

FEATURE



FOREST GROVE: The crowd at What the Festival 2013.

BRAVING THE BEATS

A WHAT THE FESTIVAL SURVIVAL GUIDE.

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You've been to Sasquatch every year since 2009. You've run around in a glow-in-the-dark loincloth for a week at Burning Man. You might even consider yourself a "festie." But you'll still be unprepared for one of Oregon's weirdest, wildest and finest festivals: What the Festival.

"WTF is not a run-of-the-mill concert or festival," says Glen Boyd, who created the electronic music-focused event in 2012 with his wife, Tiffany. "We wanted to do something in the Pacific Northwest that would be as focused as much on art and experiences as the music."

This week, 3,000 house-, dubstep- and trap-heads will gather in the dry forest beneath the eastern face of Mount Hood to witness performances from the likes of Glitch Mob and Washed Out and Portland artists like Natasha Kmeto and Emancipator. In between, they'll be checking out the spa and hookah lounge, soaking in the giant wading pool and tripping out to creepy late-night vaudeville shows. If unprepared, your experiences may vary, so we put together a guide to help you make it out of Dufur with at least a few brain cells intact.



1. Food: Cooking back at camp is no sweat, as you'll never be much farther than a 15-minute walk from your campsite. But there is a plethora of moderately priced, weird-diet-friendly food carts, like Korean Express and Oregon Country Fair favorite Get Fried Rice. It's probably better than the shepherd's pie your buddy made for his 3 am post-Nightmares on Wax munchies.



2. Hydration: Seriously, drink water. The gorge is quite a bit hotter and drier than Portland, and the huge tanks of drinking water leave no excuse to be dehydrated. When it comes to other liquids, caution is advised. Though the camping and stages are adjacent, buzz-killing patrols monitor the bottleneck to keep booze out of the stage area. An opaque, vacuum-sealed water bottle will keep your booze on ice and away from prying eyes.



3. Shelter: Anything private will do. It's almost certainly not going to rain in Central Oregon, but during the day the hammocks of the Illuminated Forest will be way cooler than your tent. If you can take the literal and figurative heat, the middle of the giant wading pool—allegedly the world's largest—is where you'll find all the fun. Check out the Dirtybird showcase Sunday, featuring Claude VonStroke and co.



4. The elements: Last year was so dusty that by Sunday the grounds looked like *Woody Guthrie Presents the Dust Bowl: Live at Giza*. For the rowdier, bouncier acts—Cashmere Cat and Trippy Turtle, for example—it could get apocalyptic. The organizers are promising clearer skies this year, but absolutely do not forget your bandanas, goggles and lens caps. And think twice about your delicate electronics.



5. Hygiene: People can go three days on baby wipes alone, especially when the showers are behind huge lines. But WTF's modest size means you can easily grab a shower at Oasis Spa, or check out the Airstream they've converted into a sauna. Your grind buddy during Kaytranada will thank you later.



6. Dangers: Funktion-One speakers are the best in the world, not only for their sound quality but because of their open-face design. You may be compelled by RL Grime's booming trap bass (and other, more psychochemical influences) to climb in. Don't. Also, avoid cameras at all costs, unless you want to become a meme in the "Coachella attendee who couldn't put on his sandals" vein.



7. Intoxicants: Music and psychoactive drugs have a long shared history, but let's be honest: No other genre is as married to them as electronic music. And at a festival like WTF, the scene can overwhelm even the hardest of festies. If you're having a bad trip, head for the soothing art installations of the Illuminated Forest to calm down. And in the event a naked trustafarian starts worshipping you as a god, calmly back away. Do not make eye contact—which should be easy, as his will likely have rolled back in his head. **WU**

SEE IT: What the Festival is at Wolf Run Ranch near Dufur, Ore., on Thursday-Sunday, June 19-22. 18+. See whatthefestival.com for ticket prices and a complete schedule.