

THE MAURELIAN

Inform and entertain

Memphis in May!



It is that time of year again...Memphis in May! Barbecue, music, and mud make downtown the place to be in May. Tom Lee Park will be filled with action as the Beale Street Music Festival gets underway with acts as diverse as Andrew W. K. to Vance Joy. The Maurelian journalists examine the musical lineup and offer a survival guide to the entire Memphis in May experience.

Share your observations or commentary with us.
Send to Shawn Kelly, skelly@cbhs.org

A few thoughts on Memphis music ...

"I bought my first electric guitar when I moved to Memphis; a Gibson with a DeArmond pickup which I used with a small Gibson amplifier."

- B.B. King

"I spent a few years here in Memphis, in the late '70s and early '80s, where I was studying a lot of country blues players and their styles. So it seems like every record I'll do, I will appropriate these blues styles that I remember."

- Alex Chilton

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Something for Everyone: Music at MIM!

By: Jones Casper

Several weeks ago, the lineup for the Beale Street Music Festival was announced, and it seems like this year will be a special one. The organizers of the lineup have done a great job getting artists, old and new, from across all different genres of music. Jack White, Post Malone, Ludacris, Alanis Morissette, Logic, and Vance Joy are among some of the best-known artists that will be performing at Music



Fest this year. Music Fest lasts three nights, each night having three different headline artists that perform at the end of the evening on separate stages. One of the hardest parts of music fest is deciding which acts to see each night. Personally, the artists I am most excited to see are Third Eye Blind, Ludacris, and Post Malone.

Friday will be the hardest day for me to identify my favorite artists because I am not that big of a fan of any of the day's lineup. I had only heard of four of the artists that night and could only name one song by three of them. If I had to pick one of the acts as the one I would most like to see, it would probably have to be Third Eye Blind. I don't know very many of their songs, but they have had a few hits from the 90's and early 2000's that some people would probably recognize, including "Semi-Charmed Life" and "Jumper". If you're looking for a band to go listen to and relax, this is a great choice for you.

I am very excited for Saturday's festivities, but only because of one artist. Sure, Logic has a huge following and Jack White is a rock legend I like, but I don't listen to either of them near as much as I listen to Ludacris. Most people probably recognize him from movies or his roles as a featured artist in hit songs. The legendary rapper from Atlanta might not have released anything relevant on his own in recent years but has several hits from his heyday. His aggressive raps match his booming voice perfectly. "How Low", "My Chick Bad", and "What's Your Fantasy" are three of Ludacris' most well-known songs that are sure to have you partying all night long.

Perhaps the most popular artist coming to Music Fest this year, at least among the youth in Memphis, is Post Malone. The hip-hop influenced singer with only two official albums to his name has taken the country by storm. His debut album, *Stoney*, was released all the way back in December of 2016 and is still ranked number 11 on the Apple Music top charts. He first became known with his smash hit "White Iverson" and became even more popular upon the release of his album. It had so many quality songs, particularly "Congratulations," that gave music listeners a rare cross between rap and spectacular vocals. His album *Beerbongs and Bentleys* was recently released and has already produced hits with "Rockstar" and "Psycho". Seeing Post Malone at Music Fest could be an opportunity to see a top young talent before he achieves a legendary status of fame.

The Beale Street Music Festival is one of the biggest, most anticipated events in the city of Memphis every year. Memphians and non-Memphians alike wait in eager anticipation for each year's lineup. This lineup features many quality acts, but I am most excited for Third Eye Blind, Ludacris, and Post Alone. As the festival nears, I get more and more excited about seeing these acts live in person.

International Week in Memphis

By: Kellon Musgrove

Memphis in May is a festival at the core of Memphis culture that many Memphians attend. Many attend Memphis in May because of Beale Street Music Fest. The event draws large crowds due to the big name stars that perform, but there are other parts to Memphis in May. They include the barbecue contest, a half marathon, and more. While all of these events are great, I believe International Week is the hidden gem of Memphis in May.

Since the festival's inception in 1977, International Week has been a major event for Memphis in May. Every year, International Week features a showcase of a particular country. International Week provides an experience for the whole Memphis community. But International Week goes a little deeper, serving as an educational program for anyone who visits. It provides students and adults alike with a chance to experience the customs and cultures of several countries that many would never have a chance to learn about. From food to art to performances to luncheons with ambassadors, there's no shortage of customs to experience.

International Week has featured dozens of fascinating countries since the festival's inception. A few of the countries represented during Memphis in May over the years include Japan, Israel, Mexico, South Korea, Tunisia, and Panama. This year, Memphians will have the chance to learn about the culture of the Czech Republic. One of the most peaceful countries in the world according to the Global Peace Index, the Czech Republic is a developed country with plenty of history.

First formed in the late 9th century, the Czech Republic is truly amazing. From its large and vibrant cities like Prague to the peaceful mountains of Bohemia, the culture and history of the Czech Republic is abounding, and is primed to provide a wonderful experience to those who attend International Week.

