

# OUR BRAND

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KENTUCKY  
DERBY

# WELCOME

Welcome to the first Saturday in May.  
Welcome to Churchill Downs.  
Welcome to the Kentucky Derby.

With pride and tremendous excitement, we cordially welcome you to the greatest horse race on planet earth, where you'll experience a heart beating, blood pumping, adrenalin flowing, people watching, breath holding, tear wiping, hand wringing, hoove thundering, ticket clutching, laughter inducing, high fiving, peacocking, julep sipping, moment defining time of your life.

It's time to break out the big hats and the bow ties.  
It's time to bask in the cheers of 150,000 celebrating fans.  
It's time to live the dream.

Please join us in making memories that last forever.

THE KENTUCKY DERBY



KENTUCKY  
DERBY







WHO WE ARE

THE KENTUCKY DERBY IS A  
BELOVED, SOPHISTICATED  
AND INDULGENT  
CELEBRATION OF THE  
GREATEST HORSE RACE ON  
PLANET EARTH.





*“It's the best of Kentucky,  
on Kentucky's best day.”*

- Woodford Reserve



# THE JOURNEY TO GREATNESS





# A STAR IS BORN

The Kentucky Derby is more than a race, it's a journey that starts on a farm, the very day a foal is born. 100,000 thoroughbreds are brought into this world each year, but only 20 will go through the rigorous training it takes to make it to the backstretch of Churchill Downs. These magnificently beautiful creatures are the greatest competitive athletes in the world - all heart, muscle and power. Imagine sprinting at 40 mph for 2 miles while carrying a man on your back... not bad for a 3-year old.



## Fun Fact:

**Jan 1**

The official birthdate of all thoroughbreds (for bloodline tracking)



*“A Thoroughbred racehorse can go from 0 to 40 in a matter of three strides. It’s exhilarating, the feeling of power underneath you is incredible. I love to learn what makes a thoroughbred tick.”*

– Chris McCarron,  
2 time Kentucky Derby Winning Jockey



# *AND DOWN THE STRETCH THEY COME...*

*NORTHERN DANCER, 1961, TIME: 2:00.00*

*GRINDSTONE, 1996, TIME: 2:01.06*

*SECRETARIAT, 1973, TIME: 1:59.40*

*AUTHENTIC, 2020, TIME: 2:00:61*

*MONARCHOS, 2001, TIME: 1:59.97*

*PROUD CLARION, 1967, TIME: 2:00.60*

*MEDINA SPIRIT, 2021, TIME: 2:01.02*

*SPEND A BUCK, 1985, TIME: 2:00.20*

*FUSAICHI PEGASUS, 2000, TIME: 2:01.12*

*DECIDEDLY, 1962, TIME: 2:00.10*





*“The Kentucky Derby, whatever it is  
- a race, an emotion, a turbulence,  
an explosion. It’s one of the most  
beautiful and violent and satisfying  
things I have ever experienced...”*

- John Steinbeck, 1956







*“Let excellence be your brand...  
when you are excellent,  
you become unforgettable.”*

- Oprah Winfrey



# OUR STRATEGIC GOALS & AMBITIONS

**REINFORCE** the Kentucky Derby as the longest-held sporting event in America and that's much more than a race but rather, a beloved and celebrated global experience and a way of life.

**CELEBRATE** the Kentucky Derby's commitment to making guests feel important and special bringing pure, unapologetic fun and joy to all who attend. People come as guests and leave as family.

**HIGHLIGHT & EVANGELIZE** the Kentucky Derby brand pillars, purpose, core values, and overall brand strategy so we can communicate our unique story of iconic greatness with consistency and passion. If we don't tell our story, others will tell it for us.

**ESTABLISH** the Kentucky Derby as *the* premier bucketlist event that simply cannot be missed. It's the event of all events that needs to be experienced at least once. It's also the ultimate party to host and celebrate.





*“Your brand is what people say about you when  
you're not in the room.”*

- Jeff Bezos



# OUR AUDIENCES

While the race itself is something to behold, it's the wide variety of guests and people-watching that makes the event a spectacle.



## THE INFIELDER

Anyone born and raised in Louisville has spent at least one first Saturday in May amongst the raucous spirit that defines the infield at Churchill Downs. This experience is a right of passage full of music, mint juleps and many conversations over which horses to wager on. Over 60,000 people celebrate together here from college students to first time visitors to those enjoying a family reunion.



## THE MILLIONAIRES ROW ATTENDEE

The name of this famous corner of Churchill Downs says it all. This is where the rich and famous come to play. Here you'll find guests adorned in couture and custom headwear sipping \$1,000 Mint Juleps.



