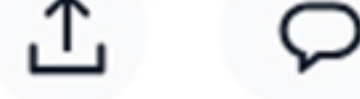


The Desert Sun

This SoCal music festival is named among best in US. Hint, it isn't Coachella or Rolling Loud

Paris Barraza, Palm Springs Desert Sun

Wed, March 12, 2025 at 12:24 PM PDT · 4 min read



Southern California is home to an impressive culinary scene and a film industry, so it's no surprise that the festivals that tap into this are among some of the best in America.

USA TODAY 10Best revealed what are the best festivals nationwide, from art to music festivals, and eight different festivals in California — and not just Southern California either — were recognized. 10Best, which has experts nominate entries to be voted on by readers, released the lists Wednesday.

Nearly earning the No. 1 spot for the best music festival category was the Joshua Tree Music Festival, a multi-day event that brings an eclectic mix of music to the desert and offering community to its attendees. Its next festival is May 15 to 18.

Barnett English, the founder of the Joshua Tree Music Festival, who topped the list in 2024, spoke to the difficulties independent music festivals are experiencing, noting that many have faced cancellations or have gone out of business over the past year and said "it's a huge honor to actually be on the list" as a smaller, independent operation.

"It creates a lot of buzz. I was surprised last year to realize how many people see this and read about it and that USA TODAY readers are tuned into us," English said.

From festivals that fundraise for important causes to festivals that recognize the importance of art, here's which in California earned a spot on a 10Best list (and which you may want to attend.)

Concern Foundation Block Party, Best City Food Festival

The Concern Foundation, a non-profit organization focused on supporting cancer research, is behind the annual block party and fundraiser, the Concern Foundation Block Party. The festival offers its guests an array of food to try from more than 70 restaurants and caterers, according to its website. The 50th annual block party is on July 19 in Los Angeles.

L.A. Loves Alex's Lemonade, Best City Food Festival

Sample food and drinks from chefs, brewers, vintners and mixologists at L.A. Loves Alex's Lemonade, a tasting experience that supports the Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation. The nonprofit foundation supports childhood cancer research and supports families navigating childhood cancer, according to its website. This year's L.A. Loves Alex's Lemonade is on Oct. 4 in Los Angeles.

Salute Your Shorts Film Festival, Best Film Festival

Salute Your Shorts Film Festival showcases short films from both local and international artists with a mission to leave audiences with a lasting impression, according to the film festival. Expect screenings, exhibitions, panels and workshops at the film festival that was described as being started by filmmakers and for filmmakers. The Salute Your Shorts Film Festival is scheduled for Aug. 15 to 17 in Los Angeles.

NewFilmmakers Los Angeles, Best Film Festival

Catch monthly film festivals with NewFilmmakers Los Angeles, which will show global shorts, documentaries and feature films paired with Q&As from the filmmakers. The nonprofit says it "champions emerging and independent filmmakers and storytellers" while providing a space where they can be recognized for their work. Its next monthly film festival is on March 22 in Los Angeles.

San Luis Obispo International Film Festival, Best Film Festival

Founded in 1993, the San Luis Obispo International Film Festival is a six-day showcase of contemporary and classic film screenings. The San Luis Obispo International Film Festival is April 24 to 29.

Pan African Film and Arts Festival, Best Film Festival

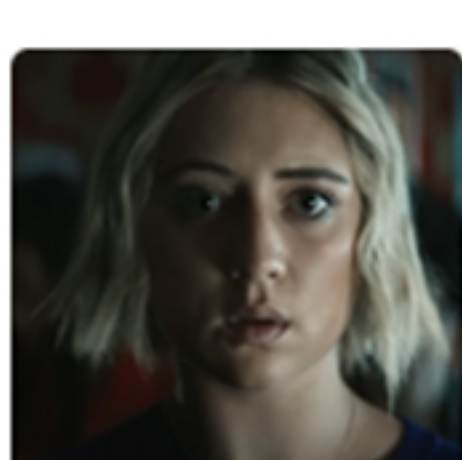
Self-described as America's largest and most prestigious international Black film festival, the Pan African Film and Arts Festival was created by actors Danny Glover and Ja'Net DuBois and Ayuko Babu in 1992. Over the years, the film festival has showcased global works and has served as a "beacon" for the African diaspora film and arts communities, according to its website. This year's festival took place in February.

Festival Napa Valley, Best Music Festival

Travel to Northern California's wine country for a "celebration of music, art and culinary excellence" with Festival Napa Valley, according to 10Best. See the upcoming events for Festival Napa Valley on its website.

Desert Sun reporter Brian Blueskye contributed to this article.

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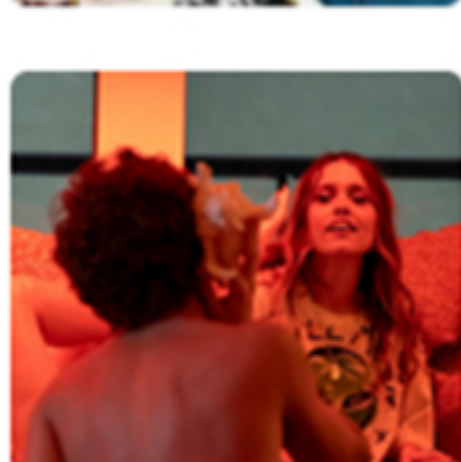
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