Casey set for Barnes-storming gig

Australian country music artist Casey Barnes has had a busy year performing at some of the biggest music festivals in the world and writing new songs. He took time out to talk with KONNOR FURBER about his upcoming visit to Mareeba's highly-anticipated Savannah in the Round.



Casey Barnes is looking forward to performing some of his new tracks at next month's Savannah in the Round.

CASEY Barnes is primed and ready to go for Savannah in the Round after already ticking off performances at CMA Fest and Stagecoach – the two biggest country music festivals in the world.

"It's been a pretty productive year," the 47-year-old said.

"We're in the cycle of creating new music. So, a lot of writing, a lot of recording, and a couple of trips over to Nashville to work with some writers over there.

"We've been touring as well. I just came back from, I think it's our third or fourth year in a row, playing CMA Fest in Nashville.

"The other highlight was probably playing Stagecoach (California), which is the biggest country music festival in the world. It's at the same location as Coachella and they have it the week after Coachella, so it's huge."

He said this year would be his fourth time playing at Mareeba's Savannah in the Round and he couldn't wait to see the Far North crowds again.

"We just love the crowds up there. They love their country music, and they all want to have a good time, and they're always welcoming and super friendly," Barnes said.

"And it's nice that there's a real broad mix of people up there too – you've got younger country fans, you've got the mums and dads, and a lot of people that bring their families and kids to be a part of it.

"It's great when you look

> **'We just love the crowds up there,**

at the front row and you've got kids wearing your t-shirt and your hat and holding up a sign, or just singing along to the songs."

Barnes kicked off this year in high spirits after his 2024 album *Mayday* picked up a Golden Guitar for Album of the Year.

"I was super happy with it (the album). It did incredibly well," he said.

"It's always difficult to back up. The previous album *Light It Up* did really well and I won an ARIA Award with that.

"Growing up as a kid watching the ARIAs every year, it's like man, if someone had have told me when I was 13 that I was going to win an ARIA, I would have never believed it was going to happen.

"So, I've been pretty lucky and I'm very grateful for what I've been able to do the last few years, that's for sure."

He's also given his fans "a little bit of a taste" of what's to come next, with two singles, *Buy That Girl A Beer* and *Rough Around The Edges*, released so far in 2025.

"The first single was *Buy That Girl A Beer*, which is misleading because it's not just about literally doing that," Barnes said.

"The song is more about taking chances in life and not living with regrets, whatever it is that you do.

"It's more a metaphor of like if there's a girl and you see her and you're afraid about buying her the beer, it's like just do it, just buy the beer, take a risk."

He said the inspiration behind his latest release, *Rough Around The Edges*, was to celebrate the fact that nobody's perfect.

"I think sometimes we live in a world where we expect relationships are going to be perfect and rosy all the time, but that's not the case," he said.

"Sometimes, being a little rough around the edges can be a good thing. It's embracing the fact that everyone's imperfectly perfect.

"My wife and I have been married for 19 years and we're best friends, but we know we're not perfect at the same time. It uses that analogy and it's had a really great reaction so far, so I'm stoked."

Barnes is notably known for his biggest hit *God Took His Time On You*, which remains his favourite song.

"If you look at my whole catalogue of music, the biggest song of my career, is actually a ballad called *God Took His Time On You*," he said.

"I wrote that about my wife. I was trying to come up with a story of the ultimate compliment that whoever created you, obviously took their time because you're as perfect as you could possibly get.

"It's funny that that song has gone on to become really big."

He said he was looking forward to seeing everyone at the festival and he was happy that country music was "flourishing".

"We're looking forward to seeing everyone up there and it's great to see country music having a real moment in Australia right now," he said.

"When you look at some genres in music, they are struggling and some festivals are struggling a little, but country music is really flourishing. It's doing better than it ever has, that's pretty interesting.

"I'm looking forward to catching as many acts as I can and there's some really good bands playing, so it's going to be awesome."

Barnes will be playing on the Sunday of the festival (10-12 October) from 7.10pm on the Cape Stage. For more information or to purchase tickets for the event, visit www.savannahintheround.com.au

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