

Summer in NYC: 101+ Free NYC Summer 2012 Concerts

June 25, 2012



Now that the summer is officially here, I am hard at work compiling recommendations for (primarily) free summer outings. Initially, I was going to do a post regarding my top 8 favorite free family-friendly NYC Summer concerts. I like to make sure that I don't miss anything, so I compiled a comprehensive list of choices first. When I did this in an Excel sheet, it ended up being over 101 different free NYC summer concerts being held this summer! In any event, I decided to do two posts – this one (that is comprehensive) and another one (with my top 8 family-friendly picks) later in the week. FYI: Several of the picks on this list are series with multiple concerts, so I batched them together. Also, this comprehensive list includes several concerts that will primarily appeal to adults. (We moms can enjoy them with our husbands, partners and other adult friends.) Enjoy!

Brooklyn

-8th Annual Afropunk Festival

August 25th – 26th

Held in Commodore Barry Park, it features a diverse mix of performers including Erykah Badu, Janelle Monae and more.

-Albee Square Summer Concerts for Kids – Downtown Brooklyn

Thursdays (May 17th to August 23rd) at 10am

Kid-friendly performances.

-BAM R&B Festival at MetroTech

Thursdays (June 7th through August 9th) at noon

There are still 7 more acts in this outdoor concert series featuring R&B legends and emerging stars.

-Bargemusic Presents: "Music In Motion"

Every Saturday afternoon (June to August) at 3pm

There are Q & A sessions with the musicians after these one hour neighborhood family concert performances.

-Carroll Park Kids' Concerts

June through September, once a month

Astrograss and The Deedle Deedle Dees are on the schedule for 2012.

[-Celebrate Brooklyn!](#)

June through August

34th year of free performances at the Prospect Park Bandshell including several popular musicians and singers.

[-Fort Greene Park Conservancy's Greene Music on the Main Stage](#)

July 10th and 24th from 6pm to 9pm

Featuring Lee Fields & the Expressions and Shabazz Palaces.

[-Fort Greene Park Conservancy's Music in the Grove: Kids](#)

Wednesdays (June 20th to August 15th) from 10am to 11am

Listen to kid favorites (AudraroX, Astrograss and more) at the grove.

[-Fort Greene Park Conservancy's The String Orchestra of Brooklyn](#)

Various dates (May through July)

Beethoven: Symphony No. 5 and other pieces are on the schedule.

[-Kingsborough Community College Hot Summer Nights](#)

Saturdays in July at 8pm

There will be live music (ragtime, swing and more) at the oceanfront campus.

[-Pretty Good Friends with Eugene Mirman and Special Guests featuring OK GO](#)

July 19th

Open Space Alliance Events presents this free show at Williamsburg Park.

[-Summer Thunder at Union Pool](#)

Various dates (May – August)

The Williamsburg bar and venue sponsors these daytime shows featuring a variety of bands in their backyard.

[-Vans House Parties](#)

Multiple dates from June to August

Listen to performances by H2O, 7 Seconds and more at this summer series performed live at the House of Vans.

Bronx

[-Bronx Arts Ensemble SummerMusic 2012](#)

Various dates (July through August)

There are several musical styles (Latin, jazz, etc.) represented in this concert series.

[-SummerStage Highlight: Frankie Negron](#)

July 8th from 7pm to 9pm

Listen to Puerto Rican salsa singer Frankie Negron and his new brand of Latin fusion music in St. Mary's Park.

[-SummerStage Highlight: Our Latin Thing: A Tribute to the Fania All Stars / Felix Hernandez's Rhythm Revue](#)

June 28th from 7pm to 9pm

Listen to an ensemble of lead singers and musicians from NYC's top Latin bands in Soundview Park as they pay tribute to the Fania All-Stars.

Manhattan

-2012 4Knots Music Festival

July 14th from 1pm to 8pm

The Village Voice sponsors this indie-rock music show at Pier 17 on the South Street Seaport.

-Broadway in Bryant Park

Thursdays (July 12th to August 16th) from 12:30pm to 1:30pm

Popular on and off Broadway shows perform their hits in these 6 performances.

