

ARE CONCERTS WORTH FOMO IF YOU STAYED HOME?

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Ten years ago, convention events like Warped Tour were the place for alternative people to see their favorite bands and to discover similar music. It combined punk rock music with skate culture, which is why the festival is sponsored by Vans. It was hyped up online as a once in a lifetime opportunity to meet band members and get exclusive band merch, as well as guaranteed to hear your favorite songs live.

In 2006 Warped Tour came to Fresno along with 49 other stops, but in 2026 they only have five locations making it harder to plan the trip.

Kcon, a Kpop convention event held in L.A., has also been around for over 10 years. It is advertised as a fan event with trivia games, raffles and dance competitions. All with a chance to meet idols or win exclusive merch and in rare cases even a chance to dance on the main stage at the end of the night with the idol group. This all sounds fun if you're a mega-fan or a dancer, but as a casual fan I would skip all of this.

Both of these events would have at one point been appealing to me, but looking at their 2026 lineups, they are full of artists I either don't listen to or wouldn't care to see live. Especially not for the asking price of \$92-\$662 for one day.

Let's say you do spend \$200 for one day to go, let's run through how your day would go.

Assuming you didn't drive there the day of, (only a crazy person would do that) traffic would still be hectic near the venue. Parking prices also spike during big events like these and good luck even finding a spot that's within walking distance. You'd have to wait in line to



Graphic of Rampage reporter Reoz Marquez listening to music with doodles leading to logos of their favorite tours/bands. Graphic made by Miley Araujo

get your ticket and bag checked, it doesn't matter if you arrived early, trust me.

I attended Kcon 2022 and I arrived around 9:45 a.m. and although I had a prepaid parking spot, which was \$45 by the way, the line to check in made it so I only got inside at 11:25 a.m. The whole reason I arrived so early was because there was an idol event I didn't want to miss and I ended up in the back with a horrible view. If you want merch you should line up immediately, they will run out of the hoodie you had your eyes on, but sometimes even that's not enough.

I went to see The Boyz, a Kpop group, in September 2025. I arrived at 3 p.m, five hours before the concert began just so I could line up early to get merch. I was the

only general admission person there at the time because the venue let VIP tickets in at 4p.m. So although I was first in line for general admission when doors finally opened, VIP sold out the only merch item I wanted. How is that fair?

After that you will probably wander around the venue aimlessly for approximately another two hours before the show. By now your feet are starting to burn.

The time of the show arrives and you have to squeeze in between strangers legs to get to your seat, your feet finally catch a break as you sit down. Lights turn off and the show begins, the speaker music blares popping your ears. The people sitting in front of you stand up as the opening artist comes out and your entire view is blocked. Now you have to stand for the whole show if you want to see anything.

Hopefully there's no bar at the venue, the people in front of you may

have a little too much to drink and vomit causing security to escort three whole rows to new seats, kind of like what happened to me when I saw Peso Pluma in September 2024. The smell lingered and I am severely emetophobic (intense fear and anxiety of vomit) so I can safely say I didn't enjoy the show after that.

After the show, your feet are throbbing, your throat is on fire from singing along, you are beyond exhausted and all you want to do is go home. Then you remember you parked three streets away for the cheapest parking price and you also drove there day of to save on a hotel.

Next time I'll just listen to my favorite songs on Spotify.

CINEMA COMPARISONS: WHO SHOULD GET YOUR MONEY

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In times like these citizens are looking for outlets to take their mind off of issues around the world. But are the price of movie tickets alone, along with the quality of movies being produced, worth it?

The big three movie theater companies in the Central Valley are Regal Cinemas, Maya Cinemas and Santa Rosa Cinemas who own Sierra Vista Cinemas 16 in Clovis. Regal has a major clutch on the movie industry in the Central Valley with three theaters in Fresno alone.

But which of these major theater chains gives you the Best Bang for Your Buck? Which offers the cheapest tickets and which offer the cheapest concessions?

The first theater I looked at was Regal. If you wanted to go see a movie like "The Super Mario Galaxy" you'd be paying \$14.99 for an adult ticket or \$13.99 for a child or senior ticket. There is also a \$2.00 added fee, according to the online website.

The price seems to have increased. For the Regal in Marketplace, it's \$17.49 + tax for an adult ticket, \$14.99 + tax for a child ticket and \$15.99 + tax for a senior ticket. The kicker is that the other two Regal's see an even higher price. \$18.49 + tax for an adult ticket, \$15.99 + tax for a child ticket and \$16.49 + tax for a senior ticket.

