

= Harajuku Lovers Tour =

The Harajuku Lovers Tour was the first solo concert tour of American recording artist Gwen Stefani . The tour began through October to November 2005 , to support of her debut studio album Love . Angel . Music . Baby . (2004) . Although Stefani embarked on multiple tours with her band No Doubt , she initially opted not to participate in a tour to promote her album , an attitude that the singer eventually abandoned due to the commercial success of Love . Angel . Music . Baby .

The Harajuku Lovers Tour consisted of only one leg , which encompassed a three @-@ month @-@ long series of performances that visited cities throughout the United States and Canada . Stefani recruited hip hop group The Black Eyed Peas , rapper M.I.A. , and singer Ciara to accompany her as opening acts for her endeavors . The tour produced varying responses from contemporary critics , who despite praising Stefani 's vocals , were critical of other aspects of the show such as its musical material . According to Billboard , the tour grossed \$ 22 million from 37 concerts , from which 20 sold @-@ out . A video album , titled Harajuku Lovers Live , was released in DVD format in conjunction with her 2006 album The Sweet Escape and features the singer performing at the Honda Center in Anaheim , California , Stefani 's birthplace .

= = Background = =

Stefani announced a tour to support her first solo studio album Love . Angel . Music . Baby . (2004) on June 27 , 2005 , giving details of sixteen dates from October 16 to November 10 . The announcement on June 27 also included the fact that hip hop group The Black Eyed Peas , who are also signed to Interscope Records , would be the opening act for all the announced dates except November 3 . The group , who were backing their album Monkey Business , ended up touring with Stefani until November 14 . On August 8 , it was announced that singer @-@ songwriter and rapper M.I.A. would take over as the opening act from November 16 to November 25 , although it wasn 't until August 17 that the extra dates from November 11 to November 25 were officially added to the tour . M.I.A. toured with Stefani , backing her album Arular , until December 1 . On September 29 , the final set of dates , November 26 to December 21 , were added to the tour and it was announced that the third and final opening act for Stefani 's tour would be singer Ciara , backing her album Goodies , from December 3 to December 21 .

Stefani initially did not intend to tour to support the album , responding " What tour ? " to a question from MTV News in December 2004 regarding a possible tour . She later mentioned several times that she had not originally intended to tour in support of the album , referring to her " illegal tour " and apologizing for her breaking her promise not to tour on stage at the Xcel Energy Center in Saint Paul , Minnesota on November 14 and admitting " I just wanted to make a record . I didn 't want to tour , I was too tired , then you guys kept buying the record , and I had to come out and see you guys " on stage at Winnipeg on November 16 . In a September interview with MTV News , Stefani said of the tour : " I 'm looking forward to it , it 's going to be unbelievable . [...] I would love to try to roll a little bit of ' Orange County Girl ' in there . We 'll see . Anything can happen in rehearsals . I don 't even know how long the show can be right now . "

= = Concert synopsis = =

Stefani opened the show with the song " Harajuku Girls " , an ode to Harajuku , the fashion district of Tokyo , Japan . She appeared on stage wearing a tiara and baby doll outfit , sitting in the red velvet and gold throne from the cover of Love . Angel . Music . Baby. and surrounded by her backing dancers , also called the Harajuku Girls , while video images of Harajuku itself played on screens behind her . Her second song was the first single from the album , " What You Waiting For ? " , which she began as a ballad before bringing it up to its usual pace . Stefani and the Harajuku Girls then left the stage to change into one @-@ piece bathing suits while her band continued to play , before returning to perform " The Real Thing " . A group of four breakdancers came on stage to perform while Stefani left the stage again to change into a black @-@ and @-@ white leather

tracksuit . For the next song , the album 's sixth single " Crash " , the audience were then divided into male and female halves and , as images of a car hood bouncing to the beat were broadcast , each half took turns to sing the lyric " back it up , back it up " . Stefani then performed the fourth single from the album , " Luxurious " .

Stefani changed outfits again into a pair of black hot pants to perform " Rich Girl " , the album 's second single , while walking along a catwalk into the crowd and giving fans high @-@ fives . She then sang " Danger Zone " and " Long Way to Go " , both intimate songs , before performing two new songs back @-@ to @-@ back : " Wind It Up " , which would become the first single from her second album The Sweet Escape , and " Orange County Girl " . " Wind It Up " was performed with a carnival vibe and " Orange County Girl " was accompanied by a video montage of childhood photos of Stefani and images of items mentioned in the song . She changed into a silver sequined cocktail dress for the fourth single from her first album , " Cool " .

