

SUMMER FESTIVAL GUIDE

Fans can look forward to a steaming-hot, action-packed season of music in the sun

By Chris Neal

The Flaming Lips at the Bonnaroo Music & Arts Festival, Manchester, Tenn., 2010

Scientists will try to tell you that summer begins with the solstice—the moment when the earth is tilting its farthest toward the sun, an event that this year is set to occur on June 21. But music fans know better: Summer begins when festival season heats up. It's a chance to get out of the house, soak up some rays and enjoy your favorite acts in one long, sunshine-soaked listening binge.

Just as they have for the last several years, this season will be dominated by “destination festivals”—events happening at one location. The sheer number of festivals has never been greater, not least because multi-artist bills offer consumers more bang for their buck in a trying economic climate. So it's no surprise that while summer is still weeks away, the festival season is in full gear already. Here's a look at some of this year's biggest and most buzz-worthy events.

BONNAROO

June 9-12, Manchester, Tenn.

Top acts: Eminem, Arcade Fire, Widespread Panic, Buffalo Springfield

Tickets: Sold out

BONNAROO.COM

The venerable Bonnaroo festival celebrates its 10th anniversary this year by offering more than 125 bands and over 20 comedians performing on 13 stages during its four days. Among this year's highlights is a performance from the newly reunited Buffalo Springfield, one of just a handful of dates the group plans to play this year. Dr. John and the Original Meters will play his 1974 *Desitively Bonnaroo* album, from which the festival borrowed its name, in its entirety.

LOLLAPALOOZA

August 5-7, Chicago

Top acts: Foo Fighters, Coldplay, My Morning Jacket, Muse

Tickets: \$215 for a three-day pass

LOLLAPALOOZA.COM

The alt-rock stalwart celebrates its 20th anniversary this year, although this is only the 15th festival in its history. Wait, what? The first iteration of Lollapalooza was as a touring festival that ran from 1991 to 1997 and picked up again in 2003. It was successfully reinvented as a destination festival in 2005 at Chicago's Grant Park, where it remains. Lollapalooza has lately expanded overseas, including a recent edition held in Santiago, Chile.

OUTSIDE LANDS FESTIVAL

August 12-14, San Francisco

Top acts: Phish, the Black Keys, the Roots, MGMT

Tickets: \$199.50 for a three-day pass

SFOUTSIDELANDS.COM

The fourth annual Outside Lands shindig will be held in Golden Gate Park, with some ticket proceeds going to the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department. Other artists scheduled to perform include Arcade Fire, the Shins, John Fogerty and Arctic Monkeys (Phish phans can expect a double dose, as the group will play two sets). In addition to the dozens of musical acts, attendees can sample the wares of more than 20 restaurants and 20 wineries.

WARPED TOUR

June 24 - Aug. 14

Top acts: 3OH!3, A Day to Remember, Travie McCoy, The Devil Wears Prada

Tickets: Various prices

VANSWARPEDTOUR.COM

The skater-friendly Vans Warped Tour is still going strong after 16

years, the only 1990s-vintage traveling festival left standing after shows like Lilith Fair, H.O.R.D.E. and Lollapalooza (in its mobile incarnation, at least) are long gone. Seven of the 44 planned shows will also include Paramore on the bill.

AUSTIN CITY LIMITS MUSIC FESTIVAL

Sept. 16-18, Austin

Top acts: Stevie Wonder, Arcade Fire, Coldplay, Kanye West

Tickets: \$90 for single-day pass

ACLFESTIVAL.COM

More than 100 acts will take the stage at Austin's Zilker Park for the 10th annual Austin City Limits (ACL) Festival, including Bright Eyes, Cee Lo Green, TV on the Radio, Big Boi, Santigold and many others. Four acts that played the first-ever ACL affair nine years ago will return: Asleep at the Wheel, Jack Ingram, Patrice Pike and Gary Clark Jr.



Gogol Bordello at the Outside Lands Music & Arts Festival, San Francisco, 2010

NEWPORT FOLK FESTIVAL

July 30 and 31, Newport, R.I.

