

A YEAR IN festivals

Why not plan your next holiday with one of these adrenaline-pumping parties in mind? This round-up will have you upping your wifi connection for the pre-ticket hustle.



JANUARY BUGGED OUT WEEKENDER

WHERE: Butlins Bognor Regis resort, West Essex, UK
WHEN: January 15-17, 2016
WHY GO? What's the all-time best thing for Insta-bragging but the worst thing for actual life? Festival camping. It's fine until you have to use a pee funnel and then realise it was a really, really bad idea. Welcome to Bugged Out Weekender, where you can happily do your business in a toilet... your own even, thanks to the event being at a retro-esque resort. Lose your mind over the electro-dance acts, then go to a room with carpet and a shower so you don't feel like you've been at a *Walking Dead* convention. See Buggedoutweekender.net.



FEBRUARY SÓNAR REYKJAVIK

WHERE: Harpa, Reykjavik, Iceland
WHEN: February 18-20, 2016
WHY GO? Sónar is as much about the big, prestige acts (Skrillex headlined in 2015) as it is about the local music scene. Rooted in electro-house, the punters are a cool mix of people who know their acid house genre from their drill 'n' bass, to people who are just so stoked for the music, they all launch their pants in the air. Yeah, that's a bit of a thing in Harpa. Guess dub-step dancing really gets a person working up a sweat... See Sonarreykjavik.com.



MARCH LOLLAPALOOZA

WHERE: Santiago, Chile
WHEN: March 13-14, 2016
WHY GO? Combine Big Day Out's music evolution and Coachella's general vibe, and you've got a pretty good idea of what Lollapalooza is all about. It first started as a place for indie/alternative lovers but now it's a crowd-flockers arena. Chile's Lolla (as it's affectionately called) still has the thrilling buzz about it that you would expect from Santiago: electric. There's no space for nodding along on the spot to heavy bass. Here, you dance in the bar line and toilet line, and really feel the music. Which is what all festivals were made for, right? See Lollapaloozacl.com.



APRIL SNOWBOMBING

WHERE: Mayrhofen, Austria
WHEN: April 4-9, 2016
WHY GO? It's at the snow! Clearly some geniuses sat around a table and went, 'What are the two greatest things we can join together to amuse people?' And boom! A music festival in an alpine setting was born. It's not the only one of its kind in the world, but there's something more exciting about Snowbombing – most likely the line-up and crazy stages (forests, igloos, mountain-tops). This year had Fat Boy Slim, Rudimental and Basement Jaxx owning the speaker system. And even if music and snow aren't really your thing, it's like a fancy dress party. The festival encourages you to "pile down yer charity shop or get straight on eBay" for outfits of "frivolously fancy themes". See Snowbombing.com.



MAY MUTEK

WHERE: Museum of Contemporary Art, Montréal, Canada
WHEN: May 25-29, 2016 (TBC)
WHY GO? If you're an experimental-music buff who's confident in how to use the term 'avant-garde', this is definitely your spirit festival. Mutek is more high-brow than your average round-up, and be warned: it would stand out if you wore an Aussie flag cape. The not-for-profit event is a great hub of new, unique, techs-perimental sound and visual. Despite its fancy-pants approach to music, the point is to bring a different sound to the masses. High eyebrows and all, the huge crowd's arms are wide open for even the biggest pop music lovers among us. See Mutek.org.





JUNE ROSKILDE FESTIVAL

WHERE: Roskilde, Denmark

WHEN: June 25-July 2, 2016 (TBC)

WHY GO? 1) All profits go to an initiative benefiting children and young people in humanitarian and cultural work. Plus, you can also volunteer for it. 2) You'll love the tunes. Seriously, you could probably have The Wiggles on your playlist and you'd still find a Roskilde set to suit you.

It's hard to explain, except to give you 2015's host of acts and let you see for yourselves. This year featured stage-slaying sets from Kendrick Lamar, Muse, Pharrell Williams, Paul McCartney, Noel Gallagher's High Flying Birds, Florence + The Machine, Ryan Adams, Hot Chip and Nicki Minaj. See, we told you so. See Roskilde-festival.dk.

