

USE-IT

TOURIST INFO FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

WHEN TO COME TO BRUSSELS



3 MARCH 2012

MUSEUM NIGHT FEVER

For one night, it's young people who call the shots in twenty Brussels museums. Expect graffiti, breakdance, catwalks and dj-sets in places that weren't exactly meant for them, like the Museum of Natural Sciences, the Army Museum or the old Hallepoort. While the concerts and performances go on, art students do guided tours (in Dutch and French, but English and Spanish too). Goes on until 1 o'clock, with a famous afterparty.

www.museumnightfever.be

5 - 17 APRIL 2012

precise date to be confirmed

BRUSSELS INTERNATIONAL FANTASTIC FILM FESTIVAL

"Bukarest Fleisch", "Reykjavik Whale Watching Massacre", "Zombies of Mass Destruction". Most people who come here agree that chain-saw massacres, live burials and brain eating are just a good laugh. The science fiction and horror festival presents both new big releases and B-films in an old industrial site with over a 1000 seats. Nobody stays quiet during the movies. Special yearly tradition = big dressed-up vampire ball.

www.biff.org

11 - 20 MAY 2012

LES NUITS BOTANIQUE MUSIC FESTIVAL

Plants and music, just what we need in springtime. Les Nuits Botanique lasts for ten nights in the pretty botanical gardens, with a selection of the big names in the indie scene (like Grant Lee Buffalo, Yoav and Mercury Rev) and unknown young gods (who often become big names the year after). From rock to jazz, electronics and reggae, and some dj's in the bar to end the night.

www.botanique.be

APRIL / MAY 2012

precise date to be confirmed

VISIT THE ROYAL GREENHOUSES

Each spring, king Albert II opens the gates of the royal domain in Laeken so that everyone can come and have a look at his palace. You cannot shake hands with the king, but what you get is better: the Royal Greenhouses. Built in Art Nouveau style by his great-great-uncle (king Leopold II), they are a world apart with 15.000m2 of flowers, plants and art nouveau glassworks and even palm trees which were brought here from the former colony of Congo more than 100 years ago. Funny: the whole thing is so popular that you stand in a queue from the ticket booth to the exit, as if everybody was standing in line on one big conveyor belt.

www.monarchy.be/en

25 - 27 MAY 2011

precise date to be confirmed

BRUSSELS JAZZ MARATHON

You can run a marathon, or run for 3 days between 50 venues for 125 concerts. Big Belgian names play on the Grand Place or the other city squares, while students and rising stars just perform in bars. There aren't enough jazz bars in Brussels, so they'll do it on a few beer crates if necessary. All concerts are for free - check the programme online.

www.brusselsjazzmarathon.be

MAY - SEPTEMBER 2012

precise dates to be confirmed

CITY APERO

Each friday and on a different location you can go to a 'Apero Urbain'. The philosophy behind this event is to allow people to discover new places and especially to meet each other after the daily working rush. You can come to have a drink, play a game of cards or boules, gaze at the park's flower beds, to dance, to party, to hangout, to talk with the people sitting nearby... All the ages and all the different categories of people find their happiness. Children mixed with trendsetters, the elderly with students. Animals are also welcome and when the apero ends you can enter a club for free and enjoy a great after party.

Free www.aperourbain.be

29 JUNE - 1 JULY 2012

COULEUR CAFE

Couleur Café is a three-day world music festival that reflects the multicultural city that Brussels is today. It is hosted at 'Tour & Taxis', one of the most beautiful industrial sites in Europe. With more than 40 concerts, Couleur Café offers the best of R&B, hip hop, world, afro, reggae, dub, dancehall, Latin, salsa, son, raï and rock under three huge tents. There is also a dance floor featuring electronic music where you can feel the force of the musical mix.

www.couleurcafe.be

6 JULY - 5 AUGUST 2012

BRUSSELS BEACH

Eh... a beach? In Brussels? OK, it took us some improvising with trucks full of sand, plastic coconut trees and cocktail cabanas, but this comes close to a summer beach, right next to the canal and with a skyscraper skyline. It's probably the only event in Brussels where really everybody comes, from a Moroccan family to a Russian macho to a sexy Brazilian silhouette. Brussels beach is also popular with the male gay community - all those oiled naked upper bodies playing beach volley! Big disappointment: you're not allowed to swim in the canal, and you already have to leave between 22.00 and 23.00.

