

## Destination Festival: 5 Weekend Music Fests to Rock With Kids - ParentMap

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TRAVEL | OUTINGS + ACTIVITIES | ARTS

## Destination Festival: 5 Weekend Music Fests to Rock With Kids

For many people, summer means music festival season. But if you have small kids, Coachella is probably not in the cards. That doesn't mean you have to give up summer road trips capped with camping and great music. Up and down the west coast, summertime is filled with destination festivals where families are not just tolerated, but welcomed. There is a family-friendly festival to match every musical taste. Here are a few to pin to your calendar for this year.

### Darrington Bluegrass Festival



Courtesy of Darrington Bluegrass Festival

**July 18-20**

**Darrington, Washington**

Kids and bluegrass are a natural fit. The music is not too loud (although ear protection is always advisable) and the atmosphere is laid back and participatory. Featured performers at this year's festival, set in the stunning foothills of the North Cascades, include Joe Mullins & the Radio Ramblers; Audie Blaylock & Redline; and Lorraine Jordan & Carolina Road. Guests are encouraged to jam in the campground and a special class for kids aged 6 to 18 will culminate in the performance of a full 45-minute set of music.

Camping (no RV hookups), hiking, and river swimming are part of the experience. Tickets must be mail-ordered and paid by check, or purchased in cash at the gate. Prices go up as the date approaches but children 12 and under are always free.

- **Kids will love:** Learning how to play an instrument and performing on the same stage as the grown-up musicians. Parents will love the view of Whitehorse Mountain.
- **Insider tip:** The campground is open for the entire week before the festival. Come early and join in the jams or just kick back and listen.

### Vancouver Folk Music Festival



Courtesy of Vancouver Folk Festival

**July 18-20**

**Jericho Beach Park, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada**

The fun of the Vancouver Folk Festival starts with its setting in one of the loveliest beach parks of the Northwest's most cosmopolitan city. Then, there's the music. Vancouver Folk Fest is centered on folk music – Joan Baez will headline this year – but with more than 60 acts over two days and three nights, it's an opportunity for discovery. Afrobeat, klezmer, Québécois, indigenous traditions and myriad fusion experiments are on offer.

As far as accommodations, Jericho Beach Park does not allow onsite camping, but there are numerous hotel and camping options in the city, and the park is served by public transit. The Little Folks Village will offer crafts and activities, including hooping lessons and water play. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Tickets can be purchased online, and prices go up as the festival approaches. Kids 12 and under are admitted to the festival free.

- **Kids will love:** Stiltwalking workshops in the Little Folks Village.
- **Insider tip:** The official hotel for the Vancouver Folk Music Festival is the [Sandman Hotel](#) Vancouver City Centre (180 West Georgia). They offer special rates for Festival audiences (rooms from \$119CD).

### Oregon Jamboree



Joan Baez; courtesy of Vancouver Folk Festival



Courtesy of Oregon Jamboree

**August 1-3  
Sweet Home, Oregon**

If you like both kinds of music (ahem, country and western), the Oregon Jamboree is your festival. This year's performers include Miranda Lambert, Tim McGraw, Billy Currington and Jake Owen. There is already a waitlist for RV and tent campsites for 2014, but partner hotels in Eugene offer a special Jamboree rate upon request at the time of booking.

In the general admission area children 6 and under are free; children 7 to 12 years old require a \$35 child's ticket. Everyone over the age of one must have a Reserved Seating ticket and wristband to access the reserved seating area. No outside food or drink (except baby food) is allowed on the festival grounds, so be sure to eat at the camp or budget accordingly.

- **Kids will love:** The historic covered bridge and all-ages activities at Sankey Park.
- **Insider tip:** All food and beverage purchases are made with scrip tickets purchased inside the concert grounds.

Pickathon



Courtesy of Pickathon

**August 1-3  
Happy Valley, Oregon**

Pickathon's independent music festival, with six performance spaces scattered throughout a wooded farm, is legendary for its effort to eliminate the usual festival hassles. A strong environmental ethic means the festival is free of plastic and disposables, and offers shuttles to the nearest hotels and the nearest light rail station for campers and commuters throughout the event. **"Allowing families to thrive" is one of its mission statements.** A family program includes a full schedule of summer camp-type activities, performances are broadcast over the radio for parents to listen to once kids are tucked into sleeping bags in the campground, and children under 12 are free. The lineup emphasizes indie rock, but soul, hip-hop and folk are represented as well.

- **Kids will love:** Watching (or joining) the Kids' Open Mic on Friday in the Workshop Barn.
- **Insider tip:** Enjoy the horses and farm pets, but please don't feed them treats. They are already well-fed.

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*And for next year ...*

Sierra Nevada World Music Festival

June, 2015

Boonville, California

This year's fest has passed, but mark your calendar for next year: Sierra Nevada World Music Festival is three days of roots, reggae and world music on the Mendocino County Fairgrounds. Featuring artists like Clinton Fearon, Ozomati, Seun Kuti and Shaggy, the festival has an international emphasis in its marketplace and food vendor offerings. Special activities for kids include a daily parade, bouncy house, giant puppets, and drumming workshops. Other activities, such as yoga, hula hoops and a mini-pow wow are intended for all ages. Children 12 and under are admitted free. Onsite RV camping is sold out, but car camping is still available. Other campgrounds are located nearby. Campers are encouraged to bring water bottles and utensils into the festival to minimize waste.

- **Kids will love:** Dressing up in costumes provided by Land of Merriment in the Kids' Zone.

- **Insider tip:** Although shops and restaurants are located nearby, there is no in-and-out privilege for vehicles at the camping area. Consider alternative camping arrangements at the nearby Anderson Brewing Company, where Thursday night is free with purchase of a 3-day festival campsite.