-Bryant Park After Work

Wednesdays (June 6th to August 29th) from 6pm to 7pm

Free music concerts with NY area jazz musicians and singers.

-Carl Schurz Park: Children's Activities

Multiple dates in July and August

Activities include musical concerts (Audra Rox, The Fuzzy Lemons, and more).

-Carl Schurz Park: Summer Sounds

July 11th and 25th from 7pm to 8:30pm

Concerts are held on the East 86th Street staircase. This year's lineup: STEVE SHAIMAN AND SWINGTIME BIG BAND and MARTHA REDBONE AND BAND.

-Friends of Washington Market Park Summer Concert Series

Thursdays in July and June at 6pm

Each summer, family-friendly bands perform music outside in Washington Market Park.

-Good Morning America Summer Concert Series 2012

Fridays (May 25 to August 31st) from 7am to 9am

Robin Thicke, Counting Crows and Demi Lovato are just a few of the acts scheduled to perform at Rumsey Playfield in New York City's Central Park.

-Harlem Meer Performance Festival

Sundays (June 17th to September 2nd) from 2pm to 4pm

Listen to live music by the lake at Charles A. Dana Discovery Center in the Park.

-Hudson River Park's Blues BBQ

August 25th at 2pm

It's the 13th year of this annual Blues BBQ festival. The BBQ will cost (a reasonable price), but listening to the Blues bands is free.

-Hudson River Park's RiverRocks

Thursdays (July 12th and 26th and August 9th) at 6pm

Enjoy listening to emerging and established rock musicians in this event series.

-Hudson River Park's Stars of Tomorrow

Tuesdays (June 5th through August 21st) at 6:30pm

Music students from the New School for Jazz and Contemporary Music and from Mannes College perform on Pier 45 in this series.

[-Hudson River Park's Sunset on the Hudson](#)

Fridays (June 8th to August 24th) at 7pm

Enjoy some of the city's favorite musicians at this popular annual concert series.

[-Kids in the Square](#)

Thursdays (June 14th through August 9th) starting at 10am

Presented by the Union Square Partnership, this family-friendly series that is held on the South Plaza features music, fitness, and more. Hot Peas & Butter, Suzi Shelton and Zak Morgan are on the schedule for this year.

[-Lincoln Center Out of Doors](#)

Multiple dates, July 25th through August 12th

There are 100 free performances (including various musical concerts and family events) in this series.

[-Mad. Sq. Kids Concerts](#)

Tuesdays and Thursdays (June 12 to August 9th) at 10:30am

The Itty Biddies, The Dirty Sock Funtime Band and Princess Katie & Racer Steve are scheduled to perform during this 10th anniversary season.

[-Mad. Sq. Music: The Oval Lawn Series](#)

Wednesdays (June 20th to August 8th)

Enjoy this outdoor concert series of nationally touring acts during this 10th anniversary season.

[-Naumburg Orchestral Concerts](#)

July to August

This is the 107th year of free classical music concerts.

[-NBC's Today Show Toyota Concert Series](#)

Through September (mainly on Friday mornings)

Access to these concerts of famous musical acts (including Maroon 5, Flo Rida and Shakira) are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

[-RCTA Sunset Concert Series](#)

Saturdays (June 23rd to August 18th) from 7pm to 9pm

The Riverside Clay Tennis Association hosts this series of concerts (classical, jazz, orchestra, etc.) on the tennis lawn overlooking the Hudson River at 97th Street.

[-River & Blues at Battery Park City](#)

Thursdays in July from 7pm to 8:30pm

Listen to a variety of blues musicians at Wagner Park.

[-River to River Festival](#)

June 17th to July 15th

This festival brings a variety of family and musical performances (as well as dance, theater, film, etc.) to Downtown NYC.

[-Sandbox Music](#)

Mid-July to mid-August

Professional musicians from Central Park Brass will perform and teach kids to accompany their live brass instruments with percussion.

[-Seaport Music Festival](#)

Fridays (June through August) at 6pm

Enjoy free indie music shows on the waterfront (Pier 17).

