

# THE MINI GLASTO - WITH SUN AND SEA



**T**HERE will almost certainly be no mud. No one will get stuck in a traffic jam on the A37. And it is also highly unlikely that anyone will be unable to find their tent.

This is a music festival guaranteed to be very different to Glastonbury for the hundreds of Bristolians who are expected to attend it this summer.

For one thing, it is not even in this country.

The Garden Festival takes place in a 900-year-old fishing village called Petrcane, on the Dalmatian Coast in Croatia.

For years it has attracted hundreds of music lovers from the Bristol area – and this year the acts will have been booked and programmed by Dave Harvey and Steve Nickolls, of Futureboogie, who are well-known for their club nights and promotions in Bristol and London.

They will also be performing as DJs at the festival in July, with Dave appearing as his alter-ego El Harvo, and Steve as Joe 90.

So why are two music promoters and DJs from Bristol playing such a key part in a festival taking place in Croatia?

“We started DJing there about five years ago. Last year we were residents at the festival, and at the end, the organisers asked us to become part of the programming team,” says 37-year-old Steve.

“It’s the antithesis of Glastonbury. It’s a very small festival with a capacity of about 2,000, compared to around 150,000 at Glastonbury.

“The site of the festival is on a peninsula, which limits the number of people who can attend, but it

DJs Dave Harvey and Steve Nickolls are known in Bristol for their Futureboogie events – and this summer they will be extending their talents to a festival in Croatia, as SUZANNE SAVILL reports

means that it’s not hectic. Its popularity has spread through word of mouth. When the festival first started a few years ago, lots of people thought that Croatia was still at war.

“There was also a view among people who hadn’t been there that Croatia was some grey Eastern European country, which couldn’t be further from the truth.”

Among the acts which have been confirmed for this year’s Garden Festival – which will take place on the first and second weekends in July – is Bristol’s Daddy G of Massive Attack, who will be doing a DJ set.

However, Steve and Dave – who also manage performers and are a booking agency as Futureboogie – are not just booking acts from Bristol to appear at the festival, but are signing up acts from all over Europe.

“Generally, a couple of hundred people fly over from Bristol every year for the festival, and we are expecting that even more will make the journey this year,” says Dave, 32.

“But a lot of people also fly over from places like Manchester and Birmingham, so we wanted to make sure there was a wide range of acts and have been careful not to be too biased towards Bristol.”

Isn’t it a bit of a long way to go for a music festival?

Dave replies: “You can fly direct from Bristol to Split by easyJet on a flight that takes about two and a half hours, and then travel by bus to the festival site.

“It actually takes less time to get to Split from Bristol than it does to get to Stanstead.

“And it’s quite cheap at the moment for flights – last time I checked it was about £65 return.”

Of those who travel to Croatia for The Garden Festival, about 300 have been estimated to stay for both weekends, turning their trip into a holiday.

It is easy to see why, given the way Dave and Steve enthuse about the place.

“There’s nothing else like it,” declares Dave. “The weather is beautiful, you’re next to the sea, the food is fantastic, and the setting is superb with the main stage near to the sea.”

Steve adds: “The fact that the festival is so small makes it special, as you can get to know people there.

“The locals love it. It tends to attract people aged from their early 20s to their late 30s who are into their



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**Rave reviews:** DJs Steve Nickolls, left, and Dave Harvey are organising The Garden Festival in Croatia, which hundreds of Bristol music lovers are expected to attend

Photograph: Jon Kent

music. They treat the village with respect, and there has never been any trouble.”

I remark that the small size of the festival should mean that at least no one should risk having to wander around for hours in the dark unable to find their tent, as often happens at large festivals like Glastonbury.

Steve says: “There is a camp site but a lot of people tend to stay in accommodation.

“People have to make their own

arrangements about where they stay, but the festival organisers can offer some guidance.”

■ The Garden Festival takes place across the first and second weekends of July. Tickets cost £80 per person for each weekend, or £130 for both weekends, and in addition, festival-goers can also buy tickets for the boat parties that have become an intrinsic part of the festival.

For further information go to [www.thegardenfestival.eu](http://www.thegardenfestival.eu).

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