



Applause
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The Newest Breed of Rock Stars

Taylor Swift will replace Eric Church as opening act during Rascal Flatts' "Me and My Gang" tour. Gary Allan will remain as the middle act. At the tender age of 16, Taylor Swift has ascended lightning fast through the ranks of country music stardom. Despite her youth, she has been performing publicly for six years and writing her own songs and playing guitar for four. Taylor has signed on with Big Machine Records, founded in 2005 by music industry veteran Scott Borchetta. Taylor's debut album is set to release on October 24, just two days before her appearance at the Frank Erwin Center!

They have played for the President and First lady; become national spokesmen for American Red Cross; hosted a farewell tribute to the legendary group Alabama; their first album sky-rocketed to No. 3 on *Billboard's* Top Country Albums with a No. 1 single; and their newest album has earned them a Grammy Award. I'll give you one guess who it is – that's right, Rascal Flatts.

These pop-country all stars have proved themselves, in a mere six years, to be some of the hottest entertainers from coast to coast. Melding a blend of country, pop, R&B and raw energy, this eclectic trio has effectively stolen the hearts of one of America's most passionate music loving demographics – a younger audience of adoring fans that embrace this new amalgamation of pop and country.

Hits like "These Days," "I'm Movin' On," "I Melt," "Bless the Broken Road" and "What Hurts the Most" have taken Rascal Flatts repeatedly to the top of the charts. They have sold more than 12 million records, with their fourth CD, *Me and My Gang*, hitting double-platinum status in one week. According to their Web site, they have pulled in a multitude of awards and accolades, and are the reigning CMA, ACM, CMT and ASCAP Vocal Group of the Year.

But how did an unknown group of musicians, performing against the backdrop of the millions of other acts trying to make it in Nashville, reach the dizzying heights of success so quickly?

There is no simple answer to this question. Jay

DeMarcus (vocalist/multi-instrumentalist) made it to Nashville in 1992. After five years, a stint in a Christian band and a steady gig in Chely Wright's band, he convinced cousin Gary LeVox (lead vocalist) to join him in Music City. They had secured a steady gig in Nashville's Printers Alley, when one night their regular guitarist couldn't make it. DeMarcus had worked with Joe Don Rooney (vocalist/guitarist) in Wright's band, and invited him to play the gig. Once Rooney entered the fold, the three felt a new wave of inspiration; their harmonies meshed and their music molded so perfectly that they knew they were on the fast track.

Sure enough, in November 1999, the trio went into the studio and recorded a demo with producers Mark Bright and Marty Williams. By January, Rascal Flatts had an album and video completed for Lyric Street Records and was hitting the road on a 16-week radio tour.

"They [Lyric Street] wanted to get us out of the box first because they felt like there was a void with no groups being out, no trios," LeVox said. "I'm so glad because there's a lot of friends of ours that have had record deals for two years and their stuff is still sitting on the shelf, so we've just been blessed immensely."

When the band's self-titled debut album was released in June of 2000, it had the highest first-week sales for a debut country group in the history of SoundScan. Its debut single, "Praying for Daylight," shot straight to No. 1 on country charts.



According to an interview with Pollstar, the band credits much of that success to Walt Disney-owned Lyric Street and the label's vision. The band said the pre-release radio tour, in which they sang for program and music directors in conference rooms, was the key to getting air time for their record.

LeVox says that the difference with being on a record label owned by Disney is that "...you have soundtrack opportunities, movie opportunities, all that stuff. An outlet that most artists in any genre

of music don't have is that kind of money. And with money and being as big as Disney comes power. It can open some doors that you might not have with another label. That was very appealing to us. And we wanted to dress up like Goofy and the whole nine yards."

Experience for yourself the hottest young headliners in the country when they rock the Erwin Center on October 26!

Rascal Flatts VIP Pre-Show Dinner Package - Thursday, October 26 at 5:30PM

Party Menu:

Mixed Greens with Choice of Sun Dried Tomato Vinaigrette or Spicy Ranch

Peppered Sliced Sirloin with Gorgonzola Cream Sauce

Herb Crusted Chicken Breasts

Sautéed Green Beans and Carrots

Assorted Gourmet Breads and Compound Butters

Garlic Mashed Potatoes

Chocolate Cheesecake

Menu prepared by Executive Chef Mark Keller and Executive Sous Chef Judd Finn

You and your gang can kick up your heels at the Frank Erwin Center's VIP Pre-Show Dinner right here in our own Lone Star Room.

Dinner Packages for Rascal Flatts are \$94 and include a concert ticket, dinner ticket, parking in University of Texas Trinity parking garage (subject to availability) and entrance through the Red River Street level doors. A cash bar will be available for your convenience. There will be no appearance by Rascal Flatts, Gary Allan, or Taylor Swift during the dinner.

To order, contact the Group Sales Department at 512-232-4343 or send your request to groupsales@erwin.utexas.edu. Include your name and phone number and how many packages you would like. VIP seating is limited. Orders are filled on a first-come, first-serve basis and **MUST BE PAID IN FULL WHEN RESERVATIONS ARE MADE**. We accept all major credit cards and checks made payable to The University of Texas.

Make your reservations today by calling the Group Sales Department at 512-232-4343.

All information subject to change.

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for Rascal Flatts with special guests Gary Allan and Taylor Swift at the Frank Erwin Center, Thursday, October 26 at 7:30 p.m. are \$59 and are ON SALE NOW at all Texas Box Office Outlets (includes Central Market and H-E-B stores in Austin, Bastrop, Bee Caves, Cedar Park, Georgetown, Pflugerville, Round Rock, San Marcos, Taylor and Temple; Ft. Hood Bldg. #136 and Renaissance Records in Killeen), charge-by-phone at 512-477-6060 or 1-800-982-2386 or order online at TexasBoxOffice.com. Convenience charges may apply. All information is subject to change. The Frank Erwin Center is a smoke-free facility. Convenient parking is available within walking distance in nearby state and University lots. For more information, call 512-471-7744 or visit uterwincenter.com