In early performances of the show , Stefani 's next song was " Hollaback Girl " , the album 's third and best @-@ selling single , performed in a drumming costume and singing with the audience . This was followed by an encore of " Serious " and " Bubble Pop Electric " , for which Stefani was brought out in a stretcher by the Harajuku Girls . However , in later performances , " Hollaback Girl " was saved for the encore and preceded by the two other songs .

= = Critical response = =

Critics were divided with the Harajuku Lovers Tour . Patrick MacDonald of the Seattle Times , while applauding Stefani 's song @-@ writing efforts and the show 's " frothy fun " antics , reprimanded the singer 's dancing and limited material , given that she performed only twelve songs from Love . Angel . Music . Baby. and two from The Sweet Escape but none from previous work with her band No Doubt . In regards to the musical selection , MacDonald concluded that half the songs are " eminently forgettable " , a view echoed by Winnipeg Sun columnist Rob Williams , who described some of the album tracks as " filler " . Despite these objections , Williams issued her MTS Center performance a three @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half out of five stars . " But sometimes the music didn 't matter when there was as much eye candy as Stefani provided " , opined the Winnipeg Sun writer . " She is an extremely striking figure and the choreography , light show , backup dancers and frequent costume changes all added to the spectacle , which ended up being more style than substance . "

Mike Ross of the Edmonton Sun was impressed with Stefani 's ability to engage the audience , a quality that earned her the description of the " effervescent hostess " from the journalist . In his four star review for the concert , he commended the " swell " music and " amazing " choreography ; " It also had merit as a choreographic tour @-@ de @-@ force ? thanks in large part to a quartet each of talented dancing geisha girls and B @-@ boys " , remarked Ross . Stefani 's different outfits and set pieces also won praise . " So you could have enjoyed last night 's concert as a fashion show . Or a music video , sure " , Ross concluded . Although she called Stefani the " new princess of pop " and praised the singer 's charismatic presence during the show , Jane Stevenson of the Toronto Sun felt that the concert was " definitely of the lightweight variety in the music department " and noted that , although Stefani models herself after Madonna , she is " no real threat " . She gave the concert three @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half stars out of five .

MTV 's Corey Moss compared Stefani 's performance to Madonna with regard to " the eight costume changes to the dancers to the theatrics to , hell , even the music itself " and avouched that she sounded completely different from how she did with No Doubt . Moss asserted that the No Doubt lead vocalist was the " most captivating thing onstage " with her " confident strut and dead @-@ on vocals " . Jon Pareles of The New York Times admired the " glamour and groove " antics of the show and how Stefani " flaunt [ed] the perks of stardom " . He praised her music , describing the album as " a smart [record] , with honed rhythm tracks that flit from funk to pop , electronics to rock " , although calling most tracks " superficial " , being about " style " , " success " , " shopping " and " sex " .

Jim Harrison of SoundSpike affirmed that the Harajuku Lovers Tour lacked a strong musical setlist , and also felt that Stefani 's stage presence was absent . He stated that she " doesn 't have many

songs that translate well in a live setting " from her album Love . Angel . Music . Baby. and suggested that she should have included songs by No Doubt for " much @-@ needed shots of adrenaline " for the audience , who were , according to Harrison , " figuratively sitting on their hands and literally yawning four songs into the set " . Harrison felt that Stefani seemed truly " lost on stage without a band " , ultimately describing her performance as " [lacking in] energy " , " lukewarm " and seemingly " on autopilot " . Furthermore , the SoundSpike writer thought that her performance was akin to that of fellow American recording artist Britney Spears , which was " utterly unsuitable for both the song selection and her style " . However , he did praise the rendition of " Hollaback Girl " , calling it " great " and " Gwen being all Gwen can be " , and called the breakdancing " pretty cool " .

= = Broadcast and recordings = =

Stefani 's performance in late November 2005 in her home town of Anaheim , California was recorded and released on DVD as a video album Harajuku Lovers Live . It was released on December 5 , 2006 , the same release date as Stefani 's second album , The Sweet Escape . The DVD was directed by Sophie Muller . The concert features performances of all twelve songs from Love . Angel . Music . Baby. and two new songs from her second studio album , The Sweet Escape , as well as interviews with the musicians and dancers and a documentary of tour preparation . The DVD received similar mixed reviews to the concerts themselves . Reviewers praised Stefani 's musical performances and stage presence , but criticizing the lack of material and the long costume changes . The DVD was certified gold in Australia by the Australian Recording Industry Association and platinum in Canada by the Canadian Recording Industry Association .

= = Opening acts = =

The Black Eyed Peas (October 16 ? November 14)

M.I.A. (November 16 ? December 1)

Ciara (December 3 ? December 21)

= = Set list = =

= = Tour dates = =