There's something about those long and languid summer days that makes seizing the cooler nights an imperative. Portland's Old Port offers a plethora of opportunities (despite the complaints of a few killjoy guests at nearby hotels) to get loose and loud well into the witching hours.

SUMMER CITY CLASSICS
In Portland, it's not always at the trendy newcomer locales that you'll find the really good times. Some of the city's most tried-and-true do it best, with the characteristic warmth and laid-back atmospheres most conducive to high spirits and hedonism.

Remember those illicit backyard parties of your underage youth, the ones your friends threw while their overly trusting parents were vacationing in Italy? Blaring and raucous with stale Doritos and warm, flat beer in red Solo
Where the music’s hot, where the beer’s cold, where everybody is.

By Karen Hofreiter

On the Beach

Old Orchard Beach is an epicenter of loud music and dancing every night of the summer. The Brunswick pub deck is the place for live music. Line-up includes: Hello Newman, June 17; Quiet Riot Act, June 19; Dan Merrill, June 24; Tickle!, July 1; Stolen Mojo, July 3; Sons of the Beach, July 10; The Inflatables, July 16; Diezel, July 23; Mitch Alden, August 1; Stolen Mojo, August 6; The Dapper Gents Duo, August 9; MB Padfield, August 16; Jodie Cunningham, August 20; The Hurricanes, August 27; Alex Roy, August 31.
Swap these out for authentic toasted tortilla chips and local craft beer and that’s exactly the vibe you’ll find on a summer’s eve at **Amigos Mexican Restaurant** (9 Dana Street, Portland 772-0772). In the outdoor space out back strings of lights along the high wood fencing, a band tucked in the corner, and the youthful, shoulder-to-shoulder crowd create that homegrown, thrown-together-last-minute atmosphere of an authentic party. As a local party fiend put it: “The name of the place should be ‘The IT bar of the Old Port.’ It’s just dive-bar enough to scare away the high-maintenance types, the whiners, the snobs, the yuppies, and the hipsters… and the patio is where it’s at!” (Yelp, September 2015).

The nightly live jams coming from the wharf-side deck at **The Portland Lobster Company** (180 Commercial Street, Portland, 775-2112, portland-lobstercompany.com) liven up this long stretch of Commercial Street. It’s hard not to be lured over for a beer, bite, and perhaps a little boogie—if there’s space, that is—in the “crowded, hectic atmosphere” (Tripadvisor reviewer, Killington, VT, December 2015). The incredibly popular lobster and seafood joint is almost always packed with locals and tourists alike, crammed in to crack lobsters and sip Maine-brewed summer ales, while soaking up the live music lacing the fragrant sea breeze. “This place is straight up ROCKING what seems like every day of the week during peak season.” (Yelp reviewer, Flushing, NY, February 2016).

Head just around the corner and you’ll find another deck for dancing at **The Porthole** (20 Custom House Wharf, Portland, 773-4653, portholemaine.com). The expansive wharf-side patio draws high-spirited hordes on balmy summer nights with live local acts, plates...
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of briny oysters, and no-frills cocktails. From post-work suits ditching their jackets and loosening their ties during happy hour, to slap-happy tourists already on their sixth round, there’s “plenty of people-watching: young folks dressed for the clubs, old folks dancing to music...” (Yelp reviewer, El Dorado, CA, August 2013).

Another famed Portland patio sits on the rooftop of Brian Boru (57 Center Street, Portland, 780-1506, brianboruportland.com). At this classic Irish pub, join the sea of sunglasses while guzzling Guinness or sipping cider and listening to live bands (Thursday-Sunday) cranking out everything from reggae to funk to rock and pop covers. While some may not be too keen on the craic—“a really LOUD bar” (Yelp, Wilmington, DE, September 2015)—for the rest of us, that’s the whole point. As a native Irishman raved, “This bar is without doubt one of the reasons I’d return to Portland for a night out. The rooftop bar was busy and with the live band playing the atmosphere was wonderful” (Tripadvisor, August 2015).

REALLY LOUD AND REALLY BIG

Portland’s premier outdoor concert venues offer a slew of national acts for all tastes...as long as your taste is big, bold, and blasting. Join the 3,000 revelers at the Maine State Pier (Commercial and Franklin streets, Portland, Box Office 358-9327, waterfrontconcerts.com) and catch acts like Top-40 rapper Fat Joe (June
Along the Waterfront

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4); indie rock band Dashboard Confessional (June 15); and the epitome-of-summer crooners, the Beach Boys (July 7). Beyond the masses and the mammoth steel-frame stage, serene sailboats float through Casco Bay, providing an a picturesque backdrop to the revelry.

The recently reopened Thompson’s Point (Thompson’s Point Road, Portland, (207) 747-5288, statetheatreportland.com for event listings) also boasts a stellar line-up this summer. Enjoy acts like progressive rock group Moe. (June 17) and the feel-good reggae tunes of Michael Franti & Spearhead (June 15) while enjoying the view over the Fore River and feasting on food truck favorites from CN Shawarma and Fishin’ Ships. Last summer’s concert-goers always mention the incredible sunsets from the open-air venue. After all, “Who doesn’t dig music next to the ocean???” (Facebook fan, October 2015).

Weekend Wind-down

Just because it’s Sunday and you’re back to the grind in 12 hours doesn’t have to mean a dreary night in. Taking in a film at Congress Square Park is the perfect chilled yet social last call to a party warrior weekend. Grab your camp chair and drink cooler and join the audience for classic thrillers like North by Northwest and Psycho; retro rom-coms like Breakfast at Tiffany’s and Manhattan; and beloved blockbusters like E.T., Indiana Jones, and Star Wars. Laugh, cry, and get goose bumps in unison while the weekend slips behind the giant silver screen and the rush of traffic and pedestrians on Congress Street fades to a peaceful lull. Portland Summer Film Series (Congress Square Park, Portland, portlandsummerfilms.com; see website for schedules and times).