Out of curiosity, I wanted to look at a morning showing of the same movie, and that was the same price as the afternoon showing.

Next, I decided to take a look at Maya to see how it compares to Regal with the same movie at the same times. At Maya at 2 p.m. for the showing of the "Super Mario Galaxy" movie, an adult ticket is \$10.00 and a child and senior ticket is \$9.50 each.

For an 8 p.m. showing, the prices increase. An adult ticket is \$12.75 and child and senior tickets stay the same at \$9.50. Maya sees a \$2.75 increase for adult tickets, compared to Regal's \$2.50 increase.

While Maya has a higher pricing curve than Regal, the tickets are still much cheaper than what Regal is offering.

But how do they both stack up against Sierra Vista Cinemas? For the same 2 p.m. showing at Sierra Vista it is \$14.25 + \$1.75 tax and \$14.00 + \$1.75 tax for child and senior tickets. For a 9 p.m. showing it is \$13.75 + tax for an adult ticket, \$12.00 + tax for student and military tickets and \$10.50 for child and senior tickets.

I think it's very interesting that Sierra Vista is the first theater where the prices actually see a decrease as the day goes on. It's also interesting that it's the first theater which offers student and military tickets.

So as far as it goes for tickets, Maya wins in terms of general pricing, for both movies during the day and at night.

Concession Price Comparison

Great, now you've got your tickets and you're set right? But what is a good movie without getting a concession from the stand, what about popcorn with a drink or a snack?

According to Cinemark Theatres in 2022, the most popular movie theater snack was peanut M&M's. How much does a popcorn, drink and Peanut M&M's cost at each theater?

At Regal a small popcorn sells for \$10.49, a medium for \$11.49 and a large for \$12.49. A small drink costs \$8.49, a medium \$8.99 and a large \$9.49. Finally Peanut M&M's sell for \$6.49. If you were to get a large popcorn and drink with Peanut M&M's your total would be \$28.47.

At Maya a small popcorn costs \$8.50, a medium \$9.50 and a large \$10.50. Their drinks cost \$8.00 for a medium and \$8.50 for a large. If you were to also get Peanut M&M's alongside that costs \$6.00. Overall, your total would come out to \$25.00 exactly.

At Sierra Vista a small popcorn costs \$9.75, a medium for \$10.75 and a large for \$12.00. A small drink costs \$7.50, a medium \$8.50 and a large for \$9.50. Finally Peanut M&M's cost \$6.50. If you were to get a large popcorn and drink with Peanut M&M's your total would be \$28.00 exactly.

As far as prices on concessions go, Maya once again wins in that category. If you were to buy one ticket for a 2 p.m. showing, as well as popcorn and soda with Peanut M&M's your total cost would be \$35.00 exactly.

If you were to watch an 8 p.m. showing, your total would be \$37.25.

I think this is a fair price, especially in this economy and certainly the cheapest out of the three movie theaters being compared.

Membership Perks Between Theaters

Regal's membership program is called "Regal Unlimited." This membership offers three contract lengths, a 3 month subscription which is \$77.97 + tax. A six month subscription which costs \$155.94 + tax and a 12 month contract is \$311.88 + tax.

The Regal website also says that your tier is determined by the price at your primary theater. A theater in a higher tier will have you pay a surcharge of

\$1.50 to \$3.00 per ticket.

Regal also offers discounted movie tickets for members on Tuesdays, prices vary between locations. At the Regal in Marketplace tickets cost \$6.99, and at both the River Park and Manchester locations they cost \$7.99.

The perks with Regal Unlimited allows you to see any movie at any time, 10% off of all food and drinks, a free large popcorn and drink on your birthday, early access to new movies and opportunities to bring a friend for free to select showings.

Maya offers a free program called the "Maya Rewards Membership." It allows you to earn one point for every dollar spent. These points can be used to spend on tickets and concessions. You also get a free birthday ticket every year, no ticket fees on the Maya Cinemas website and app when you are a gold or platinum member. Special email offers are also a part of the program.

Sierra Vista offers a program called "Encore Movie Rewards." This program seems to only give members points to spend on tickets and concessions and just like Maya, rewards one point for each dollar spent at the ticket office and concession stand

Overall, when considering the categories discussed above, the theater that is the most worth your money is Maya Cinemas. Maya offers the cheapest tickets and concessions while also having a good rewards program.

While there may be other factors that can go into determining the best theater i.e., theater comfortability, distance and handicapped accessibility, Maya has all the other theaters beat in pricing and membership perks.



Photo of Regal Cinemas 16 on E Shields Avenue from the parking lot on April 8. Photo by Donovan Rivas.