

Birmingham Festivals Guide 2019



**Birmingham
Festivals**

Why is Birmingham such fertile ground for festivals?

It's a big, sprawling place, full of unusual buildings, railway viaducts, leafy parks and distinctive neighbourhoods. It's culturally mixed, with people from all over the world building their lives here. And it's a city with a history of making its own entertainment - if we spot a gap, more than likely we will organise a festival to fill it.

Perhaps some of that helps to explain the depth and variety contained in this handy booklet. Whether you're seeking cocktails, warehouse parties, outdoor film, brain food, performance art or just great music in the sunshine, there will be at least one event here to catch your eye - and the list is growing all the time.

For more events go to birminghamfestivals.com.

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**Birmingham
Festivals**



West Midlands
Growth Company



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ENGLAND**



2019

Still Walking Festival

**September 2018 –
September 2019**

Across Birmingham
bit.ly/StillWalking2019

Birmingham's annual programme of exploratory guided tours and walking events, which since 2012 has been encouraging visitors and local residents to experience the city's culture more closely.

March

St Patrick's Festival

9–17 March
Digbeth High Street
bit.ly/StPatricks2019

The largest St Patrick's celebration in the UK, including a parade through the city centre and a festival of music, dance and performance which takes over venues across Digbeth.

Bournville BookFest

14–24 March

Venues across Birmingham
bit.ly/BournvilleBookFest2019

Friendly, affordable, 100 event storytelling family festival for children, with world-class authors to meet, interactive workshops to take part in and new books to discover.

Birmingham Wine Weekend



Birmingham Wine Weekend

22–24 March
Venues across Birmingham
bit.ly/BWW2019

Showcasing hand-picked venues across Birmingham, the festival will see beginners and connoisseurs alike come together to enjoy the city's favourite wines.



Still Walking Festival

CineQ Queer Film Festival

22–24 March

Venues across Birmingham
bit.ly/CineQQFF2019

Launching for the first time in 2019 after a series of popular one-off events, CineQ focusses on new stories and QTPOC perspectives, showcasing some of the best LGBTQ film past and present.

Salaam Pakistan Film Festival

24–30 Mar

MAC
bit.ly/SalaamPakistanFF2019

Celebrating the best of Pakistan's new independent film making, providing audiences with a rare chance to see award-winning films, Oscar winning documentaries and special Q&A's.



Asian Woman Festival

30 March

The New Bingley Hall
bit.ly/AsianWomanFest2019

Combining culture, conversation and art the Asian Woman Festival is the UK's first of its kind, smashing stereotypes and stigma to empower and celebrate Asian women.

April

Thinking/Not Thinking Festival

12–14 April

Centrala
bit.ly/TNTFest2019

Festival of contrasts, curveballs and juxtapositions in Birmingham.

Birmingham Gin and Rum Festival

19–20 April

Edgbaston Cricket Ground
bit.ly/GinRumFest2019

The festival brings to Birmingham not only unique spirits from around the globe but a great selection of some of the best entertainment and food from around the UK.

Insomnia Gaming Festival

19–22 April

NEC, Birmingham
bit.ly/InsomniaGamingFest2019

A chance to see your favourite YouTubers, play the latest games, experience virtual reality and so much more all under one roof.

Vaisakhi

28 April

Handsworth Park
bit.ly/Vaisakhi2019

This open-air celebration is a not-for-profit community event, allowing citizens of the second city to celebrate their heritage together.



Flatpack Festival

30 April – 5 May

Venues across Digbeth & Birmingham
bit.ly/FlatpackFestival2019

Eclectic feast of moving image creativity, with everything from live soundtracks to cat bento taking over archways, bars, warehouses and cinemas across the city.



May



BEAST FEaST

2-4 May

University of Birmingham
bit.ly/BEASTFEaST2019

A festival of electronic and electroacoustic music, exploring the idea of the modern and the futuristic. Join us for three days of music, meeting and ideas.

