

THINGS TO DO > MUSIC + CONCERTS

Taylor Swift shakes off her reputation with 60,000-plus fans at the Rose Bowl



Taylor Swift performs before approximately 60,000 fans during her Reputation Stadium Tour Friday night May 18, 2018 at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, Calif. It was the first of two Swift shows at the stadium. Camila Cabelo and Charli XCX also performed. (Photo by Will Lester, Pasadena Star-News/SCNG)

By **KELLI SKYE FADROSKI** | kfadroski@scng.com | Orange County

Register

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Taylor Swift, country music singer-songwriter-turned-bona-fide-pop-megastar, is absolutely not messing around with her Reputation Stadium Tour. The ginormous spectacle arrived Friday night at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, where it will also play out on Saturday, and it was definitely a good time.

Swift came out around 8:45 p.m. – appropriately to a recording of Joan Jett & the Blackhearts’ “Bad Reputation” – clad in a tight, black vinyl bodysuit with a hood and when she asked, or rather sang at the audience, “Are you ready for it?”

They totally were.

At last count, Swift’s reps reported that there were more than 60,000 in attendance and the overall mood was highly upbeat. Fans from all over Southern California turned out and hundreds dressed up as Swift from her various music videos or donned homemade shirts, pants and jackets with some of their favorite song lyrics printed on them.

Groups of young girls, pre-teens and teenagers danced around the outside of the Rose Bowl, skipping by in their trendy, yet mostly age-appropriate outfits. Despite Swift being 28 years old, shedding her snake skin and bringing out the claws a bit with her sixth studio album, “Reputation,” she’s still has a bit more of a wholesome appeal than her pop counterparts such as Katy Perry or Ariana Grande.

She’s got that kinda nerdy girl-next-door thing going on, which has been highly debated to be genuine or fake, and that’s the exact sort of thing she has taken to task with the lyrical content in “Reputation.” Love her or not, she’s a superstar and she presents herself as such on stage. When she’s singing, she’s fierce and there’s no stopping her. Throughout the evening her vocals were on point and above all, she actually looked like she was enjoying herself.

“You guys were so loud after the first song, I had to take an in-ear monitor out to really listen to it,” Swift said catching her breath after a fiery performance of “I Did Something Bad.”

She let the audience know that this was her very first performance at the Rose Bowl, adding “I get the allure,” she quipped. “You guys are amazing.”

Swift also announced that the show marked her 40th appearance in Southern California and she recalled making her area debut at the Whisky A Go Go in West Hollywood in 2006 in front of about 40 people.



Now, standing in front of 60,000, Swift not only brought new music, she came with a huge production that was hauled in by more than 40 semi trucks. The visuals up on the giant screen panels and the elaborate props were spectacular, but not overwhelmingly distracting.

However, if you suffer from ophidiophobia (the fear of snakes) this may not be the tour for you. With the lead single off of “Reputation,” “Look What You Made Me Do,” Swift was met on stage by a gargantuan-sized cobra with glowing eyes and lots of fog.

It was a big moment in the show, the fans roaring along at points louder than Swift could project her voice through millions of dollars worth of sound equipment. The song also included a video of comedian Tiffany Haddish picking up the phone and reciting the lyric “I’m sorry, the old Taylor can’t come to the phone right now. Why? Oh, ‘cos she’s dead!”

Swift has so many hits at this point in her career that she had to do little medleys to squeeze them all in. She mashed up “Style” with “Love Story” and “You Belong to Me” early on in the set, later cleverly combining “Bad Blood” with “Should’ve Said No” and she took advantage of being solo on stage with her piano with “Long Live” which easily led right into “New Year’s Day.”

As she delivered the newer single, “Delicate,” she rode above the crowd in a chariot-like lift, wearing a new sparkly rainbow-colored dress as she coasted from the main stage to a smaller stage near the back of the stadium. It was a pretty, sing-along moment and Swift quickly brought back up the energy by inviting out her openers, Camila Cabello and Charli XCX for a rousing rendition of “Shake It Off” that was powerful enough to have been the encore.

**A "Shake It Off" dance party with
@taylorswift13 @Camila_Cabello
and @charli_xcx
@RoseBowlStadium
#repTourPasadena
pic.twitter.com/sWLxpD2DUM**



After all the confetti cleared and it was just Swift on the small stage with her acoustic guitar she told the audience “I wanted this show to feel as small and intimate as possible.” In an attempt to achieve that, she spent a good amount of time on the two stages strategically placed on the floor that faced different parts of the stadium. Her acoustic segment was a smart addition and has allowed her thus far on the tour to switch up her set list. On Friday she played “Dancing With Our Hands Tied” and “Red.” She zoomed over to the second satellite stage for “Blank Space” and the sultry song, “Dress.”

As a surprise to L.A. area fans, Swift brought out her friend Shawn Mendes, who non coincidentally had just announced earlier in the day that he’d be playing Staples Center on July 5, 2019. The pair performed Mendes’ hit “There’s Nothing Holdin’ Me Back.”

**.@taylorswift13 brought out
 .@ShawnMendes during night 1 of
 her 2 night stay .@RoseBowlStadium
 #repTourPasadena
 pic.twitter.com/h14SurJw0f
 — kelliskye (@kelliskye) May 19, 2018**

For her final act, Swift came out with “Getaway Car” and “Call It What You Want” before ending the evening with another mashup. This time she combined her breakup anthem “We Are Never Ever Getting Back Together” with the explosive “This Is Why We Can’t Have Nice Things.”

With this tour, it’s worth it to get to the show early to catch Cabillo and Charli XCX, two strong artists that Swift said she felt lucky to have out on the road with her. Cabillo was great as part of the girl group Fifth Harmony, but she’s a very strong solo performer. Her set, which included “Never Be the Same,” “Bad Things” and, of course, her big hit, “Havana,” was super entertaining. She even peppered in a little “Kiss” by Prince and a cover of Elvis Presley’s “Can’t Help Falling in Love” for good measure.



Charli XCX is like the tour hype woman. She came out straight away with her familiar hit, “Boom Clap,” and got the crowd going. Even those standing around to get food, drinks or tour swag were dancing and singing along. She kept the good times coming with her peppy Icona Pop collaboration “I Love It” and ended her turn with her single with Iggy Azalea, “Fancy.”

Taylor Swift’s Reputation Stadium Tour

With: Charli XCX and Camila Cabello

When: Friday, May 18

Where: Rose Bowl, Pasadena

Next: 7 p.m. Saturday, May 19 at Rose Bowl, 1001 Rose Bowl Drive, Pasadena.

Tickets are \$119.50-\$600 at 800-745-3000 or [Ticketmaster.com](https://www.ticketmaster.com).

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random famous person, she's catching up on episodes of 'The Walking Dead,' somewhere sampling craft beer, enjoying Taco Tuesday or yelling at the contestants through the TV on 'Celebrity Name Game' for not knowing basic pop culture trivia. She's also a diehard Detroit Lions fan.

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