

THE CALGARY STAMPEDE – THE GREATEST OUTDOOR SHOW ON EARTH

Hundreds of thousands of spectators lined the streets downtown Friday to watch the Calgary Stampede parade's floats, marching bands and cowboys bedecked in their finest western wear and tack.

Parade officials said **350,000** people watched the event, more than the number of attendees for all Stampede's shows combined, including the rodeo, chuckwagons and grandstand shows. The parade featured 267 entries and 3,000 participants

The **Calgary Stampede** is an annual rodeo, exhibition and festival held every July in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. The ten-day event, which bills itself as *The Greatest Outdoor Show on Earth*, attracts over one million visitors per year and features the world's largest rodeo, a parade, midway, stage shows, concerts, agricultural competitions, chuckwagon racing and First Nations exhibitions. Calgary takes on a party atmosphere during Stampede; residents don western wear and events held across the city include ever popular pancake breakfasts and barbecues.

The Stampede's roots are traced to 1886 when the Calgary and District Agricultural Society held its first fair. American promoter Guy Weadick launched the first rodeo in 1912 though the second was not held until 1919 when the Victory Stampede was organized to honour soldiers returning from World War I. A 1923 merger with the Calgary Industrial Exhibition created the **Calgary Exhibition and Stampede** and it has been an annual event since. Over two million people visit Stampede Park annually as events are held throughout the year.

