

## IN PERFECT HARMONY

Music festivals are a wonderful way to share your passion with fellow fans.

BY ALICE BRADLEY



**F**ew experiences compare to that of a music festival. Immersed in music you love, surrounded by like-minded fans, the experience can be almost ecstatic. Chip Conley, founder of Fest300 (a website celebrating the best festivals in the world), calls this feeling “collective effervescence.” “When you’re surrounded by people who are similarly experiencing communal joy over something they love,” he says, “your sense of separation seems to evaporate.”

No matter where you are in the world or what sort of music speaks to your soul, there’s a festival waiting for you. Here are some of the best for 2015.

### **Jakarta International Java Jazz Festival, Jakarta, Indonesia**

MARCH 6–8

The Java Jazz Festival was founded in 2005 with the intent to “bring the world to Indonesia.” And the world came. Past performers have included Natalie Cole, Jimmy Cliff, Pat Metheny,

Jamie Cullum and Allen Stone. Plenty of top-notch Indonesian musicians are on hand as well. “Jazz has become really popular in Indonesia,” observes Conley. The nation’s love of the genre is exemplified in performers such as Dwiki Dharmawan, B.L.P. and guitarist Yuri Jo, who mixes contemporary

jazz with experimental rock and Indonesian ethnic music.

[javajazzfestival.com](http://javajazzfestival.com)

### **Istanbul International Music Festival**

MAY–JUNE

According to Conley, Istanbul is “one of the hottest destinations in the world right now,” and if

you’re a lover of classical music, the Istanbul International Music Festival is a perfect marriage of music and location. Featuring a mix of European classical music, ballet, opera and traditional music, the Istanbul International Music Festival has attracted renowned conductors and performers from every part of the world since 1973. Most of the concerts take place in the Byzantine church of Hagia Eirene, which is famous for its extraordinary acoustics.

[muzik.iksv.org/en](http://muzik.iksv.org/en)

### **Electric Daisy Carnival, Las Vegas, NV**

JUNE 19–21

Get ready for a three-day sensory overload: The Electric Daisy Carnival at the Las Vegas Motor Speedway is a festival like no other. “It’s a raucous, wild affair,” says Conley. Sample the best in dance music, enjoy interactive art installations, fireworks and rides, and marvel at the costumed performers wading through the crowds. Want to look as fabulous as the dancers and stilt-walkers? Wear your own costume. (“Think grown-up candy raver,” advises



dumplings while you take in the beautiful surroundings and colorful Korean fashions. The festival runs shuttle buses directly from Seoul, so getting there couldn't be easier.

[fest300.com/festivals/ansan-valley-rock-festival](http://fest300.com/festivals/ansan-valley-rock-festival)

### Cambridge Folk Festival, Cambridge, England

JULY-AUGUST

According to Paul Myers, songwriter and music biographer, what sets the Cambridge Folk Festival apart is its "true folk spirit: It's about songs and songwriters, not glitz and glamour." Since its inception 50 years ago, thousands of fans have flocked every year to Cherry Hinton Hall and its verdant grounds. While Cambridge has no problem getting major names—Van Morrison and Roseanne Cash are recent headliners—organizers also work to bring emerging artists into the spotlight. (Attendees of Cambridge's inaugural festival, in 1965,

can brag that they saw Paul Simon before anyone knew who he was.) The festival is family-friendly, featuring a children's concert and activities such

this rock festival." Just in case your pulse dips to near normal between sets, visit the amusement park, featuring a zipline, turbo drop, roller coaster and



as instrument making and "face-painting fairies." [cambridgefolkfestival.co.uk](http://cambridgefolkfestival.co.uk)

### Rock in Rio: Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

SEPTEMBER 18-27

Rock in Rio is big. Really big. This gargantuan festival (held in what will be the 2016 Olympic Athlete's stadium) brought in almost half a billion U.S. dollars in 2013. And its reputation is as big as its size. Think of the most famous names in music: They've been there and probably will be again. Beyoncé? Check. Bruce Springsteen? Done it. Stevie Wonder, Justin Timberlake, Metallica, Bon Jovi? Yes, yes, yes and of course. "When you think of Rio, you think of samba and Carnival," says Conley, "and all of a sudden here's

climbing wall. Rock in Rio has taken on the world, with festivals in Lisbon and Madrid as well as Las Vegas, but it's returning to Rio in 2015. [rockinrio.com](http://rockinrio.com)



**LISTEN UP:** Opposite page, the Istanbul International Music Festival. This page, clockwise from top left: Folk music in Cambridge; the crowd at Rock in Rio; Ansan Valley Rock in South Korea; and the wild fun at Electric Daisy Carnival in Las Vegas.

Fest300.) But keep it skimpy: The heat of Vegas in June is as intense as the carnival itself.

[electricdaisycarnival.com](http://electricdaisycarnival.com)

### Ansan Valley Rock Festival, Ansan Valley, South Korea

JULY 26-28

Ansan Valley was canceled last year due to the tragic ferry accident in South Korea, but promises to return in 2015 better than

ever. "It's the best music festival in Korea," says Conley. "For someone who wants to understand Korean culture, this is a great opportunity." Nestled in a nature park on Daebu Island, Ansan Valley Rock Festival features international headliners such as The Cure, Vampire Weekend, and Skrillex alongside Korean pop (or K-pop) stars. Snack on barbecue beef skewers and



CLOCKWISE TOP LEFT: PHILIP RYALLS/GETTY IMAGES; BUDA MENDES/GETTY IMAGES; BEN WELLER; STEVEN LAWTON/GETTY IMAGES