

THE INSIDER GUIDE TO FOREIGN FESTIVALS

Forget wellies – all you need for this summer's best live music is a passport, says Leonie Cooper

With seemingly any tuft of grass in the UK now being sized up as a site for a festival, this could be the year to try an overseas event. Not only do they boast some of the finest acts, but you will also avoid knee-deep mud and trench foot. We've got the lowdown on four of the planet's best bashes, from who's playing to the expert tips on how best to enjoy the experience.

THE CLASSY CLUBBER'S RETREAT

Where The Garden Festival (Thegardenfestival.eu); Petrcane, Croatia; 2-11 July.

Best for Clubbers who've seen and done Ibiza and are looking for a more intimate and urbane alternative. The festival has more than found its feet, despite only being five years old. There's extra added fun to be found with the Argonaughty boat bashes (pictured right) and after-parties at kitsch club Barbarella's Discotheque, which go on until sunrise.

Who's playing Filthy Dukes, Terry Farley, Horse Meat Disco, Mr Scruff.

Insider tip Go to both weekends of the festival, but spend the weekdays in-between exploring this Croatian paradise. Take a ferry out to the stunning Kornati Islands, then wind down by the beaches and lakes of Dugi Otok before eating some of the finest seafood in the world.

Price £130

THE HOLLYWOOD HANGOUT

Where Coachella (Coachella.com); Empire Polo Club, Indio, California; 16-18 April.

Best for Mud-shy party people. Held on a lush polo field in a desert valley (pictured inset), it attracts West Coast revellers seeking sunshine soundtracked by crowd-pleasing indie and chart champions. The small site means it's easy to stroll between stages and you can camp but, considering the sizzling temperatures, it's not advised. Play safe and get a hotel.

Who's playing Jay-Z, Vampire Weekend, MGMT, The Specials.

Insider tip Drinking in front of the stages is prohibited – you have to sip your beverages inside gated areas – and we obviously couldn't possibly advocate hidden hip flasks... Coachella is all about the pre-party.



The shipmates cheered as Birds Eye was keelhauled

Coachella is all about the pre-party - you can find the action on discussion boards

Record labels and magazines host pool parties at local hotels before the on-site action starts, which you can find out about on the festival website's discussion boards.

Price £179

THE ADVENTURER'S IBIZA IN THE SNOW

Where Snowbombing (Snowbombing.com); Mayrhofen ski resort, Austria; 5-10 April.

Best for Those who love Ibiza and snowboarding. The luxurious spa facilities that accompany the resort make that mud-soaked field in Somerset seem far, far away. When you're done on the slopes, head to the stages for a line-up mixing popular dance and established indie acts.

Who's playing Doves, Editors, Fatboy Slim, Friendly Fires, The Enemy.

Insider tip Bored of flying? Take part in the 'Snowbombing Road Trip', travelling through five countries along with 120 other cars – call 0161-610 2000. Also, ensure you invest in a higher level of travel insurance than you usually would, as there are a raft of extreme sports for you to test your inabilities at.

Price From £239 (including accommodation)

THE ROCKER'S FOREST ESCAPE

Where Hove Festival (Hovefestival.com); Tromoya, Arendal, Norway; 29 June-2 July.

Best for Rock fans going back to basics. Situated on the atmospheric, wooded island of Arendal, this carbon-neutral festival is full of young, urban Oslo



The new line-up of Black Lace attracted quite the crowd

dwellers, who make the three-hour drive from the city to get back to nature and listen to some impressively diverse bands while they're at it.

Who's playing Muse, Them Crooked Vultures, Dizzee Rascal, Gallows.

Insider tip Seek out the hidden woodland bar for special DJ sets and a lush, fairy-tale ambience. Lots of bands arrive by speedboat, so get a good spot by the shore if you want to see the likes of Josh Homme and Matt Bellamy arriving. For that romantic factor, scramble along the beach to the rocky outcrop and watch the sun set over the sea.

Price £230