Top Acts: The Decemberists, Elvis Costello, Emmylou Harris, Tegan & Sara

Tickets: \$69 for adults, \$15 for children, \$125 for a two-day pass

NEWPORTFOLKFEST.NET

This year marks the 52nd edition of the beloved festival, which offers a typically diverse bill. “The goal, as always, is to serve the festival's musical heritage, which to me is paying respect to older groundbreakers while championing young chance-takers,” says co-producer Jay Sweet. “This is Newport's blueprint. Folk music is, and will always be, a living tradition, constantly evolving. As long as we stay true to this simple credo, we'll be around another half century and beyond.”

GATHERING OF THE VIBES

July 21-24, Bridgeport, Conn.

Top acts: Jane's Addiction, Furthur featuring Phil Lesh and Bob Weir, moe., the Levon Helm Band**Tickets:** Start at \$125 per day

GATHERINGOFTHEVIBES.COM

The more than 40 acts making up the lineup for the 16th annual Gathering of the Vibes, held at Seaside Park, is heavy on jam bands, but makes room for alt-rock, reggae and other styles. Deadheads in particular may rejoice: In addition to Dead alums Lesh and Weir, the Rhythm Devils' Mickey Hart and Bill Kreutzmann will make an appearance, as will the Dead tribute act Dark Star Orchestra.

**PITCHFORK MUSIC FESTIVAL**

July 15-17, Chicago

Top acts: Animal Collective, Neko Case, Guided by Voices, Thurston Moore**Tickets:** \$45 per day

PITCHFORKMUSICFESTIVAL.COM

The three-day Pitchfork festival focuses on indie-rock acts, and its 2011 lineup features Fleet Foxes, DJ Shadow, Battles and many others. More than 50,000 fans typically attend the three-day blowout, hailing from more than two dozen countries. The event was founded in 2006 by the cutting-edge music website pitchfork.com.

ESSENCE MUSIC FESTIVAL

July 1-3, New Orleans

Top acts: Kanye West, Mary J. Blige, Usher, New Edition**Tickets:** \$50-\$240 each day

ESSENCEMUSICFESTIVAL.COM

Perhaps the most anticipated act at this year's Essence Music Festival is the return of newly reunited R&B supergroup New Edition, set to celebrate its 30th anniversary by taking the stage on the event's third day. Jill Scott, Chaka Khan, El DeBarge, Charlie Wilson, Jennifer Hudson, Fantasia, Boyz II Men, New Edition, Trey Songz, Kem and others are also scheduled to perform.

CMA MUSIC FESTIVAL

June 9-12, Nashville

Top acts: Keith Urban, Brad Paisley, Sugarland, Lady Antebellum**Tickets:** \$35-\$45 per day, four-day passes for \$115-\$325

CMAMUSICFESTIVAL.COM

This year's headline shows at the CMA Music Festival will feature several guest performers in addition to the lineup of country hitmakers: Kelly Clarkson will join Jason Aldean to sing their hit "Don't You Wanna Stay," while Alan Jackson will sit in with the Zac Brown Band for their song "As She's Walking Away." Nashville resident Sheryl Crow will play a set, as will country stars like Blake Shelton, Trace Adkins, Rascal Flatts, Sara Evans and Miranda Lambert.

**ROAD RUNNERS**

While destination festivals have been all the rage for the last few years, there are still a few traveling shows out there.

BONNAROO BUZZ TOUR

May 17 - June 9

Top acts: Grace Potter & the Nocturnals, Futurebirds, Gary Clark Jr.

BONNAROO.COM/BUZZTOUR

IDENTITY

Aug. 11 - Sept. 10

Top acts: DJ Shadow, Steve Aoki, Pete Tong, the Crystal Method

IDFESTIVAL.COM

ROCK THE BELLS

Aug. 20 - Sept. 10

Top acts: Lauryn Hill, Nas, Erykah Badu, Cypress Hill

ROCKTHEBELLS.NET

ELECTRIC FOREST

June 30 - July 3, Rothbury, Mich.

