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# THE FAYETTEVILLE ROOTS FESTIVAL

AN URBAN MUSIC AND FOOD FESTIVAL  
ROOTED IN OZARK TRADITION



F ull of cultural diversity, Fayetteville is an easy town to love. A creative community, its local businesses, thriving restaurants and bars, and entertainment hotspots make it unique. Capturing the heart of its originality is the Fayetteville Roots Festival, an urban music and food festival that celebrates the root of what makes the Ozarks culturally distinct.

Starting in 2010 as a one-day musical event, the Roots Festival has now grown into an annual four-day festival showcasing a long lineup of artists from all around the country, and featuring food and drink from farms and restaurants all across Northwest Arkansas.

"I personally believe this festival embodies our city more than any event that has ever taken place in Fayetteville," says Jermy Gawthrop, one of the festival's founders. "The music style and genres represented at this festival are rooted here. We use local food by local chefs, serving local beer, all with a local Ozark theme."

Though it has quickly become one of the year's most anticipated events, festival founders say that keeping things intimate is integral to the festival's character.

"We are not 10,000 people in a field," adds a second festival founder, Bryan

Hembree. "We are a festival that takes place in small venues inside the borders of a thriving community. We continue to find ways to keep the festival small, but fill it with a fun offering of music and food events. We love bigger and better, but we are also hoping folks will leave feeling like they just attended one of the most intimate listening festivals around."

Although the founders aim to keep the festival small, that certainly doesn't mean there's not a lot to look forward to. In addition to a top-notch music schedule, there are several new food elements that have been added to this year's lineup, sure to make anyone's mouth water.

VIP ticket holders can look forward to a private reception at Garner Farm, featuring locally sourced food from area restaurants such as Greenhouse Grille, Bordinos, Eleven at Crystal Bridges, Wood Stone Craft Pizza, and Tusk and Trotter, craft beer from local breweries, and musical performances from three of the festival's headlining bands.

"The opening reception is going to be the biggest and best yet," says Gawthrop. "This event is, for most people attending the festival, the most celebrated and sought-after ticket."

In addition to mouthwatering food and private entertainment, VIP tickets also include reserved seating at the KUAF main stage and access to all other stages, admission to all late-night shows at George's Majestic Lounge, plus free festival food vouchers during Friday and Saturday shows.

For those without VIP tickets, there's still a lot of fun to be had. This year's main stage lineup features over 15 bands, including some of the hottest in the folk, Americana and bluegrass genres, such as Punch Brothers, JD McPherson, Shook Twins, Watkins Family Hour (featuring Sara and Sean Watkins of Nickel Creek, and Fiona Apple), plus many more.

"I love that there is not just one genre of bands on the lineup," says Hembree. "The festival offers a musical journey for patrons. We love to mix it up and introduce our festival audience to a new artist they might not have heard of before, something they might only catch at a festival."

Another exciting element to this year's festival is the first annual Fayetteville Farmers Market Chef Cook Off, taking place on Saturday, Aug. 29, at the Fayetteville farmers market. Featuring an



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*Iron Chef* format, each chef team (which will consist of one Fayetteville and one Bentonville chef) will have \$50 and one hour to purchase all needed ingredients from the farmers market before competing in an exciting cooking competition, taking place right on the square. After receiving a mystery ingredient, the teams will have 30 minutes to produce four plates for the celebrity judge panel. Each chef team will be cooking on behalf of their favorite food-based nonprofit in Northwest Arkansas, and the winning team will be co-donating a price of \$5,000 worth of organic Crystal Lake Farms' chicken to that charity. This event will be free to watch, and does not require a festival ticket or pass.

Additionally, there will be multiple other free food, music, radio and workshop offerings throughout the weekend available to the public. ■

The festival kicks off on Aug. 27 with events and performances taking place all across downtown Fayetteville, and will conclude on Aug. 30. For tickets or more information, visit [www.fayettevilleroots.com](http://www.fayettevilleroots.com).

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