

= Dude Ranch (Modern Family) =

" Dude Ranch " is the third season premiere of the American sitcom Modern Family and the 49th episode overall . The episode originally aired on September 21 , 2011 on American Broadcasting Company (ABC) and ran back @-@ to @-@ back with " When Good Kids Go Bad " . The episode was written by Paul Corrigan , Brad Walsh & Dan O 'Shannon and directed by Jason Winer .

" Dude Ranch " features guest stars Tim Blake Nelson as Hank and Reid Ewing as Dylan . Serving as the first part of the one @-@ hour season premiere , the episode revolves around the three families traveling to a dude ranch .

" Dude Ranch " received positive reviews from critics with many praising Nolan Gould 's performance as Luke Dunphy , with Alan Sepinwall calling him the MVP of the episode . The episode was viewed by more than 14 @. @ 54 million viewers and received a 6 @. @ 1 rating / 15 % share among adults between the ages of 18 and 49 , marking an 18 @-@ percent rise from the second season premiere , " The Old Wagon " . The episode also became the highest @-@ rated and most viewed episode of the series . It also ranked as the highest @-@ rated ABC series for the week of broadcast and fourth overall .

This episode won a Primetime Emmy Award for Outstanding Sound Mixing for a Comedy or Drama Series (Half @-@ Hour) and Animation . Season one episode " En Garde " won the same award back in 2010 .

= = Plot = =

The three families travel to a dude ranch in Wyoming . In the Pritchett family storyline , Gloria (Sofia Vergara) experiences hearing difficulty following the plane ride while a cowboy , Hank (Tim Blake Nelson) , flirts with her . Gloria 's husband , Jay (Ed O 'Neill) , takes notice , but Gloria is oblivious to his behavior . Later , Hank grabs Gloria 's butt causing Jay to tell him to back off , which he does . He said if it were not for him being the bad guy Jay would not have been a hero , but Gloria fights back and says Jay is always a hero .

Meanwhile , in the Dunphy family , Dylan (Reid Ewing) , Haley 's boyfriend , tags along on the trip , much to Claire 's chagrin . However , Phil (Ty Burrell) eventually convinces her that she should try to get to know Dylan . She attempts to , but suddenly Dylan proposes to Haley (Sarah Hyland) around the campfire one night . This causes Claire (Julie Bowen) to instantly say no for Haley , leading to Dylan running away . The families go off and look for him , during which Haley criticizes Claire for interfering and reveals she would not have accepted Dylan 's proposal . It is also revealed that Dylan gets a job at the ranch and decides to permanently stay in Wyoming , breaking up with Haley .

During the trip , a teenage boy named Jimmy (Matthew Gumley) flirts with Alex (Ariel Winter) and later kisses her . In addition , Phil attempts to impress Jay and prove he has earned Jay 's respect , and Jay eventually tells Phil that he does truly respect Phil .

Cameron (Eric Stonestreet) and Mitchell (Jesse Tyler Ferguson) reveal that they are adopting a boy from the United States . Mitchell worries that he will not be able to do all the father / son things because of his sexuality and his inability to participate in " manly " activities such as catching and shooting . Despite this , he reassures himself after he blows up a birdhouse with a firecracker with Luke (Nolan Gould) .

= = Production and themes = =

" Dude Ranch " was written by Paul Corrigan , Brad Walsh & Dan O 'Shannon . The episode was directed by Jason Winer , his first director 's credit since the first season . It aired on September 21 , 2011 , back @-@ to @-@ back with the " When Good Kids Go Bad " . " Dude Ranch " was filmed between August 17 and August 19 , 2011 on location in Jackson Hole , Wyoming . Other cities that were under consideration were Tucson , Arizona and Bozeman , Montana . Tim Blake Nelson guest starred in the episode as a cowboy who " intimidates the guys and sends the girls ' hearts a @-@

twitter " . Reid Ewing returned as Dylan , in his final appearance for the series until he reappeared in the episode entitled " Disneyland . "

Near the end of the second season , there were rumors alluding to the producers recasting the role of Lily , and changing her age from a baby to a toddler . In July 2011 , a casting call for a " 3- to 4 @-@ year @-@ old daughter of Mitchell and Cameron " was put out by the producers . Co @-@ creator and executive producer Steven Levitan stated that :

" It was a hard decision , and this was not remotely having to do with us wanting to upgrade the acting ability or jump the character in age . The twins who play the part (Jaden and Ella Hiller) were not happy . We started feeling like we were just being mean to these little girls , making them come to the stage . And the character is reaching an age where she would talk , and that was going to be an asset to us to have Cam and Mitch communicating with her . "

They eventually cast Aubrey Anderson @-@ Emmons to play the toddler @-@ aged , Lily , replacing twin sisters , Jayden and Ella Hiller . The episode also features the addition of two new writers , Ben Karlin as a consulting producer and Cindy Chupack as co @-@ executive producer .