Top acts: String Cheese Incident, DJ Tiësto, REO Speedwagon, Guided by Voices**Tickets:** \$239.50 for a four-day pass

ELECTRICFORESTFESTIVAL.COM

The inaugural edition of Electric Forest will be held at the Double JJ Resort in Rothbury, which boasts trails, forests, fields, lakes and beachfronts, and even a 60,000-square-foot indoor water park. "We've always tried to honor our many musical influences, both individually and collectively, and do it in the most celebratory way," says String Cheese Incident bass player Keith Moseley. "This festival definitely feels like the ultimate manifestation of all that energy, and the location, well, you just can't beat it."

**SUNSET STRIP MUSIC FESTIVAL**

August 18-20, West Hollywood

Top acts: Mötley Crüe, The Doors' Ray Manzarek & Robby Krieger, Buckcherry**Tickets:** \$250 for a three-day pass

SUNSETSTRIPMUSICFESTIVAL.COM

Hard-rock mainstays Mötley Crüe got their start in the Sunset Strip music scene, so it's apt that they're now the official honorees for the fourth annual Sunset Strip Music Festival. An award ceremony will kick off the three-day event. "It means a lot to us that we are recognized for our contribution to this historic place," says drummer Tommy Lee. The group will also be given its own special day by the city of West Hollywood. The event itself will offer musical performances across six venues, concluding with a street festival on August 20.

4KNOTS MUSIC FESTIVAL

July 16, New York City

Top acts: Ted Leo and the Pharmacists, the Black Angels, Davila 666, Oberhofer**Tickets:** Free

VILLAGEVOICE.COM/4KNOTS

The first-ever 4Knots festival will be held at the South Street Seaport in New York. The event replaces the Siren Music Festival at Coney Island, which was also produced by the *Village Voice* newspaper. "Music fans from all five boroughs and all over the world have circled the date of our summer music event on their calendars each year," says *Village Voice* publisher Josh Fromson. "We feel this new festival will not just live up to the glory of our past events, but will set the stage for continued success in the future." **M**

ALSO...**KERRVILLE FOLK FESTIVAL**

May 26 - June 12, Kerrville, Texas

Top acts: Asleep at the Wheel, Randy Rogers and Wade Bowen, Marcia Ball, Butch Hancock, Judy Collins

KERRVILLE-MUSIC.COM

CHAOS IN TEJAS

June 2-5, Austin

Top acts: Killing Joke, Autopsy, Youth of Today, Converge

CHAOSINTEJAS.COM

MILWAUKEE SUMMERFEST

June 29 - July 3, July 5-10, Milwaukee, Wis.

Top acts: Britney Spears, Kid Rock, Def Leppard, Katy Perry

SUMMERFEST.COM

VANCOUVER ISLAND MUSICFEST

July 8-10, Vancouver Island, B.C.

Top acts: Alison Krauss and Union Station, David Crosby, Randy Newman, Rodney Crowell

ISLANDMUSICFEST.COM

L.A. RISING

July 30, Los Angeles

Top acts: Rage Against the Machine, Muse, Rise Against, Lauryn Hill

FACEBOOK.COM/LARISING

MTS ROCK ON THE RANGE CANADA

Aug. 20, Winnipeg, Manitoba

Top acts: Alice in Chains, Evanescence, Sum 41, Five Finger Death Punch

MTSROCKONTHERANGE.CA

ELECTRIC ZOO 2011

Sept. 2-4, New York City

Top acts: David Guetta, Tiësto, Armin van Buuren

ELECTRICZOOFFESTIVAL.COM

DETROIT JAZZ FESTIVAL

Sept. 2-5, Detroit

Top acts: Kevin Eubanks, Regina Carter's Reverse Thread, Sammy Figueroa & the Latin Jazz Explosion, Dave Holland Octet

DETROITJAZZFEST.COM

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Stevie Wonder at Bonnaroo, 2010

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