

## SOUNDS



**PASTA PARTY:** Can't wait till Spaghettifest 6 this September? Now fans of funk-masters Midnight Spaghetti can get the DVD documentary of last year's festival from Cave House Studios. Free screening tonight, 8 p.m., at The Third Floor; spaghettifest.com.

» LABOR DAY WEEKEND PRESENTS THE IDEAL OPPORTUNITY TO SEE AN ISLAND-MUSIC ICON

# BUFFETT SHOW CAPS OFF PERFECT HOLIDAY

BY CRAIG SCHULIN  
AND BEN SELLERS  
THE FREE LANCE-STAR

**Ben:** Schulin, don't ever let anyone tell you that Labor Day's a second-rate holiday.

While your parents in New Orleans were hunkered down waiting for Hurricane Gustav to land, Virginians faced another unstoppable force from the gulf: Jimmy Buffett and the Coral Reefer Band playing two shows at Nissan Pavilion on their "Year of Still Here" tour.

Island music, a long weekend, 80-degree weather, a designated driver and a boss out the whole week on vacation—in the partying world, they call *that* the perfect storm.

**Craig:** Sellers, every Buffett concert is like one big Labor Day party. The tailgating in the parking lot that starts hours before the show is like the party outside a football stadium on college game day.

By the time Jimmy takes the stage—barefoot, mind you—the crowd is obviously in the mood to turn up the intensity of the fun.

**Ben:** Buffett recently graced Vanity Fair's list of the 100 most influential people—along with the likes of Vladimir Putin, Warren Buffett (no relation) and Mick Jagger—and I can see why. One of the things that really stood out was his unique stage presence. He was grinning ear-to-ear and chatting with the audience throughout the show.

As a first-time parrot-head, I had a vague idea what to expect, but was surprised how much happier people seemed at this concert than at most others. Even waiting in line to get in the gate, there were beach balls bouncing all over the place.

**Craig:** No doubt about it, the



FILE / SCOTT GRIES / GETTY IMAGES

Forget the hushpuppies—Jimmy Buffett was barefoot Monday.

crowd at the concert came to have a good time. And who can't when you're treated to a show of the caliber of a guy who, for 40 years, has been making folks smile, dance and sing along?

**Ben:** There was certainly plenty to sing along with on Monday. Mixed in with his staple hits like "Changes in Latitudes, Changes in Attitudes," "Boat Drinks," "Volcano" and, of course, "Margaritaville," Buffett did covers of Van Morrison; the Grateful Dead; Crosby, Stills and Nash;

and Bob Dylan.

My only regret was that I missed "Cheeseburger in Paradise" while waiting in line for a cheeseburger at the concession stand.

**Craig:** Speaking of food, JB gave a nod to those affected by Hurricane Gustav along the Gulf Coast with "I Will Play for Gumbo." You know, listening to the music at one of his concerts can really make you hungry and thirsty—gumbo, cheeseburgers, boat drinks and margaritas.

Also on Monday, Buffett

played songs such as "Cowboy in the Jungle," "One Particular Harbor" and "Knees of My Heart" that added to the "island escapism" experience.

**Ben:** The set helped, too. Faux palm trees and tiki torches were scattered about the stage—along with no fewer than two dancers, three drum sets, four guitars and a couple of keyboards.

It wasn't all escapism, though. One of the nice things about the show was the way Buffett brought in current events such as Gustav without making it a guilt trip. The

**"HIS CONCERTS CAN REALLY MAKE YOU HUNGRY AND THIRSTY—GUMBO, CHEESEBURGERS, BOAT DRINKS AND MARGARITAS."**

backdrop for the set was a map of the world, where he'd occasionally spotlight a particular region. He shone it on the Middle East at one point and gave a very thoughtful tribute to the crew of the USS Harry S. Truman, which he visited during his off-season last winter.

**Craig:** But alas, the palm trees and steel-drum music eventually faded away—and the tedium of sitting in concert traffic for an hour brought us back to reality.

Regardless, I'll raise my tin-cup chalice and toast Mr. Buffett and the Reefers for putting on a show that left me with "Visions of good times that brought so much pleasure . . ."

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## HOT CONCERTS »

### WHAT'S COMING UP

■ **Brooks & Dunn** with **ZZ Top** and **Rodney Atkins**, Sunday at Charlottesville Pavilion

■ **Steve Earle** with **Allison Moorer**, Sunday and Monday at Alexandria's Birchmere

■ **Celine Dion**, Monday at Washington's Verizon Center

■ **Aimee Mann**, Monday at Richmond's National Theater

■ **Rascal Flatts** and **Taylor Swift** Thursday, Sept. 11 at Virginia Beach Amphitheater

■ Awakening Music Fest, featuring **Newsboys**, **Skillet** and **Matthew West**, Saturday, Sept. 13 at Bull Run Special Events Center

■ **Pat McGee Band**, Saturday, Sept. 13 at Richmond's Toad's Place

■ **Xavier Rudd**, Sunday, Sept. 14 at Washington's 9:30 Club

■ **Levon Helm Band**, Sunday, Sept. 14 at Charlottesville's Paramount Theater

■ **Indigo Girls**, Wednesday, Sept. 17 at Baltimore's Rams Head Live

Show information is subject to change, and ticket availability isn't guaranteed. Always call ahead!



Aimee Mann