Swingamajig

5 May

Birmingham Botanical Gardens
bit.ly/Swingamajig2019

All about the sights and sounds of the 1920s with a modern twist, this heady blend of music, dance and cabaret is moving to Edgbaston Botanical Gardens for the first time.

B-Side Hip Hop Festival

3-12 May

Birmingham Hippodrome
bit.ly/BSide2019

Expect explosive dance battles and live graffiti art, music and DJ performances on an outdoor stage as well as talks and workshops with high-profile guests from the international hip hop scene.



Viva Magical Vegan Festival

18 May

The New Bingley Hall
bit.ly/VivaMVF2019

Come along and indulge in the most delicious food and vegan delicacies and shop for ethical clothing, cruelty-free cosmetics and much more.

Independent Birmingham Festival

18–19 May

The Bond
bit.ly/IndependentBham2019

A jam-packed line-up of pop-up restaurants, cocktail bars, street food, craft beer, artists, designers and makers, along with a full programme of live music and entertainment.

Birmingham Pride

25–26 May

Birmingham Gay Village
bit.ly/BhamPride2019

Birmingham Pride is now the UK's biggest two-day LGBTQ+ festival, held annually in the Gay Village. Expect music acts, a dance arena with DJs, funfair, cabaret and stalls.

A Matter of Life and Death Festival

10–19 May

Venues across Birmingham
bit.ly/BrumYOD02019

A unique event tackling the taboos around death and dying, encouraging open and honest conversations through a city-wide programme of creative events.

Rum & Reggae Festival

18 May

The Mill, Digbeth
bit.ly/RumReggaeFest2019

The festival will showcase a selection of rums from across the globe, as well as live music, carnival dancers, steel drum bands, and traditional Jamaican food.

The Migrant Festival

30 May – 2 June

IKON Gallery
bit.ly/MigrantFest2019

Four-day event celebrating our diverse roots, welcoming new arrivals to the city by fusing themes of migration with visual arts, music, film and performance.



June

Arts & Science Festival

June 2019 – May 2020

University of Birmingham
bit.ly/ArtsandScienceFest2019

A celebration of research, culture and collaboration across campus and beyond.



The Green Heart Festival

June 2019 – May 2020

University of Birmingham
bit.ly/GreenHeartFest2019

To mark the formal opening of the university's new parkland, this year-long festival will kick off with a celebratory weekend of free activities, incorporating a prom, performances, interactive demonstrations and more.



Birmingham Design Festival

6–8 June

Digbeth
bit.ly/DesignFestBrum2019

Second edition of an event highlighting the international design industry, featuring talks, workshops, exhibitions and screenings in venues across the city centre.

Birmingham Coffee Festival

7–9 June

Custard Factory
bit.ly/BhamCoffeeFest2019

Featuring the top 40 independent coffee shops and coffee culture experiences from the local area and beyond. Sample specialty coffee and food from all around the world.

Junction Festival

7-9 June

Digbeth
bit.ly/Junction2019

New festival exploring the unique spaces found around the Digbeth canal through a mix of street art and graffiti activities, art walks, film, workshops and a pop-up gallery.

Brindleyplace Family Festival

15 June

Brindleyplace
bit.ly/BrindleyplaceFamilyFest19

Back for the second year running, the event is in support of Cure Leukaemia and will include a jam-packed schedule full of family fun as well as the renowned Dragonboat Race.

Independent Birmingham Festival at Aston Hall

20-21 July

Aston Hall
bit.ly/IndependentBham2019

Independent Birmingham take over the grounds of Aston Hall with their customary mix of cocktails, street food, indie retail and live music.

Foodies Festival

21-23 June

Cannon Hill Park
bit.ly/FoodiesFest2019

Family food festival featuring a number of guest chefs, Cake & Bake theatre, kid zone, street food, artisan produce and live music.



