

Lollapalooza

Chicago, Grant Park
Aug. 3-5
\$195 a ticket
For more details,
www.lollapalooza.com.

Rock on the Range

Columbus, Crew Stadium
May 19
Tickets are \$49.50
For more information:
www.rockontherange.com

Bonnaroo

Manchester, Tenn., an hour south of Nashville; June 14-17
\$214.50 for tickets, includes camping fee and four-day pass. For more details:
www.bonnaroo.com

Pitchfork Music Festival

Chicago, Union Park; July 13-15
Tickets are a bargain, \$35 for Saturday and Sunday, \$50 for all three days; For more details:
www.pitchforkmusicfestival.com

Crossroads Guitar Festival

Chicago, Toyota Park (on the south side); July 28
Tickets are \$90.
For more details:
www.ticketmaster.com

GENERAL INFO.

SELECTED LINE-UP

More than 100 bands, including the Stooges, Pearl Jam, Ben Harper, Interpol, Snow Patrol, My Morning Jacket, Lupe Fiasco, LCD Soundsystem, TV on the Radio, Modest Mouse, Yo La Tengo, Amy Winehouse, Patti Smith, The Roots, and Daft Punk.

ZZ Top, Velvet Revolver, Puddle of Mudd, Evanescence, Hinder, Breaking Benjamin, Papa Roach, and Buckcherry.

About 100 bands, including the Decemberists, the Police, the White Stripes, the Roots, Tool, Widespread Panic, Richard Thompson, Ralph Stanley, Mavis Staples, Franz Ferdinand, Ornette Coleman, Gov't Mule, the Flaming Lips, and DJ Shadow.

At least 46 bands, including Cat Power, The New Pornographers, De La Soul, Grizzly Bear, Of Montreal, Sonic Youth, Clipse, Iron and Wine, Girl Talk, and Stephen Malkmus, and Yoko Ono.

Eric Clapton, Jeff Beck, Robert Cray, Sheryl Crow, Vince Gill, Buddy Guy, Los Lobos, John Mayer, Alison Krauss, Willie Nelson, and Steve Winwood.

GENERAL VIBE

Teenagers, hipsters, college students, thirtysomethings with their kids, and the downtown setting and a slightly-older leaning band line-up ensuring a fair share of well-to-do aficionados.

Break out the leopard-print Lycra. A tattoo convention. Tailgating in the parking lot, tons of bandanas, and refugees from the '80s hair-metal scene. A modern hard rock OzzFest without the Ozz or the tradition. (WHOOO!)

In keeping with Bonnaroo's jam-band roots, expect a fair amount of hippies born in 1986, and a fair sampling of the real thing. Big-name additions in recent years (last year's headliner was Radiohead) and a wise appreciation for iconoclastic legends (note Ornette Coleman) have changed the mix to more general music obsessives and a hip-family-with-an-RV demo.

Hipper than thou, young-ish, lots of young men with lots of patience who love their record collections more than their parents — and thrilling if you want a bead on acts that everyone else will be listening to in a couple of years. (Last year's festival, a mix of old indie favorites and new, included Tapes N' Tapes, Spoon, Mission of Burma, and Mr. Lif.)

The gray pony-tail brigade; fortysomethings (and older) busing in from the suburbs with their kids and their sunscreen; a handful of Mayer fans and more corporate sponsorship than a NASCAR championship (not that other festivals are immune to it). If the last CD you bought is Norah Jones, you must be here.

REASON TO GO

It's a sprawling, surprisingly thoughtful representative assortment of **what the iPod generation is listening to in 2007**, with a dose of history.

You still listen to rock radio, you can't get excited by the other festivals, and you can tell the difference between these acts. But no, seriously, ZZ Top aside, here's **a deceptively ambitious attempt at defining what mainstream heavy metal sounds like in 2007.**

If you have the money and the time (and the air mattress), it's a bona fide happening. For maximum results, don't shower. Without a city to lure you away, the focus is on the music and the art. **With a shrewd mix of country and jazz and hard rock, the idea is to encourage discoveries.** (Incidentally, with the music industry more decentralized and singles-based than it's been since the '60s, discovery is the reason so many acts hit these festivals.)

A weekend here is equivalent to a couple of months worth of club shows — and in Toledo, a dozen tanks worth of gas for the drive to St. Andrews Hall in Detroit. Pitchfork, as with many of these festivals, is a far more engaging way of planning your CD buying than surfing iTunes.

Guitar solos don't bore you. Records made before 1975 make you nervous — and you still call them records. That said, Clapton is never looser than at a festival, and for \$90, you could tune out every single indulgent faux-blues number and still get your money's worth off Alison Krauss, Los Lobos, Buddy Guy, B.B. King, Albert Lee, and Willie Nelson.