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## TripAdvisor Calls Out America's Wackiest Summer Events

### Quirky Summer Shindigs Honor the Unusual, from Mosquito Fests to Celebrations of "Slugburgers", Bagels and Bats

NEWTON, Mass., June 7, 2012 /PRNewswire/ -- [TripAdvisor](#)<sup>®</sup>, the world's largest travel site\*, today announced ten wacky summer events in the U.S., as chosen by TripAdvisor editors. From the world's largest mosquito, to a "slugburger" eating contest and bat costume competitions, these events feature off-the-wall fun for travelers seeking quirky pursuits as the mercury rises.

To view the multimedia assets associated with this release, please click: <http://www.multivu.com/mnr/49268-tripadvisor-calls-out-america-s-wackiest-summer-events>

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#### 1. The Great Texas Mosquito Festival — June 26 - 28, [Clute](#), Texas

Located 55 miles southeast of Houston, Clute will be a-buzz with excitement at the 32<sup>nd</sup> annual Great Texas Mosquito Festival. Presided over by festival mascot Willie-Man-Chew — the world's largest mosquito, standing at 26 feet tall (and rest assured it's fake) — some 13,000 attendees will find themselves bitten by the bug for summertime fun at this al fresco fiesta. Thick-skinned contestants can vie to summon a bevy of bugs in the mosquito calling competition, or simply strut their stuff in a mosquito legs contest. Meanwhile, a big-time BBQ cook-off competition will serve up proof that the ultimate delicacies at this event are not the attendees. Admission is \$5 - \$15 for adults, and \$3 - \$5 for senior citizens and children alike (ages five and under are free).

#### 2. Slugburger Festival — July 12 - 14, [Corinth](#), Mississippi

Now in its 25<sup>th</sup> year, the annual Slugburger Festival pays tribute to Corinth's local culinary delight. Comprising a deep-fried patty formed of beef and soy meal, the "slugburger" may be an acquired taste — but fervent fans of the unique sliders will be in their element at this three-day celebration in northeast Mississippi. This year's not so fat-free festivities include the inaugural World Slugburger Eating Championship, in addition to a Slug Idol talent contest, carnival rides and more. General admission is free of charge on Thursday, \$6 on Friday and \$10 on Saturday.

#### 3. World Chicken Festival — [London](#), Kentucky, September 27 — 30

Home to the very first restaurant established by Kentucky Fried Chicken founder, Colonel Harland Sanders, Laurel County throws this annual eggs-travaganza in celebration of its fine feathered heritage. The poultry party features a hot wing eating contest, a clucking competition, and the event's famous "Chicken Scratch", in which children dig through 600 pounds of flour in search of cash. And, with crowds of up to 150,000 attendees, chicken meals are in plentiful supply, thanks to the world's largest stainless steel skillet. With a diameter of 10 feet, six inches, the hefty pan can cook 600 chicken quarters at one time. General admission is free of charge.

#### 4. Humungus Fungus Fest — August 3 - 5, 2012, [Crystal Falls](#), Michigan

This fungus-filled fete honors the largest mushroom in the world, which weighs in at 11 tons and lies beneath the ground, just south of this town in northern Michigan. Earth-enthusiasts can get their fill of mouthwatering mold at the mushroom cook off, or nosh on a slice of the world's largest mushroom pizza. And to work up an appetite for another piece, attendees can compete in the Strong Man Contest, in which tires are tossed and kegs are catapulted. General admission is free of charge.

#### 5. Wausau Possum Festival — August 4, [Wausau](#), Florida

Now in its 43<sup>rd</sup> year, the annual Possum Festival pays homage to the modest marsupial's role as a food source during the Great Depression. Crowds of up to 5,000 visitors descend on this small town (population 400) in the central Florida Panhandle, for a taste of down-home family fun — not to mention, the possum hash, which is always a sell-out. Eclectic events include a 5

km "Possum Trot", a Possum King and Queen Pageant, and a possum auction — although the highest bidder will only be granted a brief audience with the cuddly critter, before its release. General admission is free of charge.

#### **6. Batfest — August 25, [Austin](#), Texas**

Now in its eighth year, this festival celebrates the two million Mexican Free Tail Bats which take up seasonal residence beneath Austin's Congress Street Bridge, forming the world's largest urban bat colony. The batty event has proved to be a soaring success, with 40,000 attendees — and while the stars of the show are undoubtedly the winged wonders, which appear at dusk and take to the skies for their nightly flight, lower-altitude activities include a bat costume contest, bat education sessions and live music. General admission is free of charge.

#### **7. National Hollerin' Contest — June 16, Spivey's Corner, [North Carolina](#)**

In honor of keeping the "almost-lost-art" of hollering alive, this sonorous soiree draws crowds in the thousands to Spivey's Corner, some 50 miles south of Raleigh. The men's Hollerin' Contest is the main act, but willful women and yelling youngsters can also compete for bragging rights and a dazzling trophy in the Ladies' Callin' and the Junior Hollerin' events. Attendees can also catch the conch shell blowing contest, or devour some down-home delights from an array of food vendors. General admission is free of charge.

#### **8. Cream Cheese Festival — September 15, [Lowville](#), New York**

Now in its eighth year, this cheesy celebration in upstate New York is a recipe for tasty fun. With milk tray relays and a cream cheese toss included in this late-summer shindig's scrumptious spread of events, attendees can even while away the afternoon playing cream cheese bingo. Travelers can also sample a piece of the nation's largest cheesecake, or fill their faces in an all-you-can-eat contest — and once appetites are appeased, enjoy the cream of the crop of local music acts. General admission is free of charge.

#### **9. Hope Watermelon Festival — August 9 - 11, [Hope](#), Arkansas**

Featuring three days of fruity fun, Hope's annual Watermelon Festival draws crowds of some 50,000 visitors to the southwest corner of Arkansas. Juicy shenanigans include a seed-spitting contest and a watermelon eating competition, which sees competitors vie to devour an eighth of a melon, down to the rind — seeds and all. Even the local politicians get stuck in, in the "politically correct watermelon eating" heat. Awe-inspiring watermelons will also be on display, with some supersize specimens tipping the scales at close to 200 pounds. General admission is free of charge.

#### **10. Mattoon Bagelfest — July 19 - 21, [Mattoon](#), Illinois**

There's a "hole" lot of fun in store at Mattoon's 27th annual Bagelfest, as this town in the Midwestern farmbelt celebrates its self-declared status as "Bagel Capital of the World", thanks to the Lender's bagel factory situated there. This year's "Lights, Camera, Bagelfest" theme will shine a spotlight on the boiled and baked bread, with events including the largest free bagel breakfast in the world, at which 10,000 bagels are consumed. Further dough-themed delights include a bagel bow-wow contest, featuring canines competing for the best costume trophy, and a parade featuring bagel-bedecked entries. General admission is free of charge.

"These off-beat and affordable summer events provide unique, family-friendly fun," said Brooke Ferencsik, director of communications at TripAdvisor. "With local traditions celebrated through these eccentric events, attendees will enjoy photo opportunities galore and memories sure to last a lifetime."

#### **Notes to editors**

Event details and admission fees were sourced via the respective festival websites and / or organizers.

#### **About TripAdvisor**

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