



THE the NOISES

by Crystal Villarreal

T

he power of music permeates nearly every corner of the Golden State. Electric basses thump

from Los Angeles to San Francisco, from Napa Valley to Del Mar all the way to Sacramento. These cities are home to some of the country's biggest music festivals. The state hosts events for fans of everything from alternative to classic country, pop to indie greats.



A fan takes in a live performance at Coachella.

Photo by epicurean, iStockphoto.com

Coachella, Outside Lands, KABOO and Wanderlust are just a few popular festivals that people travel from all over the world to experience. A few others include the Monterey Jazz Festival, Bear Valley Music Festival, Hardly Strictly Bluegrass Festival, Stage Coach, Strawberry Music Festival, BottleRock Napa Valley and the San Francisco Jazz Fest. But it's not just the music — it's the scenery, the culture, the melting pot that is everything California that draws people to these events.

Let the Beat Drop

“California is home to more outdoor music festivals than any other place in the US,” says Brook Taylor, deputy director of communications, California Governor’s Office of Business and Economic Development. “What we find is that these music festivals are catalysts for international travel. People come from all over the world go to these music festivals to experience California culture and art and music.”

Every April Coachella dominates Twitter and news headlines, exploding into one of the country’s biggest music events. The two-weekend festival is a household name and has come to describe a culture, rather than just an event. The festival features a skating rink, general store, hands-on art studios and even a farmers market, furthering the hipster vibe. During the two-weekend extravaganza, the festival’s campgrounds serve as instant villages.

The state’s popular string festival, Bear Valley Music, is located between Lake Tahoe and Yosemite. Launched in 1967, this festival features a full symphony orchestra, soloists, and music styles from classic to contemporary. BottleRock Napa Valley doubles as a culinary event, where local food and wine takes the stage. In regards to the location, there are plenty of high-end wines and craft brews to choose from, and the food is something you will want to experience.

In August, Outside Lands dominates San Francisco. Rock royalty turns out and shows up in the city that is home to flower children and the summer of love. Fans attend a three-day event with great musicians including Phish, Arcade Fire and Kings of Leon. And most of California’s

festivals aren’t offering the traditional fare. Quite a few are boasting food trucks, wine tastings and pop-up restaurants.

“Culture is a huge part of not only contributing to tourism and music festivals, but the culture also attracts the best and the brightest to come and work here for the innovative companies that live here,” says Taylor. “California has always maintained an open mind in terms of welcoming people from other countries and other places in the world.”

Homegrown

One of the state’s newest festivals, TBD Music Festival in Sacramento, was co-founded by Clay Nutting. The boutique festival began as a one-day hotel party called Launch in 2008. “At TBD you can catch some of the biggest names on the festival circuit — like Chance the Rapper, Porter Robinson, Madeon and Pretty Lights — without having line-up overlap or fighting an enormous crowd to catch a glimpse of your favorite artist,” says Nutting. “This year 20 percent of our audience was from outside California, up from 12 percent in 2014, and with attendance up 34 percent in that time frame as well.”

Homegrown in Sacramento, Nutting describes the tiresome trek of hundreds of miles you used to have to make to see great festival-caliber music. Sacramento is the sixth-largest city in California. The arts, music and restaurant scene is vibrant, and its central location in Northern California made it very appealing.

The event has grown over the last seven years. In 2014, Nutting and his colleagues rebranded TBD Fest and took the next step in talent, production and marketing.

“I think on one hand it was a community effort, so many people have rallied for this festival to exist,” says Nutting. “The creative community in Sacramento has wanted a platform like this to showcase the talent and vibrancy in our region. And once we built the festival to become more than a regional event, and people from around California and around

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the world started coming to TBD, the feedback that we would hear, time and time again, was how the creative community in Sacramento really shines through the festival.”

“What we find is that not only do these festivals create economic opportunity, they serve as a significant tourism driver and create future opportunities when people visit California,” says Taylor. “We find that quite often they end up returning, they move here and open up businesses, and it has a trickle-down effect that has lasting effects on our economy.” 🐘