## THE CELEBRITY

The rich and famous find annual escape in the lure of the Kentucky Derby. There are countless royalty, Hollywood elite and sports stars who have fallen for the Derby's charm: HRH The Queen, Tom Brady and Mary J. Blige just to name a few.



# OUR PURPOSE

WE EXIST TO PRODUCE THE BEST HORSE  
RACE IN THE WORLD. WE PROVIDE OUR  
GUESTS WITH UNMATCHED EXCELLENCE  
AND HOSPITALITY, RESULTING IN  
EXCITEMENT, HAPPINESS AND LIFELONG  
MEMORIES.





*“The brands that will thrive in the coming years are the ones that have a purpose beyond profit.”*

- Richard Branson





## LADIES FIRST

The Kentucky Oaks is the sister race to the Derby for thoroughbred fillies and takes place every year on the Friday before the Kentucky Derby welcoming over 100,000 guests. The day culminates with the running of the fillies, a race just as exciting as the First Saturday in May. The popularity of this pre-party has soared over the past decade, with guests donning the event's signature color pink, walking the pink carpet for the fashion contest and indulging in the day's official drink, The Oaks Lily.

The color pink is worn in solidarity and in effort to drive national attention to women's health. One of the most beloved traditions is the *SURVIVORS PARADE* - a march of breast and ovarian cancer survivors that takes place on the historic racetrack prior to the race.

The stargazer lily is the official flower of the race, and the winner is presented with a blanket of lilies called *LILLIES FOR THE FILLIES*.





*“Until you go to Kentucky and with  
your own eyes behold the Derby,  
you ain't never been nowhere and  
you ain't seen nothin'!”*

- Irwin S. Cobb



The following pages define our

# 5 BRAND PILLARS.

These are the main ideas that convey our identity and guide our brand story.  
They should be the inspiration for everything we do and say.





# OUR BRAND PILLARS

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KENTUCKY, USA

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A LIVING TRADITION

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SPECTACLE OF SPECTACLES

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THE GREATEST RACE

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OUR GUESTS



1

# KENTUCKY, USA

Every year, the first week in May, Louisville, Kentucky is the capital of the world, home of the greatest race in the world, as it hosts this incredible, 2-week-long party. Racing fans, partying fans, celebrities and influencers descend upon the city. Some will come to the track, others come to indulge and enjoy all of the excess this big/little town has to offer. Posh galas, vibrant food and music festivals, crackling fireworks, majestic hot air balloons and steamboat races down the Ohio river. There's bourbon distilleries and bluegrass horse farms. Pick your pleasure...there's something for everyone. For the people who live there hosting is truly a privilege.





*“I don’t know how anything could be bigger than the Kentucky Derby. If you hear of something, let me know.”*

- J. Paul Reddam  
of Reddam Racing LLC  
Owner of I’ll Have Another, 2012 Derby Winner  
& Nyquist, 2016 Derby Winner



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# A LIVING TRADITION

The Kentucky Derby is the oldest sporting event in America and 147 years later, it's still going strong and will continue for decades to come. Since 1875 it has been run, without fail. It has persevered through weather, depressions, wars and even a world-wide pandemic. From the moment you step into Churchill Downs you can feel the magic of it all. You are a part of something so much bigger than the race itself, surrounded by history with more to be made. The racing, the parties, the cheering fans are unmatched. It feels remarkable to be a part of a celebration so timeless.





# THERE ARE SO MANY FANTASTIC TRADITIONS THAT ARE QUINTESSENTIAL DERBY

## The Garland of Roses

Each year, the winner is crowned with a garland of red roses, leading some to call the event 'The Run for the Roses.' It is draped over the winning horse and is made with more than 400 red roses, sewn together on green satin, weighing in at about 40 pounds.



## The Mint Julep

This iconic drink has been the official cocktail of the Kentucky Derby for nearly a century with on average 120,000 mint juleps sold at the race every year.



## Exquisite Hats

The tradition of Kentucky Derby hats dates back to the very first race in 1875. The derby's founder knew the race track had a reputation as an immoral place and wanted to shift it to a high-class status and spread the word to the wealthy to please add a bit of elegant flair to the event. And thus, the tradition of wearing extravagant hats was born. Year after year, guests return wearing the largest, most fantastic hats they can find. From frills to bows to ribbons, the hats become more elegant and extreme each year.



## The Walk Over

Like owners of sports teams, horse owners get their share of perks. And at the Kentucky Derby, there are few perks more coveted than the "walkover," where beaming owners and their guests revel in the exclusive privilege of ruining a perfectly good pair of shoes showing off their horses before the race begins, basking in the glory of 150,000 cheering fans.