Birmingham Indian Film Festival

21 June - 1 July

Venues across Birmingham
bit.ly/BIFF2019

A thought-provoking line-up of independent films offering a rare insight into South Asian lives in the sub-continent right now.

Birmingham Coffee Festival



Jewellery Quarter Open Studios

**29–30 June;
23–24 November**

Jewellery Quarter
bit.ly/JQOpenStudios2019

Twice a year, JQ Open Studios invites you to see beyond the window displays by opening studios and workshops to the public.

Celebrating Sanctuary

23 June

Venues across Birmingham
bit.ly/CelSancFest2019

A world music festival that focuses on the music of refugee-producing countries and the work of refugee musicians.

Jewellery Quarter Festival

29–30 June

Jewellery Quarter
bit.ly/JQFestival2019

The Jewellery Quarter Festival celebrates the best of the Quarter both past and present. Discover the JQ and enjoy free entrainment for all including our brand new Sunday heritage programming.

July

BE FESTIVAL

2–6 July

Birmingham REP
bit.ly/BEFestival2019

A week-long feast of culture, bringing the best of European performance to Birmingham. A twenty-show spread of new work from the continent, in a head-spinning takeover of The REP.



Music for Youth National Festival

3–6 July

Venues across Birmingham
bit.ly/MfYFestival2019

A four day feast of live music, featuring performances from the finest jazz, brass, classical, folk, choral and contemporary young musicians.



Beer Central Festival

5–6 July

Digbeth
bit.ly/BeerCentralFest2019

The Midlands' brand new celebration of beer, food, and music

Colmore Food Festival

5–6 July

Victoria Square
bit.ly/ColmoreFFest2019

An annual free event showcasing food and drink in Birmingham's business quarter, Colmore Business District. All dishes are under £4.

Moseley Festival

5–7 July

Moseley
bit.ly/MoseleyFest2019

An annual community festival of arts, culture and music taking place in the lively suburb of Moseley.

CoCoMAD

6 July

Cotteridge Park
bit.ly/CoCoMAD2019

The small but perfectly formed festival in Cotteridge Park. Free, family-orientated music, art, dance and science fun.



Birmingham Cocktail Weekend

11–14 July

Venues across Birmingham
bit.ly/BCW2019

An annual festival exploring new venues and sampling the best of Birmingham's cocktails. Discover all that is great about the city's cocktail scene.



Mostly Jazz Funk & Soul Festival

12–14 July

Moseley Park
bit.ly/MostlyJazz2019

A three day celebration of jazz, funk & soul in one of the most beautiful parks in the UK.

Birmingham Fest

12–28 July

Birmingham City Centre &
the Jewellery Quarter
bit.ly/BhamFest2019

Two-week fringe theatre event featuring artists and companies from across the UK.

Summer in Southside

13–14 July

Southside
bit.ly/SummerinSouth2019

Birmingham Hippodrome's free family festival blasts off into outer space in 2019, with the streets around the theatre transformed into a lunar landscape packed with performances and extra-terrestrial endeavours.

Yarningham

13–14 July

Uffculme Centre, Moseley
bit.ly/Yarningham2019

The fourth edition of Birmingham's fibre festival for knitters, stitchers and crafters, featuring an eclectic marketplace alongside workshops and talks.

Brindleyplace Film Festival

15–21 July

Brindleyplace
bit.ly/BrindleyplaceFF2019

Now in its 8th year, this popular and completely free outdoor festival will showcase a wide selection of fantastic movies on a big screen in Central Square.

Tilt Festival

15–21 July

Digbeth
bit.ly/TiltFestival2019

A week-long programme of aerial circus masterclasses, performances and workshops from renowned international artists.

Festival of Audacity

18–20 July

Venues across Birmingham
bit.ly/FestofAudacity2019

A multidisciplinary festival of activist art moving beyond traditional arts venues and making Birmingham its stage.

