

How to Do the Montauk Music Scene, Where Willie Nelson, Courtney Love and More Rock

By [Carson Griffith](#) | Billboard.com May 20, 2014 3:05 PM EDT

From Sky Ferreira to 'SNL'-style karaoke, what's new and noteworthy in Montauk, on the laid-back tip of Long Island.

From local concerts at Gosman's Dock to big-name headliners at the Surf Lodge, the scene in Montauk has made the formerly sleepy fishing village practically synonymous with music. But that's only one of the many factors that have been attracting hordes of visitors to the growing number of restaurants, bars and hotels in the farthest of the Hamptons. "At the end of Long Island with its romantic lighthouse, dramatic seaside bluffs and ramshackle surf shacks, Montauk, with its high-low culture, has a unique 'Wild, Wild East' quality unlike anywhere else on the East Coast," says hotelier Sean MacPherson, who owns Montauk's Crow's Nest Hotel and Restaurant.

New or Noticeably Different

[Gurney's Montauk Resort & Seawater Spa](#), 290 Old Montauk Highway - There's something for (nearly) every music lover at Gurney's this summer. Under new leadership, the food and beverage program will be headed by Jennifer Oz Leroy, the granddaughter of film producer-director Mervyn LeRoy. "We're very welcoming," says LeRoy. "Anyone can come." The new lineup includes electronic violinist ELEW in residency each weekend and a Saturday afternoon concert and fashion show series for 500 people titled "Sound Waves at the Beach" beginning July 19. Every other Thursday, the Club Room will host Arlene's World Famous Live Rock N Roll Karaoke Band (the official 2013-14 "Saturday Night Live" after-show party band).

[The Harbor Raw Bar & Lounge](#), 440 West Lake Drive - In the space formerly known as the Cross-Eyed Clam, the Harbor Raw Bar & Lounge is expected to open any day now. The eatery plans to be more upscale than its predecessor, with seasonal small plates and craft cocktails. A patio and lounge will offer live music and evening dancing that is set to begin Memorial Day weekend.

[The Crow's Nest Hotel and Restaurant](#), 4 Old West Lake Drive - The Crow's Nest has been such a popular spot since it opened in 2010 that it expanded its original 14-room lodging. Recently renovated, hotelier Sean MacPherson's rustic property now offers an additional five bungalows and one two-bedroom house, all called the David Pharaoh Cottages, to accommodate more guests who want to take full advantage of the fluke and chicken kabobs in the restaurant, the view of Montauk Lake and the local celeb spotting in the evenings by the fire pit. Sightings have included photographer Peter Beard and BLK DNM designer Johan Lindenberg, who says the establishment has a "great chic bohemian touch." His recommendation? The kale salad.

Star Spotting

Willie Nelson & Jimmy Buffett performing at The Surf Lodge

[The Surf Lodge](#), 183 Edgemere St. - For a concert with as notable a name as any, head to the Surf Lodge, where past performers have included the likes of Courtney Love and Montauk local Jimmy Buffett. "Seeing Willie Nelson perform was incredible," says Surf Lodge co-owner Jayma Cardoso. "I had been working on booking

him for years, so when it finally happened it was a huge treat." Cardoso's other favorite Surf Lodge performers include Django Django, The Kills and Patti Smith. The venue will host acts like Sky Ferreira, Edward Sharpe and Gary Clark Jr. this summer.

Courtney Love performing at The Surf Lodge

[*The Montauk Yacht Club*](#), 32 Star Island Road - Katie Couric, Liev Schreiber, Naomi Watts, Robert Pattinson, Ashley Greene: The Montauk Yacht Club has had its fair share of heavy-hitters for a laid-back fishing village. But the waterside resort and restaurant - which this year gains a new chef in Robert Reed - also offers a mix of live music, DJs and an upscale dance area. Dan Bailey Tribe, Twista and Joe Delia & The Thieves are all on this season's schedule. And if a Fourth of July parade with sparklers and face paint won't cut it for you, the Montauk Yacht Club is also home to one of the area's most well-known parties: Shark Attack Sounds, hosted by Naomi Watts' big bro photographer, Ben.

Live Like a Local

[*Montauk Green \("On the Green"\)*](#) - By Memorial Day weekend, Montauk's fifth annual music festival has come and gone (annually, the fest takes place in mid-May, with this year's event having run from May 15 to 18), but that doesn't mean there won't be more On the Green music events. The Montauk Chamber of Commerce presents a free concert series, at 6:30 p.m. every Monday, starting at the end of June (beach chairs and blankets not included). If you're an early planner, mark your calendars for 2015's Montauk music fest, which supports the area's local musicians and this year included more than 75 bands and singers, like Consuelo Vanderbilt, Butchers Blind and The Cranks.

[*The Memory Motel*](#), 692 Montauk Highway - You would think an establishment with a Rolling Stones song named after it could afford a few new TV sets in its rooms. But that's the charm of the Memory Motel, the 13-room roadhouse and dive bar located in the heart of Montauk Village. The Stones' 1976 hit helped put the place on the map (reportedly, however, Mick Jagger only actually stepped onto the grounds of the Memory once), and the motel is now known to out-of-towners and locals alike for its jukebox and live music. Don't expect to see Jagger on the lineup anytime soon (or Keith Richards or Harvey Mandel), but Less Than Zero, 3am, DJ Dodge, Kashmere and Goldilocks are all expected this summer.

[*Gosman's Dock*](#), 500 West Lake Drive - Both locals and tourists come for the view at Gosman's Dock but stay for the music. During July and August, the seafood restaurant is known for its Sunday evening concerts, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. "We have some of the better local acts out here," boasts Chris Gosman, one of the co-owners of the clam bar and fish market, who names The Nancy Atlas Project and The Lone Sharks as examples. "But the real treat is the venue. It's outdoors with a fabulous stage, wide open green, free concerts," he says. "[It's a] really nice event."

Hipster Hotspots

[*Sole East Resort*](#), 90 Second House Road - If you like your hotel with a side of music, Sole East may be the place for you. The boutique hotel has 60 rooms, seven renovated bungalow suites and a constantly spinning poolside DJ. Its summer concert series has attracted Citizen Cope and Holy Ghost in past seasons. Guests get to watch acts, which have included Maxi Priest, Pete Yorn and Rufus Wainwright, in the hotel's Backyard Restaurant.

[*Ruschmeyer's*](#), 161 Second House Road - This 19-room hotel may seem like a no-frills sleep-away camp for adults by day, but at night Ruschmeyer's turns into a thumping dance party and bar that attracts guests ripped straight out of an Opening Ceremony ad. Phantogram, Charlie Klarsfeld from the band The Americans, DJ Jonny Famous and DJ Chelsea Leyland all performed at the quaint and somewhat kitschy locale in summer 2013.