**10 Things You Should Know About the Key West Songwriters Festival**

The 2012 Key West Songwriters Festival is just around the corner. Whether you’ve booked your trip and are counting down the days, or you’re deciding whether or not to head to the festival for the first time, here are 10 things you should know:

1. The Key West Songwriters Festival is **May 2-6, 2012**. This year marks the beloved fest’s 17th anniversary.

2. **Loved by the greatest songwriters** in the world, the festival allows attendees to experience amazing songs in their purest original form in fun-loving Key West, where the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic meet at the continental U.S.’s southernmost point.

3. Shows are held at **venues** throughout the island. A **foodie’s delight**, Key West offers international fare and local delicacies at hotspots **all a short walk, bicycle or scooter ride away** from one another.

4. **Most of the stacked schedule is free**, including more than 30 in-the-round sets from top performing songwriters. **Tickets for a handful of intimate theatre shows** are on sale at [www.keywestsongwritersfestival.com/](http://www.keywestsongwritersfestival.com/).

5. Proceeds will benefit [Operation Homefront](http://www.operationhomefront.net/), a national nonprofit that provides emergency financial and other **assistance to the families of our service members and wounded veterans**.

6. The festival’s warm, inviting atmosphere creates unique opportunities to **mingle with current chart-topping songwriters** and **living** **legends**.

7. The 2012 lineup is bigger than ever, from **Robert Earl Keen**, **Patrice** **Pike**, **Billy** **Burnette** and **Matraca** **Berg**, to 2012 ACM Songwriter of the Year nominees **Dallas** **Davidson** and **Luke** **Laird**, the World Famous Headliners – **Al** **Anderson**, **Pat** **McLaughlin** and **Shawn** **Camp** – and the **Jeffrey** **Steele** **Band**.

8. **Jeffrey Steele** – a charismatic live performer and the award-winning writer behind smashes including Rascal Flatts’ “What Hurts the Most,” Montgomery Gentry’s “Hell Yeah,” Tim McGraw’s “The Cowboy in Me” – will perform with his ace band on Duval Street. The show is **free and open to the public**.

9. Songwriter Drew Reid first suggested a songwriter festival in Key West, and then **Charlie Baur** – who had moved to the island in 1988 to open the Hog’s Breath Saloon – jumped at the idea. The event’s **1995 debut was small but memorable**, **featuring Mickey Newbury and Shel Silverstein**. BMI first stepped in as a partner and sponsor the following year.

10. **Make your reservations now** – hotels and bed and breakfasts on the island are filling up fast. For a list of sponsoring hotels and suggestions of where to stay, visit [www.keywestsongwritersfestival.com](http://www.keywestsongwritersfestival.com/).

**Sponsors**

In addition to its title sponsor, [Better Angels Music](http://musicworthpayingfor.com/site/), and presenting sponsor [BMI](http://www.bmi.com), the festival is also sponsored by [SunTrust Bank](https://www.suntrust.com/), [Comcast](http://www.comcast.com/), [Beam Global Wine and Spirits](http://www.beamglobal.com/), [The Recording Academy / Nashville Chapter](http://www.grammy365.com/chapters/nashville-chapter), and [Hearts Bluff Music](http://www.heartsbluffmusic.com/).

**Looking for more info?** Visit [www.keywestsongwritersfestival.com](http://www.keywestsongwritersfestival.com/).