Memphis in May is an event known by everyone who steps foot in the city. Today, however, many only associate the festival with Beale Street Music Fest, the world championship barbecue contest, or even the recently added events like the downtown half-marathon or 901Fest, featuring local artists. However, International Week has been the root of Memphis in May, saluting a different country every year.

Learning the customs of foreign cultures is something that I enjoy and believe everyone should have the chance to do, too. I think Memphians should pay a visit to the festival, so they may experience a first-hand



Beale Street Music Festival Survival Guide

By: Fulton O'Keefe



The amazing Beale Street Music Festival is part of the annual Memphis in May International Festival, and is one of the biggest events in Memphis each year. The Beale Street Music Festival is a hectic three-day event that needs to be attended with caution and a clear mind. A proper survival guide for this event is in store and necessary.

The transportation aspect is one of the most important things to plan out through the weekend. Traffic will be awful and nearly impossible to avoid unless you plan on showing up downtown at five o'clock in the morning.

Finding a parking spot will be difficult, and paying for parking will be expensive. A major key is to have strong legs and stamina to walk from your car to the concerts. A risk like parking far from the concerts is one you should be willing to take. After the night is over, be very alert when walking back to your car, as some frantic drivers will likely be flying through the streets that are flooded with people. Park legally so that you don't discover your car towed or in a boot. Consider carpooling with friends or using Uber.

After transportation plans have been established, it is now time to take on the concerts and crowds. The numbers of people will be overwhelming, but to counter this, my best advice is to show up with your own group. Your friends can help you feel more comfortable because you will always have someone hanging out with you. That will help as thousands of complete strangers surround you.

The lineups will always draw interest from large crowds, so you need to know ahead of time the acts you want to see. Listening to everyone you like is nearly impossible because many concerts overlap, so maintain your schedule. Hopefully your friends have a similar taste so that you can all enjoy the music together. The times of the shows will be posted online so you will know when and where every show is. Make it the best festival you can by being organized, ready to walk, and above all else, safe.

Create an amazing weekend for you and your friends at the Beale Street Music Festival.

Money, BBQ & Music Downtown

By: Ian Rone

Memphis in May is a month full of awesome music and food. But, how “awesome” is it really? Is *Memphis in May* really that fantastic a festival? I am skeptical. *The Beale Street Music Festival* lineup is never anything spectacular. *The Barbecue Fest* is not anything that you cannot get from a local restaurant. And, how good of a time can you have hanging around a bunch of screaming, drunken people listening



to blaring mediocre music while eating overpriced food truck food? There may be some fun aspects to *Memphis in May*, but the negatives far outweigh the positives. I am choosing to pass on this festival.

The Beale Street Music Festival has been around since 1977, and rarely has it been anything special. Even when they do have a decent lineup, there may just be one or two truly great acts to hear. And, if you want to be anywhere near the stage, you must sit through several acts that you do not even want to see to secure a spot at the front. This is a big problem because you can easily end up paying \$55 to see just one band or artist that you like. If you like maybe two or three bands, chances are that they are playing on different days, forcing you to buy another two day passes or even the \$125 three-day pass.

The downtown music scene is rather limited for teenagers as bars and restaurants with potentially great music are often only accessible to those over the age of 21.

While the BBQ festival might be worth checking out, just to try all the different types available, it is not worth the big crowd and the sheer amount of loud, drunk people. While this is true with any big festival, why even bother when there are wonderful establishments within a five mile radius of the festival where you can have some of the best BBQ in the world at a friendly, less-drunk, air conditioned environment?

That brings me to the weather. It often rains during the *Beale Street Music Festival*. With this rain comes the mud and grass mixture that you must stand in for hours on end. This makes traversing the festival tricky because you have to dodge smelly mud puddles every few feet. If the mud is a part of the experience like some people say, then I do not think I want to experience it.

Many Memphians will agree that *Memphis in May* is something one must do while living in our city. However, I contend that it really is not worth the price. Many factors, from the lack of quality acts to the crazy, alcohol-heavy environment to the sheer size of the crowds and the muggy, rainy weather make *Memphis in May* not worth the money.

A Good Time: Memphis Style

By: Ryan Voehringer

As warmer springtime nears and the winter feelings of drowsiness fade away, some cities offer much more fun to its citizens and visitors than others. In the case of Memphians, May is arguably the most eventful time of year. There are chicken wing festivals, the world famous *Memphis in May Barbecue Contest*, and *Beale Street Music Fest* all



packed into the same fun filled month. Nothing quite displays the culture of Memphis better than good food and great music, and this is why it is a sure fire bet that the vibrant Memphis culture will shine through in these events.

Few cities in the nation have as many tourist attraction events in a single month as Memphis. The *Memphis in May Barbecue Contest* is a tradition that Memphians have grown accustomed to over the years. That being said, it is a great event for this city and there are many people who look forward to it each and every year. The contest is deliciously impressive. Thousands of amateur and professional barbecue aficionados come from across the nation to compete in one of the most prestigious cooking events in the region. Each year Memphis in May honors a different country from around the world, which only adds to the experience and culture of the competition. People from all over the city, the state, and the nation gather on the banks of the Mississippi River to celebrate one of Memphis's favorite past times: having a good time while eating thousands of pounds of barbecue.