JULY TOMORROWLAND

WHERE: Boom, Belgium

WHEN: July 22-24, 2016 (TBC)

WHY GO? For one, it's in a place called Boom. This is no misleading mistake. And its over-the-top everything has been its legacy for 10 years. This year, they promised a more intense sensory experience, and delivered. The bigger acts, mega sound and about six zillion strobe lights remind you you aren't in Kansas anymore. It's a pretty magical experience, with a fantastical back story released as a short film to get you in the zone before you get in the gate. It's been likened to Alice in Wonderland, but with a better soundtrack. See Tomorrowland.com.



FESTIVAL KIT

Without a doubt a sign of the technological times we live in, these festi-cool bags nail practicality with their built-in phone chargers. Plus, these waterproof shoes were made for kicking it in the dust and/or mud.



Bags (left to right), \$129.95, 199.95, 164.95, Handbag Butler. Shoes, \$120, Converse.



AUGUST BURNING MAN

WHERE: Nevada, USA

WHEN: August 29-September 5, 2016 (TBC)

WHY GO? This desert fest is for the hippie at heart. If you're looking for an existential '60s-style experience, this week-long peace, love and light festival comes pretty close. There are cars jacked up to look like a cross between *Pimp My Ride* and your kid sister's shrine of stuffed animals, art installations you won't see in any local gallery and, of course, a giant man-statue made for the purpose of setting alight. It's a fantasy world in the middle of the desert, and not as intense as something from a *Mad Max* scene. Oh, and you can walk around naked. No judgement here. See Burningman.org.

FYF FESTIVAL

WHERE: Los Angeles, USA

WHEN: August 23-24, 2016 (TBC)

WHY GO? Born as a ramshackle punk festival in 2004, these days FYF achieves the festival golden mean, with a friendly, f*ck-it-and-just-have-fun vibe of a boutique event while packing star power akin to Coachella. And while Burning Man is about art and existentialism, FYF centres on the music. Every year has a line-up of massive and next-big-thing indie and alternative names gracing its five stages. If you want incredible music, great people, a beautiful weekend and a lot of laughs, this is the one. See Fyffest.com.



SEPTEMBER ROCK IN RIO

WHERE: Rio De Janeiro, Brazil

WHEN: September 18-27, 2015

WHY GO? Ever dreamt of shrinking yourself, sliding through your phone screen and living in the Spotify Hits playlist? Err, us too! Rock In Rio is essentially that, but way less science experiment-y. The best pop/pop-rock

musical acts past and present are also known as The Rock in Rio Line-up. If you lose your mind to the likes of Elton John, Rihanna, Sam Smith, System of a Down, Queen and Katy Perry (who will all grace this year's stage), book a ticket to Brazil, and hightail it to Rio stat. See Rockinrio.com.

OCTOBER ROCKING THE DAISIES

WHERE: Darling, South Africa

WHEN: October 1-4, 2015

WHY GO? Rocking The Daisies kick-starts the season of (and is one of the biggest) music festivals in Cape Town. It's in an awesome mountain location and has truly amazing food that's not semi-hot chips with tomato sauce or soggy gozleme (although, we're not knocking that). They're also known for having a huge-name artists. This year, Milky Chance, The Kooks, Aking and The Cat Empire will hit the main stage. Daisy chains optional. See Rockingthedaisies.com.



NOVEMBER STEREOSONIC

WHERE: Most capital cities, Australia
WHEN: November 28-December 6, 2015
WHY GO? OK, our work's just a little cut out for us here. Though Stereosonic has had its fair share of bad press (fights, mega douche-y guys, intense crowds, the need for a 'shirts-on' policy), there are some real reasons to actually make an appearance at this festival. They've gone back to basics with a one-day event instead of two days. This means they're cramming the best talent into each city's line-up. Organisers have also promised high-calibre acts – and they are making good on their word with this year's line-up, featuring Armin van Buuren, Peking Duk and Major Lazer. See Stereosonic.com.au.



DECEMBER SUNBURN FESTIVAL

WHERE: Goa, India

WHEN: December 27-30, 2015

WHY GO? You need to experience India in all its wonderful glory at least once in your life. So, why not tick it off the bucket list with the biggest music festival in Asia? India is known for its sensory overload and this is just an extension of that promise. The four-day electro-dance event is flooded with colour, music and exotic food. Also, don't let the name scare you. It's in December, which is their winter, so that makes it the best time of year to go: sunny, but not humid. That's a hair victory right there! See Sunburn.in.



WORDS: RIKKI HODGE-SMITH. ADDITIONAL WORDS: KARA BYERS. PHOTOGRAPHY: FACEBOOK; GETTY IMAGES; ALAMY; INSTAGRAM.