

The Texas superfan who's been coming to the Golden Globes for nearly 30 years, and paying A LOT for access

January 8, 2017
By Jen Yamamoto



(Allen J. Schaben / Los Angeles Times)

For Ruth Turpin of Fort Worth, Golden Globes day is the highlight of the year. The 76-year-old travel agency owner proudly claims the title of the "oldest living Golden Globes superfan." She is a 28-year fixture on the red carpet bleachers at the glitzy show where hardcore Globes-watchers shell out as much as \$4,800 to glimpse Hollywood's most glamorous celebrities make their way into the Beverly Hilton.

Turpin was staying at the hotel on business in 1989 when she first noticed a flurry of preparations. "Back then, the Golden Globes were nothing," she told the Los Angeles Times on Friday from a suite at the hotel. "It was a so-so awards show that nobody paid attention to. But I thought, 'Since I'm here, I'll go downstairs and see if I can see anybody come and go.'"

That first year, Turpin says, "was amazing."

Long before the strict security protocols had the entire Beverly Hilton compound locked down for the entire week of the Globes, regular hotel guests could mosey around the awards shindig and

gawk at Tinseltown's finest. "I saw Kevin Costner and I saw John Travolta and I saw all these people that, your whole lives, you're thinking, 'Oh!' And it was just like a free show."

As the Hollywood Foreign Press Assn.'s annual dinner grew and added a lucrative broadcast deal, the ecosystem surrounding the Beverly Hilton swelled.

Organizers added more security as well as bleachers along the red carpet where fans could sit and celeb-watch for \$100 a pop – chump change compared with the pricey package deals they offer now.

Starting at \$3,220 for a two-night stay for two at the hotel, dinner at Circa 55, luxury gift bags and other assorted swag, the fan packages get costlier the closer the seats are to the action.

Turpin has staked out the middle of the front row every year for nearly three decades. Over the years, returning superfans have struck lasting friendships, keeping in touch via email and coordinating their annual pilgrimage to the Hilton. Like many other Globe regulars, she leaves her husband at home.

"My husband would have absolutely no interest in sitting in some bleachers for three hours watching anybody go by," she laughed. "Doesn't matter if it's Angelina Jolie."

Turpin remembers witnessing Jolie's infamous post-win leap into the Beverly Hilton pool in 1999, and still counts George Clooney (in his "ER" days) as her favorite Golden Globe celebrity. "He comes and talks to you and asks, 'Where are y'all from,' and 'What in the world are you doing sitting in these bleachers and why would you want to do that?'" Turpin chuckled. "You know, he's really, really nice."

Turpin is mostly content to see her favorite celebrities in the flesh, take photos, and celebrate the ritzy evening. She's not one for selfies since they don't favor the short-limbed. But occasionally, she will indulge – like the time Gerard Butler grabbed her phone and took it himself: "Best selfie I've ever had!"

She's already planning for next year, and the year after that, and the year after that. "As long as my health will let me, I have no plans to stop," she said. "And my health is pretty good."