Free (closed on Monday) / www.brusselbad.be

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20 - 21 JULY 2012

THE NATIONAL HOLIDAY

It's like the 4th of July, but with good beer instead of stars and stripes. To celebrate the fact that we've had a crazy and wonderful independent country since the 21st of July in 1830, we have spectacular fireworks and a military parade. But every Brussels'er knows the real party happens a day before (20 July), when locals get drunk, dance and sing to Belgian classics like 'Laura Lynn and 'Lou & The Hollywood Bananas' on the marketplace in the Marolles. If you're lucky, it rains, because only then it's really Le Bal National.

Free / www.balnational.be

28 JULY 2012

BRUKSELLIVE

Maybe one of the coziest free summer festivals Brussels has to offer. The location is a bit out of the city centre but very close to the atomium. It's inside the green amphitheater of the adjoining park. Hosted by the 9 youth clubs of Brussels this festival has a non-commercial vibe and offers besides quality music lots of food stands and animation. This year The Cinematic Orchestra will headline the festival along with Belgian bands as Stijn and Vismets. Dj's will close the night with some nice booty shaking music.

Free www.bruksellive.be

JULY - SEPTEMBER 2012

exact dates to be confirmed

VISIT THE ROYAL PALACE

You can only visit the Brussels Royal Palace during summer. Every seat, every ceiling and every mirror is more decorated than a wedding cake. No entry allowed on bare feet or flipflop sandals. Well, of course, it's a palace, you see. The special treat is that Belgian artists were allowed to decorate some of the rooms. The mirror hall by megalomaniac artist Jan Fabre is the biggest attraction: 1.500.000 glowing green dead beetles carefully pinned to a ceiling. You'll never forget the image.

www.monarchie.be/en/

AUGUST 2012

exact dates to be confirmed

BRUSSELS SUMMER FESTIVAL

There's too many summer festivals in Brussels. From May to August, no weekend goes by without a festival. Strangely, the name 'Brussels Summer Festival' was not taken yet, so now we have this one too. 20 euro for ten evenings, and most of the famous classic museums are included in the price - so you don't get bored during daytime. This year De La Soul + Big Band, Jamie Cullum and many Belgian bands will rock 'Brussels Summer Festival'

www.brusselssummerfestival.be

27 - 31 AUGUST 2011

MUSIC IN THE PARK

Pissing in the bushes, groups of blowing dreadlocks, ear damage after nine hours in the techno tent. How we love the big festivals! But if you also feel like something else once, you might enjoy 'Boterhammen in het park' and 'Feeërieën' in Brussels. During lunch hours, local bands play in the park next to the Royal Palace, and when it's getting dark, more international bands take over the music kiosk from 1841. The music stays intimate (singersong-writers, weird country, electronic dub, ambient pop) which explains the title Feeërieën - something like magic fairy time.

www.boterhammeninhetpark.be / www.feeerieen.be

16 SEPTEMBER 2012

SUNDAY WITHOUT CARS

If you just come from Bruges or Amsterdam, you'll notice the difference: where are the bikes? Nowhere. In Brussels, people take their cars to go to the baker, even if the car is parked further away than the baker. There is only one exception to the crazy traffic in this city: the Sunday Without Cars. Suddenly, you can hear a bird whistle. It's one of the most beautiful days in the year, biking downhill on the biggest boulevards.

6 OCTOBER 2012

WHITE NIGHT - NUIT BLANCHE

Nuit Blanche which means "sleepless night" or "white night" in French, is the perfect day to explore Brussels by night. Nuit Blanche allows you to enter places that are normally closed at night during the whole year. Besides the official programming almost every hip bar in the city centre organises something, from comedy to raves.

www.nuitblanchebrussels.be

OCTOBER 2012

precise date to be confirmed

BATARD PERFORMANCE FESTIVAL

Bâtard means bastard, but in a good way. This festival shows what Brussels is all about, with an international mix of young (mostly under 25) dancers, photographers, musicians, and actors. They do not only perform in a theatre, but also on a basketball field, in an old school or at a supermarket entrance. You have never heard of any of these artists before, but everyone with the right sense of adventure feels right in his / her place. You start the night at a meeting point, but then it's a total surprise where they'll take you in the neighbourhood.

www.batard.be