Supersonic Festival

19–21 July

Digbeth
bit.ly/SupersonicFest2019

Named as the UK's premier experimental music festival, Supersonic brings together live performances by some of the world's most extraordinary artists alongside visual art and audience participation.

Birmingham, Sandwell & Westside Jazz Festival

19–28 July

Venues across Birmingham, Solihull & Sandwell
bit.ly/BirmJazzFest2019

Europe's largest and longest running free jazz party, taking place in over 100 venues across the West Midlands.

Sandwell & Birmingham Mela

20–21 July

Victoria Park
bit.ly/SBMela2019

Music, dance, food and traditional arts and crafts bring the sights, sounds and spicy aromas of South Asia to Victoria Park, Smethwick.



Sandwell and Birmingham Mela



Simmer Down Festival

21 July

Handsworth Park
bit.ly/SimmerDown2019

A free family festival which celebrates our cultural diversity by paying tribute to the centrality of reggae and other musical genres that have contributed to Birmingham as an international city of culture.

Birchfield Jazz Festival

26–27 July

Holy Trinity Church, Birchfield
bit.ly/BirchfieldJazz2019

A celebratory weekend of free live music based at St Mary's Church in Handsworth, north Birmingham.

MADE Festival

27th July

Perry Park
bit.ly/MadeFest2019

Birmingham's biggest music festival showcases the best in electronic music, street art and the creative industries. Followed by clubbing all-dayer Legends in the Park on 28 July.



Solihull Summer Festival

27–28 July

Tudor Grange Park, Solihull
bit.ly/SoliSummerFest2019

A two-day event offering the people of Solihull the opportunity to experience the fun and excitement of a festival within their own town.

August

Moseley Folk & Arts Festival

30 August – 1 September

Moseley Park
bit.ly/MoseleyFolk2019

Showcasing unsigned acts right next to well-established international artists in the beautiful setting of Moseley Park, this weekend event has become a popular annual fixture in the UK folk calendar.

September

In:Site Festival

5–7 September

Birmingham Cathedral Square
bit.ly/InSiteFest2019

Taking place annually in Birmingham Cathedral Square, In:Site presents contemporary craft for all to encounter and experience.



High Vis Festival

7 September

Digbeth
bit.ly/HighVisFest2019

A day-long Digbeth celebration of all things street culture, from street art to street food, graffiti to graphic novels, skateboarding to breakdancing.

Kings Heath Street Festival

8 September

York Road, Kings Heath
bit.ly/KingsHeathFest2019

Annual street festival in south Birmingham, featuring a music stage, street food and children's entertainment.



Birmingham Heritage Week

12–22 September

Venues across Birmingham
bit.ly/BHeritageWeek2019

Discover Birmingham's vibrant history and culture through inspiring events such as walks, talks, open days and visits to hidden gems across the city.



October

Birmingham Literature Festival

3–13 October

Venues across Birmingham
bit.ly/BhamLitFest2019

The annual celebration of books, writers, ideas and conversations.

Birmingham Comedy Festival

4–13 October

Venues across Birmingham
bit.ly/BhamComFest2019

Award-winning city-wide arts festival featuring both big name acts and the fast-rising stars of tomorrow. With stand-up, theatre, improv and much more.

Birmingham Music Festival

12–13 October

Ruddock Performing Arts Centre, Edgbaston
bit.ly/BhamMusicFest2019

An annual competitive festival of public performances and recitals by amateur musicians from across the UK.

Fierce Festival

15–20 October

Venues across Birmingham
bit.ly/FierceFest2019

Fierce shines a spotlight on some of the most unusual, thought-provoking and downright outrageous performance from across the globe.

BASS Festival

16-21 October

Venues across Birmingham
bit.ly/BASSFest2019

Showcasing the best Black music and arts through unforgettable live events, gigs, exhibitions, commissions & masterclasses.

Birmingham Photography Festival

19-20 October

Venues across Birmingham
bit.ly/BhamPhotoFest2019

An annual festival that aims to educate and inspire all members of the wider photography community from beginners to professionals.

