



# PREVIEW: Touring is life for April Verch



CAM FULLER, SASKATOON STARPHOENIX

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When is touring not touring? When you do it all the time. Then, it's just life, says April Verch. The well-travelled champion fiddler and step dancer from Pembroke, Ont. (who lived in Saskatoon briefly in the late 1990s) recently returned from Scandinavia and was getting ready to do weekend excursions from her second home base in North Carolina. Here are some of her thoughts in key words.

**April Verch** Sunday, Nov. 6

**The Bassment**

**Tickets: \$31 (\$26 members)**

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**Sweden and Denmark:** I have to say, I've never had a favourite place to tour but it's at the top, I love it there. The people are just really kind and it's clean and beautiful and they have their own strong folk music tradition. Feels like home a bit, actually.

**The Newpart.** That's the title of Verch's latest album, named after the renovated room in the repurposed schoolhouse she grew up in. It's her 10th album but her 11th is on the way this winter, a greatest hits collection called Anthology.

**The band:** Guitar player Alex Rubin signed up in March. Cody Walters plays bass and clawhammer banjo (and he's Verch's beau).

**New shoes:** Verch has sandpaper taps to her arsenal. "It sort of sounds like a brush on a snare drum," she says. "I do that underneath some of the vocal tunes."



**Playing vs. dancing:** It's really tricky, there's so much to consider in a set list for us. Have I just danced? Have I recovered enough to sing? And then there's all the cross tunings on the fiddle and then there's also the shoe changes, right?

**Adapting to soft shoes:** It was really hard. Harder than I thought it would be. If I'm doing a shuffle, the accent of the shuffle falls on a different place than it normally does. Doing that while trying to think about singing was the hard part.

**Fan response, by country:** The Scandinavian crowds are pretty reserved while you're playing. But then when they come up after the show, they're just the warmest, most genuine and sincere. Other places they seem more verbal, they're demonstrating it while the show is going on. We've been really lucky. We've toured a lot of places now and I've never been somewhere where I was, like, this just didn't work I don't think we should come back.

**Style of music:** The bottom line is that it's not so much about the music and whether they're familiar with it or can compare it to something. I think if you're really sincere and passionate about what you're doing and you talk about that and where the stuff has come from and why you're doing it and how you're connected to it, that sincerity comes across and that's what people connect with.

**Saskatoon:** I've always really loved Saskatoon and the prairies. As someone who doesn't come from the prairies, I've always felt connected to the beautiful wide open spaces, I've always felt at home there. So I always look forward to that part of it, too. I spent enough time there to feel a connection to the place.