

**From FORTUNE: The Good Life**

# Get ready for the Kentucky Derby

**We're not talking about choosing your horse, we're talking hats, watch-chains and the perfect mint julep.**

By **Kate Bonamici**, FORTUNE reporter  
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**FORTUNE**

NEW YORK, MAY 3 2006 (FORTUNE) - The Kentucky Derby may be a horse race (and what a race - it's the oldest continuously running sporting event in the U.S.), but let's be honest. Ask most people what they associate with the Derby and they'll likely say "mint juleps and hats."

In honor of the 132nd Derby, to be run at Churchill Downs in Louisville on May 6, we searched for your Race Week essentials, even if you didn't get your act together in time to order the perfect custom hat.

Of paramount importance if you're heading to the Downs is your outfit. Think "My Fair Lady," think formal, and think old-fashioned. It's time to get dolled up - when else do you have a chance to wear a pastel three-piece suit or a tire-sized straw hat (depending on your gender)?

"By gosh, we want to be seen that day," says Tony Terry, Director of Publicity at Churchill Downs. "Anyone who has a seat on Derby Day can have the feeling, 'America is a great place and I think I've made it.'"

### Topping it off

Most hat makers require significant advance notice to create an extravagant custom art installation for your head, but procrastinators can still scoop up a frilly chapeau before the race by stopping by the Kentucky Museum of Art and Craft ([www.kentuckyarts.org](http://www.kentuckyarts.org)), in Louisville. The museum sells creations by milliners like Angie Schultz (Attitudes by Angie) and Jill Henning.

Schultz also has hats still available on her Web site ([www.attitudesbyangie.com](http://www.attitudesbyangie.com)), all with names like "Hot to Trot," "Winner Take All," and "Be Noticed."

After the Derby, drop that masterpiece off at the Kentucky Derby Museum ([www.derbymuseum.org](http://www.derbymuseum.org)) to enter it in the museum's Best Derby Hats contest - winners will be displayed for the next year, but you'll be able to reclaim it along with a certificate confirming that it's an official museum piece.



FROM: KENTUCKY MUSEUM OF ART & CRAFT

**The Dynomite hat from Attitudes by Angie**



FROM: SEIKO

**Seiko's gold tone pocket watch**

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## For the gents

The gentlemen in the crowd can top off their waistcoats with a pocket watch - few modern events display as many artfully draped watch-chains as the seats at the Kentucky Derby. If you don't have a family heirloom handy, pick up a substitute: Seiko's gold tone pocket watch has the filigreed exterior and ornate chain of an antique, for a wallet-friendly \$129 ([www.princetonwatches.com](http://www.princetonwatches.com)).

And for men who are jealous of the fabulous hats the ladies show off on race day, start planning now to have the perfect Panama hat for next year's race. Brent Black, who sells custom Montecristi Panamas, needs some advance notice if you want a hat made just for you - his favorite master weaver takes about two months per hat, working full time to weave it. Hats range in price from about \$425 to \$5,000 and up, see [www.brentblack.com](http://www.brentblack.com).

### The drink of choice: The mint julep

Now that you're dressed, it's time to find a drink. Even though it has been getting loads of press, the \$1,000 Mint Julep is still worth discussing. The Derby's official Bourbon supplier, Woodford Reserve, is making 50 special juleps to raise money for Green Pastures, which gives elderly racing horses a comfy retirement home.

It's made with ice from the Arctic Circle, fresh mint flown in from Morocco and sugar imported from Mauritius and carefully hand-ground at Woodford's Kentucky distillery. The price tag includes a limited edition gold-plated cup and sterling silver straw, an embroidered silk handkerchief (designed by one of the makers of racing silks for jockeys) to hold it with, plus a custom storage box. Pre-order by calling: 502-636-4400, ext. 3880

Can't make it to Louisville this year? Recreate the essential accessory before tuning in to the race. Churchill Downs is ready to serve 120,000 juleps this year (each \$9 and served in a commemorative glass), but economies of scale require a slightly less craftsman-like approach to the ritual than connoisseurs would approve.

Try making the real deal at home. The essentials: You'll get the real feel of it if you use a julep cup (the metal holds in the chill and keeps the crushed ice from melting too fast) and a special straw, thinner than normal to assure the proper blending of ingredients.

Here's the mint julep recipe from the bartenders at Louisville's historic Brown Hotel:

- Make simple syrup by taking equal parts of hot water and sugar. Stir.
- Add fresh mint and muddle [mash, preferably with something like a pestle, otherwise use the back of a spoon].
- Add crushed ice to an 8-ounce glass.
- Add two ounces of simple syrup.
- Top off with Kentucky Bourbon, and add a sprig of fresh mint.

Drink up!



FROM: BRENTBLACK.COM  
Brent Black's \$850 derby hat



COURTESY: WOODFORD RESERVE  
The \$1,000 mint julep.

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