

## Dierks Bentley

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Last fall, chart-topping country music heartthrob Dierks Bentley joined hundreds of Arizona bikers at Buddy Stubbs Harley-Davidson in North Phoenix for a two-hour ride to benefit Phoenix Children's Hospital. Bentley, an Arizona native now living in Nashville, Tenn., graciously thanked all those who rode—and those fans who awaited his arrival at Tempe Marketplace—with an afternoon concert that included fellow singers Stoney LaRue and Jimmy Wayne, Tempe's own Roger Clyne and the Peacemakers, and Scottsdale's Jessi Coulter. This event kick-started Bentley's first six-city Harley-Davidson motorcycle tour; in previous years, the tour was solely Nashville-based. AFM caught up with Bentley before the ride to see what it was like to be back home and raising awareness for a cause dear to his heart.



### How often do you come home to visit?

I try to get to Phoenix at least once a month; my parents live here.

### What are your favorite things to do while in town?

I like to go to Carolina's, Tee Pee Taproom or Los Olivos restaurants for Mexican food; take my daughter to Scottsdale's McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park for a ride on the train; and see the Phoenix Suns or catch the Coyotes play [depending on the time of year].

### Why did you choose Phoenix as your kick-off city?

Phoenix is my hometown, and I figured it would be the best chance to get off to a good start. Get that hometown advantage.

### You've partnered with Harley for this event. How did the relationship come to be?

I have a Harley. The Harley-Davidson dealerships that you see are a beacon for riders. It all starts off in a dealership for anyone who wants to ride. Cool Springs Harley-Davidson in Nashville, Tenn., has been really big in helping us, so I decided to do it [the ride] nationwide.

### Tell us about the moment you got your big break.

I don't really know when my big break was. I've lived in Nashville, Tenn., since I was 19 years old and have pounded away at it [music] nonstop. I never really had a big break; I just kept working at it.

### Who or what do you draw your music inspiration from?

I draw it from the stuff I see around me: life, love, heartache and happiness—the regular country-music themes.

### Who will you be collaborating with on your next album?

[Right now,] I don't have anyone in particular that I thought about yet, but there will be a lot of collaborations—just a lot of big ideas at this point. I have to get off the road and put pen to paper.