Birmingham International Piano Festival

25 October - 8 Nov

University of Birmingham
bit.ly/BIPFest2019

Two-week event which welcomes some of the world's finest pianists and keyboard players to Birmingham.

Birmingham Fashion Festival

November 2019

Venue TBC
bit.ly/BhamFashionFest2019

A community-focused festival featuring runway shows by local, national and overseas designers, stores and boutiques, along with trunk shows and great parties.

Birmingham Improv Festival

October 2019

Venue TBC
bit.ly/BhamImprovFest2019

A whole week of live performance including improvised plays, musicals, sketches, cabaret, workshops and more.



November

Screening Rights Film Festival

November 2019

Venues across Birmingham and Coventry
bit.ly/ScreeningRights2019

A space to inspire and develop debates on the relationship between film, vulnerability, human adversity, and social action.



Birmingham African Weekender

November 2019

Venue TBC
bit.ly/AfricanWeekender2019

African Weekender is a three-day festival dedicated to celebrating African dance, music, storytelling, visual art and performances from some of the finest local and international artists.



Behind the Curtain Film Festival

November 2019

Venues across Birmingham
bit.ly/BtCFF2019

A unique film festival which brings high quality films and new media from Central and Eastern Europe to venues across Birmingham.

SHOUT Festival of Queer Arts and Culture

5-17 November

Venues across Birmingham
bit.ly/ShoutFest2019

Celebrating 10 years in the city, SHOUT is an annual celebration of LGBTQIA+ arts and culture. Bringing the best queer theatre, performance, film, and visual arts to Birmingham, whilst platforming the voices of Midlands artists and unearthing local LGBTQIA+ heritage.

Birmingham Trad Fest

21-24 November

Digbeth
bit.ly/BhamTradFest2019

The UK's newest traditional Irish music festival. A weekend full of top class concerts, instrument workshops and trad sessions.

December

Magic Lantern Festival

December 2019

Birmingham Botanical Gardens
bit.ly/MagicLanternFest2019

A stunning outdoor Xmas themed event, a festival of light and illumination in Birmingham Botanical Gardens.



2020

Chinese New Year Festival

23–26 January

Venues across Birmingham

Expect performances across the city from University of Birmingham to Colmore Row, Bullring Grand Central to Birmingham Hippodrome and Southside as we celebrate the Year of the Rat.

Ideas of Noise

January/February 2020

Digbeth
bit.ly/IdeasofNoise2019

A festival of experimental sound, connecting audiences and performers of different genres across the West Midlands. From free improv and electronica to sound art, a mixture of performances, installations and more.



Birmingham Swing Festival

Birmingham Swing Festival

February 2020

Venue TBC
bit.ly/BirminghamSwingFest2019

A weekend of Swing dance workshops for all levels, with late-night parties, live bands and competitions.



Ideas of Noise

Verve Poetry & Spoken Word Festival

20–23 February

Old Rep Theatre
bit.ly/VervePoetryFest2019

A four day festival of poetry and spoken word, with readings, performances and workshop.



Verve Poetry and Spoken Word Festival

Whisky Birmingham

7 March

The Bond, Digbeth
bit.ly/WhiskyBham2020

The city's flagship whisky festival returns for its eighth year. Featuring major whisky brands, independent bottlers, local experts, creative masterclasses, collaborations with local bars, music and street food.

Great British Beer Festival Winter

4–8 February

New Bingley Hall
bit.ly/GBBFW2020

The winter edition of this annual beer jamboree lands in Birmingham next year, boasting over 400 beers, ciders and perries along with tastings, talks, food stalls and musical entertainment.

Birmingham International Dance Festival

June 2020

Venues across Birmingham
bit.ly/BIDF2020

Taking over Birmingham's theatres, streets and squares every two years with show-stopping performances and great choreography.



Birmingham International Dance Festival

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