

# Rock in Rio USA Festival Review: Weekend Two from Worst to Best

From Taylor Swift to Charli XCX, complete coverage of Vegas' Pop Weekend

BY [PHILIP COSORES](#)  
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## TAYLOR SWIFT



Everything Taylor Swift represents since the release of 1989 continued into her first U.S. performance of the 1989 tour. Her social media coverage, and as a result the bulk of her news coverage, is about her friends, her lifestyle, and, most importantly, her recent songwriting. The 1989 tour is aiming to capture a specific moment in time for one of music's biggest stars, and that is exactly what it does. |

Her friends showed up early in the set with a series of interviews on the big screen, including Lena Dunham, Haim, Selena Gomez, and several others, explaining how they met Swift, what it is like to be her friend, and why they love her. Later, another one of her friends, Ed Sheeran, popped by for a duet, allowing Swift to wax nostalgic on their three-year friendiversary. These moments brought fans into Swift's world more than the songs ever could.



As for New York's place in the set, the performance opened with the stage meant to look like the city and continued to be a theme with the iconography. Throughout the set, Swift would reflect on the city during her on-stage speeches, which typically introduced each song.

But while her friends and her home are huge for Swift right now, the set's real goal, which was achieved in spades, was highlighting her newest material. Swift rarely diverted from the 1989 material, which may disappoint some wanting more of a retrospective, but that's where she is right now.

Having changed and grown so much in the public eye, any representation beyond who she is in this moment would feel insincere. The opposite occurred on Friday: a pop spectacle that felt deeply personal. Is there anything better in live music than that?

- ARTISTS
- BIG SEAN +
  - CHARLI XCX +
  - ED SHEERAN +
  - EMPIRE OF THE SUN +
  - IVETE SANGALO +
  - JAMES BAY +
  - JESSIE J +
  - JOSS STONE +
  - MAGIC! +
  - MAYER HAWTHORNE +
  - TAYLOR SWIFT +
  - TOVE LO +
- TAGS
- LAS VEGAS +
  - ROCK IN RIO USA +