The episode mainly deals with the male characters in the show and " the flaws and foibles of the menfolk " , hence the episode title , " Dude Ranch " . Mitchell deals with being not manly enough to raise a boy while Jay deals with the cowboy flirting with Gloria . Phil attempts to gain Jay 's respect , a recurring theme in several other episodes . Eventually , all the characters gain their confidence with Mitchell blowing up a birdhouse with Luke , Jay standing up to the cowboy and Phil standing up to Jay .

= = Reception = =

= = = Ratings = = =

In its original American broadcast , " Dude Ranch " alongside the following episode , " When Good Kids Go Bad " , was viewed by an estimated 14 @.@ 54 million households and received a 6 @.@ 1 rating / 15 % share among adults between the ages of 18 and 49 . This means that it was seen by 6 @.@ 1 % of all 18- to 49 @-@ year @-@ olds , and 15 % of all 18- to 49 @-@ year @-@ olds watching television at the time of the broadcast . This marked an 18 % rise in the ratings from the second season premiere , " The Old Wagon " , making it the highest @-@ rated and most @-@ viewed episode of the series and became ABC 's top @-@ rated season premiere in six years . The episode also ranked first in its timeslot , beating the highly promoted new Fox reality series The X Factor , CBS drama series Criminal Minds , NBC drama series Harry 's Law and CW reality series , America 's Next Top Model . Added with DVR viewers , who viewed the episode within three days of the original broadcast , the episode received a 7 @.@ 7 rating in the 18 ? 49 demographic , adding a 1 @.@ 7 rating to the original viewership . " Dude Ranch " was the third most @-@ watched scripted show for the week of broadcast among adults aged 18 ? 49 and the eleventh most watched show among all viewers .

= = = Reviews = = =

The episode received positive reviews from critics .

Maris Kreizman of New York called the episode " not all that surprising and a little sentimental , but charming nonetheless . " She also complimented the development of Alex 's character commenting that it " was nice to see a bit of real character development for Alex . " .

The A.V. Club reviewer Donna Bowman compared the episode to the second season episode " Halloween " for its use of the whole ensemble , and ultimately gave the episode a B + .

HitFix reviewer Alan Sepinwall felt that " Dude Ranch " was the weaker episode of the hour , and commented that " Sitcom vacation episodes , as a rule , tend to not be very good . There have been exceptions [...] " Dude Ranch " was unfortunately not one of them . Despite this , he complimented the subplots for the kids , but criticized the plots for the adults calling them " much less memorable "

Entertainment Weekly writer Sandra Gonzalez praised the episode , saying it proved the show deserved the second Emmy Award for Outstanding Comedy Series . Despite her mainly positive review , she criticized the Gloria storyline , writing that she " wish she [Sofia Vergara] had more to do than scream the entire episode " .

Henry Hanks of CNN said the episode was equal in quality to the first @-@ season episode , " Hawaii " saying that the episode " [showed] once again why it 's one of the most consistently funny shows on TV . He also noted that his favorite moment " had to be Jay 's struggles with the horse " and called Jay the MVP of the episode , saying Ed O 'Neill deserved to win the Emmy over Ty Burrell .

Paste writer Christina Ziemba said that the episode proved that the series deserved to win at the Emmy 's saying it was " rife with great gags , jokes and one @-@ liners " . She ultimately gave this episode and " When Good Kids Go Bad " an 8 @.@ 5 / 10 calling it " commendable " .

Zac Oldenburg of Television Blend criticized the Phil @-@ Jay subplot for repeating ideas . He eventually called the episode a " rough start " and considered it worse than the following episode .

Multiple critics praised Nolan Gould 's performance in the episode , as Luke . Sepinwall called him the MVP of the episode . Other critics also called the episode superior to the second half @-@ hour , " When Good Kids Go Bad " .