

Harbourfront centre

Harbourfront Centre Celebrates the Best of Caribbean Culture with Island Soul this August Long Weekend

The beloved festival turns up the heat with five days of incredible programming

July 11, 2024 – TORONTO – Harbourfront Centre announces the full lineup of its fan-favourite festival, **Island Soul**, which celebrates the vibrant people and culture of the Caribbean held on Toronto's waterfront from **August 1 to 5, 2024**.

Now in its 26th year, the festival's theme is **Legacies of the Islands**, highlighting the rich history, cultures, influences and creativity of generations of Caribbeans. With its extended five-day weekend of programming, visitors and audiences can enjoy a high-energy lineup of **free and ticketed events**, ranging from live dancehall, Soca and reggae performances at beautiful lakeside venues to fantastic comedy, film and delicious cuisine, all of which represent the many distinct islands and flavours of the Caribbean.

In honour of Harbourfront Centre's 50th anniversary, this year's Island Soul returns with epic evening performances from the queen of Soca, **Destra**, featuring **DJ Power**, dancehall and reggae hits with the legendary **Johnny Osbourne** and a night of hilarious laughs with one of North America's best stand-up comedians, **Trixx**. The rave-style party **Paradise Soul** is new to the mix, a day party featuring choice MCs and DJs bringing vibes and spinning tunes from afternoon to night.

Harbourfront Centre's free programming includes a roof-raising performance by two-time Grammy nominee **Etana**, known for her powerful fusion of folk, soul and jazz and **Empress Mash Up**, a reggae mash-up featuring Canada's all-female reggae band, the **Rayzolution Band**.

For the film and literary buffs, the festival will host feature-length films examining the deep cultural influences and social implications of Caribbean life and family-friendly story time sessions with award-winning authors who will share the dynamic legacy of Caribbean literature.

Audiences can also participate in Djembe drumming music workshops, create their own Caribana headpieces with **VIBE Arts** and then fuel up for even more fun on campus with a feast of delectable Caribbean cuisine.

To learn more about Island Soul's full festival programming and for tickets, visit [HarbourfrontCentre.com](https://www.harbourfrontcentre.com).

ISLAND SOUL FESTIVAL PROGRAMMING

TICKETED EVENTS

COMEDY

Comedy Night with Trixx and Friends

August 1 at 8pm, Harbourfront Centre Theatre

North America's top comedians hit the stage for an evening of hilarious stand-up with Canadian comedy legend Trixx, who brings his boundary-pushing humour and bang-on commentary on pop culture, relationships and being Black in Canada.

MUSIC

Destra: Queen of Bacchanal featuring DJ Power

August 2 at 9:30pm, Concert Stage

Trinidadian singer and songwriter and considered one of the most popular Soca singers in the world, Destra Garcia comes to Island Soul with DJ Power for a high-energy show full of modern dancehall and audience favourites.

Paradise Soul

August 4 at 3pm, Lakeside Terrace

A day party celebrating Caribana weekend on the waterfront, presented by LIT (Lagos in Toronto). Dance to a lineup of DJs and MCs, dancehall, Soca and afrobeats in this Caribbean rave-style set-up.

Johnny Osbourne and the Hardcore Band

August 3 at 8pm, Stage in the Park

Johnny Osbourne, the "Dancehall Godfather" and living legend of classic hits like "Buddy Bye" and "Water Pumping," is bringing his best Jamaican reggae and dancehall to Island Soul for a night of rhythm and soul.

FREE EVENTS

MUSIC

Jah'Mila Sings Live

August 2 at 9pm, Stage at the Park

Jah'Mila brings infectious grooves and a seven-piece band for a live concert of Jamaican roots, delivering a soulful performance that fuses roots reggae music and jazz with powerful messages of love, community and advocacy.

Empress Mash Up: Roots Edition

August 3 at 4pm, Stage in the Park

Di empress dem ah mash up di place! Empress Mash Up is an all-female reggae jam session featuring four dynamic solo artists with distinct styles of reggae, dancehall and R&B backed by a seven-piece reggae band.