[-Stuyvesant Town Oval](#)

Saturdays from 3pm to 7pm in June and July

StuyTown residents and their guests can enjoy a picnic lunch and independent music acts (i.e. Blitzen Trapper) during the remaining 11 performances.

[-Summer on the Hudson: Children's Performance Series](#)

Thursdays (July 12th to August 16th) 10:30am to 11:30am

Families (with kids up to age 7) will enjoy the music portions of this series. The Funkey Monkeys and Baze and His Silly Friends are on the lineup.

[-Summer on the Plaza: Grace Building Plaza](#)

Multiple days and times (June through August)

A variety of musical ensembles (jazz, world, singer-songwriter, and pop) are scheduled to perform.

[-Summer on the Plaza: One Liberty Plaza](#)

Multiple days and times (June through August)

Several musical styles are represented at this series held at One Liberty Plaza.

[-Summer on the Plaza: One New York Plaza](#)

Multiple days and times (June through July)

A variety of musical styles (Columbian, Americana, etc.) are represented in this series.

[-Summer on the Plaza: World Financial Center](#)

Multiple days and times (June through August)

A variety of musical styles are represented at this World Financial Center series.

[-Summergarden: New Music for New York](#)

Sundays in July (gates open at 7pm)

Held in the MoMA's Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Sculpture Garden, jazz and classical music are performed in this concert series.

[-SummerStage Highlight: 20th Anniversary: Charlie Parker Jazz Festival](#)

August 24th to 26th

There are a few different concerts (2 at Marcus Garvey Park and 1 at Tompkins Square Park) that are part of this celebration.

[-SummerStage Highlight: Latin Alternative Music Conference \(LAMC\) at Central Park](#)

July 14th from 3pm to 7pm

Kinky, Los Auténticos Decadentes, 3Ball MTY and DJ Raff will perform.

[-Washington Square Music Festival](#)

Tuesdays in July at 8pm

This is the 54th season of free concerts featuring orchestra, opera, jazz and other performances.

Multiple Boroughs

-New York Philharmonic Concerts in the Parks

July 11th to 17th

In its 47th season, there will be 5 outdoor classical music concerts throughout the NYC boroughs and a free indoor concert in Staten Island.

-NYRP Garden Grooves

Thursdays (July 19th through August 9th) at 6pm

Local musicians perform in these outdoor summer concerts held in Brooklyn, the Bronx and Manhattan.

-Subway Series

TBD (check site for updates)

The Orchestra of St. Luke's travels to the five boroughs to perform one-hour chamber music concerts.

-Summerstage

Multiple dates from June through August

There are over 100 performances (including multiple music concerts) being held in parks throughout the five boroughs.

-SummerStage Kids

Multiple dates from June through August

Music plays a large part in this series of events for families with kids (ages 3-12). Robbi K and Recess Monkey are just a couple of the musical acts on the lineup.

-The Met's Summer Recital Series

Multiple dates, July 25th to August 9th

The Met's annual Summer Recital Series offers six performances (featuring rising opera stars) in the parks of all five boroughs.

Queens

-Astoria Park Independence Celebration

June 25th from 7:30pm to 10pm

Annual fireworks and Independence Day celebration featuring Joe Battaglia and the New York Big Band.

-Astoria Park Waterfront Concert Series 2012

Thursday evenings in July and August

A variety of musical styles are featured including swing, country and rock.

-Flushing Town Hall Free Summer Concerts

Sundays on July 15th and 29th, August 12th and 26th

These summer garden concerts are popular with local families.

-SummerStage Highlight: Big Daddy Kane at Queensbridge Park

July 18th from 7pm to 9pm

Hip hop legends will perform their classic hits.

[-SummerStage Kids Highlight: Queens Family Day](#)

July 29th from 4pm to 7pm

This family event features music, juggling and a dance party.

Staten Island

[-Borough Presidents Starlight Concert 2012](#)

August 9th from 7:30pm to 10pm

"Rave On" & "Alive n' Kickin'" will be featured.

[-SummerStage Highlight: Keith Murray/Beatnuts](#)

July 31st from 7pm to 9pm

Listen to multi-talented Keith Murray, a member of the legendary rap trio Def Squad (with Redman and Erick Sermon).

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