## The Survivors Parade

The Survivors Parade is a celebratory march of breast and ovarian cancer survivors that takes place on Churchill Downs' racetrack before the Kentucky Oaks. It is one of the most powerful and inspiring moments of Kentucky Derby week and has raised more than \$1million to fight breast and ovarian cancer.



*“The derby is but a single day...but the derby is also every day.  
The derby is why dreamers spend millions on yearlings, leaning  
into the longest shot in sports. The derby is why trainers rise every  
day in darkness to work a 2-year-old who might just be special.  
The derby is why a barn becomes a dream team all supporting  
the big horse.”*

- Tim Layden  
NBC Sports



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# SPECTACLE OF SPECTACLES



The Kentucky Derby isn't all about the horses. It has become a place to see and be seen. Derby week brings style, glamor and extravagance at its finest. There's no denying that it has become the fashion event of the year. People from around the world tune in to see who is wearing what at the races, choices that could end up inspiring fashion in the year to come. Spring pastels, flowing dresses, and bold suits are all part of the show, but nothing can beat the amazing hats. An iconic hat can provide as many photos as the winning horse. And who doesn't love a good celeb sighting? The parties are indulgent, over the top and so much fun. It's a way of life that only happens once a year.

  
KENTUCKY  
DERBY



*“The Derby is such a huge celebration. The hats, the fashion,  
the Mint Juleps, the parties...  
is such a unique experience that makes it so special.  
It’s the ultimate dress up day.”*

- Tara Lapinski



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# THE GREATEST RACE



The main event is the Kentucky Derby race on Saturday and it's all the fanfare surrounding "the most exciting two minutes of sports" that makes this beloved event so memorable. Racing fans place their bets, grab a mint julep and find their place on the rail. Proud owners take in the crowd during the 'walkover' before the race begins showing off their horses while basking in the glory of thunderous cheers. The bugler plays Call to Post. The jockeys prepare for the ride of their lives. Churchill Downs guests, living their best lives, celebrate across the track and at home cheering on their favorite horse. With participation from both Japan and Saudi Arabia, the Kentucky Derby is strengthening its position as The Greatest Horserace on Planet Earth.



  
KENTUCKY  
DERBY



*“When you touch the dirt on the track you have the feeling,  
at that moment, that you are on the center stage of the  
universe.”*

-Steve Cauthen  
Jockey of Affirmed  
1978 Triple Crown Winner



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## OUR GUESTS



No brand exists without the people that engage with it. The Kentucky Derby has a plethora of audiences having the time of their lives. It's over 150,000 guests with different backgrounds and pedigrees. It's where the revelers in the infield can have every bit as much fun as the suits on Millionaires Row who arrive in block-long limos. The Derby is one of the most inclusive marquee events in sports. You don't have to be a CEO or a season-ticket holder to be in the house. The infield holds loud music and crowds of college students. The grandstand is a mix of casually dressed fans sipping mint juleps and sporting massive, crazy, hats. Up in Millionaires' Row Hollywood celebs mix with professional athletes and actual Royalty as they pour champagne. But everyone is there for the same reason: to watch the greatest horse race in the world, party and hopefully win a little money.

And you don't have to be at Churchill Downs to celebrate. Don't forget the millions of people donning fancy hats and throwing Derby parties at home and abroad. All 16 million of them. More than the Oscars, but just as glamorous.





*“The people, the people, of course it’s the horses, the excitement, but it’s the people, you know the tradition.”*

-Angela Bassett





# OUR CORE VALUES

Our core values inform how we behave, what we stand for and the unwavering principles our brand lives by. They are our guiding light, our belief system and run through everything we do.



We Believe In:

## LOVE

We love what we do and are passionate about bringing our guests real joy and authentic experiences, creating memories and new traditions that last a lifetime.

## EXCELLENCE

From start to finish we obsess in making sure that our guest's experiences are first class and memorable.

## INTEGRITY

The safety of our thoroughbreds, their support teams and everyone attending is our highest priority. We are true to who we are and will always do the right and honorable thing according to our values. (That's the Churchill Downs Way).

## INNOVATION

We are competitive creators of fun and memorable experiences and are constantly developing new ways to deliver creative experiences for our guests around the globe.

## HOSPITALITY

We live to make people happy. Hospitality is in our DNA. We always strive for our guests and horsemen and women to feel welcomed, warm and have the time of their lives.



554

Roses awarded to the annual KD winner each year.



\$24.5 MILLION

Record amount bet on the KD.



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Fillies have won the KD.



46%

the Derbys run in the rain