Tiny's Session

August 3 at 6pm, Lakeside Terrace

In Tiny's Session, four artists and a stand-up comedian come together for this intimate, living room-style performance. A multi-genre travelling showcase of new music and comedy, Tiny's Session has produced living room, rooftop and cafe shows in cities across North America and Africa. (Think Tiny Desk Concerts, but better.)

The Clash!

August 3 at 8:30pm, Concert Stage

A head-to-head mash-up of sound-crushing sets with The Recipee Band and DJ Starting from Scratch. Hosted by "Canada's King of Comedy" Jay Martin, expect an explosive musical rivalry onstage where the crowd chooses the victor.

Everything O'Shaun Live

August 4 at 5:45pm, Stage in the Park

A performance by Everything O'Shaun accompanied by his three-piece band and cultural dancers. Blending influences from his Jamaican and Nigerian heritage with Toronto sound, Everything O'Shaun creates bold, melodic music that has captivated a global audience.

Etana

August 4 at 7:30pm, Concert Stage

Jamaican singer and songwriter Etana returns for a live outdoor performance, bringing her trademark soul-soaked sounds and honey-laced vocals, where she will play a setlist of her reggae fan favourites infused with R&B.

From Jamaica to Toronto with Love: Live Performance by Jay Douglas

August 4 at 9:30pm, Concert Stage

JUNO Award nominee, music producer and band leader of The Jay Douglas All-Star band, Jay Douglas brings his reggae rhythms to the stage. From his roots in Montego Bay, Jamaica, his soulful voice and energetic stage presence make him a standout in the reggae music scene.

Pimento Soul: Legacy of the Harry Belafonte

August 5 at 12pm, Stage in the Park

Celebrate the music of Harry Belafonte with the seven-piece band, Pimento Soul, featuring the most famous music recorded by Belafonte while giving thanks for the life of the late great humanitarian and civil rights activist. The audience can dance, sing and participate with the performers.

WORKSHOPS

Carnival Mask-Making with VIBE Arts

August 3 at 12pm, HarbourKIDS Tent

Join Jasmine Vanstone and VIBE Arts for an amazing Carnival mask-making workshop. After last year's super popular Carnival Collage Creations, they are back, giving both new and returning artists the chance to create their own Carnival masks.

Djembe Drumming with VIBE Arts

August 3 at 2pm, The Lookout

Join VIBE artist and accomplished drummer Richard Best for a Djembe drumming workshop to discover the unique world of Djembe drumming as you learn about its history and get a chance to perform a drumming number with other participants. This event is open to all ages and skill levels.

A Tale of Time: Caribbean Storytelling Workshop

August 3 at 3:30pm, The Lookout

A storytelling and music workshop covering multiple parts of the Caribbean where specific styles of poetry and storytelling originated and have long since developed. This workshop brings into focus poetic styles of telling myths, legends and tales of real and imagined greats from Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago, St. Lucia and Creole.

Stories at Dusk

August 3 at 5:30pm, Studio Theatre

Two film screenings featuring feature-length films examining cultural influences and social implications of multiple aspects of Caribbean life, home and abroad. The two films featured are *Pressure* (a 1975 film directed by Horace Ové) and *A State of Madness*, a 2020 film directed by Leticia Tonos.

Detailed information and dates for all Island Soul programming can be found at [HarbourfrontCentre.com](https://www.harbourfrontcentre.com)

About Harbourfront Centre

Harbourfront Centre is a leading international centre for contemporary arts, culture and ideas, and a registered, charitable not-for-profit cultural organization operating a 10-acre campus on Toronto's central waterfront. Harbourfront Centre provides year-round programming 52 weeks a year, seven days a week, supporting a wide range of artists and communities. We inspire audiences and visitors with a breadth of bold, ambitious and engaging experiences, and champion contemporary Canadian artists throughout their careers, presenting them alongside international artists, and fostering national and international artistic exchange between disciplines and cultures.

Harbourfront Centre acknowledges the generous support of Site Partners: Government of Canada and the City of Toronto; Programming Partners: Government of Canada, Canada Council for the Arts, Ontario Arts Council, Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund, the Government of Ontario and the City of Toronto and its Corporate Site Partner, Labatt.