

Palisade Festival

Palisade Bluegrass & Roots Festival, June 14-16

By Sharon Sullivan



Shook Twins photos credit: Jessie McCall

Traditional bluegrass is just one musical genre you'll hear during the annual Palisade Bluegrass and Roots Festival, which happens this year June 14-16, in western Colorado's picturesque town of Palisade.

Take the Shook Twins, for example.

"Our music is definitely not bluegrass – we call it harmonious Indi-pop; we sing in harmony a lot," said Laurie Shook, who spoke while on a break from touring to promote the group's new album "Some Good Lives" – which had reached number 35 on the Americana radio charts in March.

"Some Good Lives" was written in honor of the wonderful and honorable men in our lives, to show our respect to good men," said Shook, who plays banjo. Her sister Katelyn performs guitar. The identical twins will be joined



on stage Sunday by electric guitarist Niko Slice, Elephant Revival's Darren Garvey on drums, and Aber Miller performing keyboard and bass.

Wood Belly, winner of the 2018 Telluride Bluegrass Band Competition and 2018 International Bluegrass Music Association nominee, will kick off the weekend's festivities Friday, followed by a lineup of stellar Colorado bands, including "Chain Station," "Lonesome Days," and "Rapidgrass." Various artists will come together on stage to close out the day's music with the Palisade Super Jam.

Saturday begins with the folk-rock, four-part harmony Montana-based band "Laney Lou and the Bird Dogs," followed by "Meadow Mountain," winner of the 2017 Rockygrass Band Competition. "Chatham County Line" is next with their "unadulterated bluegrass," followed by the "genre-defying" music of the "Jon Stickley Trio." Closing out Saturday's show is the headliner sister-led folk band "Rising Appalachia."

Festivalgoers on Sunday will wake up to the music of "A gypsy grass morning" performed by various festival artists, followed by the Rainbow Girls – an eclectic folk trio from California. Also performing Sunday is classic singer-songwriter John Craigie, followed by the Shook Twins.

The Lil' Smokies will end the weekend, having been invited back to the festival for the second time. The five-piece string band won the Telluride Bluegrass Festival band competition in 2015, and the Northwest Oregon Summit Bluegrass string competition the same year. In 2016, the International Bluegrass Music Association voted Lil' Smokies the "Momentum Band of the Year."

The Missoula-based band's most recent album "Changing Shades" was released in 2017, and a live recording from the Bluebird Theatre in Denver is due to be released later this spring.

"We're rooted in traditional American music but we're doing our own thing," Lil' Smokies' fiddler Jake Simpson said.



The Lil' Smokies

The festival takes place in Palisade's lovely Riverbend Park, located along the Colorado River. Various food vendors – including wild-caught seafood tacos, pizza, Greek food, and more, plus other merchants selling handcrafted jewelry, tie-dye clothing, etcetera, set up shop on festival grounds. You can also bring your own picnic if you wish. Locally-brewed beer from The Palisade Brewery, as well as artisan cocktails made from spirits crafted at the nearby Peach Street Distillers will be for sale at the festival throughout the weekend.

As always, various events are planned during and leading up to the festival – such as the Sage Creations Lavender Farm Tour, yoga on a paddleboard classes, bourbon tastings at Peach Street Distillers, and more.

There's also camping at the festival. Shuttle bus service will bring people into town where showers are available. Campers might want to bring their own

musical instruments – artists are known to join locals in the campground making music together into the wee hours of the morning.

The venue is beautiful, and the vibe friendly and peaceful. Go for the day or enjoy the entire weekend at this fun festival. Various ticket packages are available. To see a full schedule and for more information visit www.palisademusic.com/festival-events/.

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