No matter where you're from or what you like, *Memphis in May* will not disappoint. The Barbecue is top notch and it gives us Memphians something to be proud of. However, *Memphis in May* is more than just the events. It's about what it does for this city. In a time where the Grizzlies are out of the playoffs and there are no other big sporting seasons going on the city, this year's *Memphis in May* could be one of the biggest and most impactful ones yet. It will be one of the first opportunities for Memphians to enjoy the outdoors and the Downtown atmosphere since the New Year rolled in. The variety of shops, museums, and entertainment downtown is sure to satisfy for all ages, and *Memphis in May* is a time for Memphians to kick back, relax, and enjoy the 901.

New Classics at Memphis in May Music Fest

By: Thomas Lamm

Memphis in May is a time for hanging out with friends, listening to your favorite artists, and eating some great Memphis BBQ. Many of today's most famous artists come to the awesome event known as the *Beale Street Music Fest*. This year's lineup features popular artists such as Queens of the Stone Age, Jack White, Logic, Ludacris, Juicy J, Young Dolph, D.R.A.M., Tyler, the Creator, Post Malone, and many more. This year's lineup is a stellar one, and I can't wait to experience it.



Post Malone, one of today's most popular singer and my personal favorite, is attending this year. His album *Stoney* is one of my favorite albums; moreover, his music brings so much to the table and his unique style really resonates with today's youth. His appearance at *Music Fest* is happening just as his new album has been released.

Another artist I am very excited for is Tyler, the Creator. His music has been personally impacting me since I was in the 8th grade and I listened to *Goblin*. This album really got me into the rap scene. Tyler's early stuff has been equally inspiring to me. His album, *Cherry Bomb* has gotten me through some tough times. But, this summer when I listened *Flower Boy*, it blew his other albums out of the water. All the songs are very touching and beautifully orchestrated. Tyler, the Creator's music will make a huge impact at *Music Fest*.

Some artists on this year's lineup stand out as intriguing selections. I am curious to see what Jack White has to bring to Memphis in May. I really started listening to Jack White when he broke off from *White Stripes* and began his impressive solo career. I am excited to hear his new album *Boarding House Reach* played live at *Music Fest*. It is sure to be a memorable performance.

The thing about *Memphis in May* is that you can go, have fun, and listen to music with some of your closest friends. Sometimes you will discover some artists that are really cool. Experiencing new friends and new food is the norm at *Music Fest*. It is a one of a kind experience that I can guarantee will be fun.

Bringing Memphis Together in May

By: Cole Capocaccia

Memphis in May is a month-long festival celebrating the unique and vibrant culture of Memphis and a different country each year. The festival's two most significant events are the *Beale Street Music Festival* and the *World Championship BBQ Cooking Contest*. Both of these events bring thousands of visitors to the city and pump millions of dollars into the local economy.

The Beale Street Music Festival contains demographics comparable to Memphis itself. People from all walks of life come to Memphis one weekend a year and soak up the intoxicating sounds of many great artists. Usually, the first weekend in May, the *Music Fest* features many of today's top artists, upcoming stars, and past legends.

The lineup release has become an anticipated event in the past couple of years, causing plenty of buzz on social media. This year's lineup did not disappoint. Stars such as Juicy J, Post Malone, Luke Combs will attract thousands of fans.

Visitors come from many different states and countries to enjoy *Music Fest* weekend as well as the other month-long events. The tickets for *Music Fest* range from \$55 for a one day pass to \$125 for a three-day pass. While a little pricey, I highly recommend buying a three-day pass!

Music Fest is held right on the river, and it gives you a spiritual sense of the pure Memphis culture and vibe. Every artist brings their unique style to the table. The emotions that arise at the *Music Fest* are amazing.

Another significant event of *Memphis in May* is the *World Championship BBQ Cooking Contest*. More than 230 of the best BBQ-cooking teams from all across the nation come to cook their signature style of BBQ and compete for the coveted first place title. Thousands of spectators come to experience the sites, tastes, and smells of this great event. *BBQ Fest* is an awe-inspiring event. BBQ is part of the soul of Memphis, and this event speaks to our obsession BBQ obsession.

Though these two events may be the most popular events during *Memphis in May*, a little less-known event is *901 Fest*. It takes place on May 26 and celebrates all things Memphis. Local musicians, food vendors, and brewers come together at Tom Lee Park on the beautiful Mississippi River. Local Memphians get to view everything that is Memphis. Whatever divisions exist within the community, they are all put aside for *901 Fest*, and everyone gets to have a day of relaxing fun!

The Memphis in May International Festival has a truly profound impact on the community. In fact, the Memphis economy would not be where it is without this festival. It is an event that brings all walks of life together for one month a year in the name of unity, love, and the Memphis cultural bond that runs deep in our city. Be a part of this year's festivities!



Band Director Patrick Bolton congratulates Austin Lopez after his outstanding performance.



The CBHS Alumni Band Performance on Sunday, April 29