

Best of the SF Bay Area



Posted by: [Barry Willis](#) on 08/11/2015

Tahoe Summerfest Offers Top Talent in Idyllic Setting

Bay Area classical music fans are likely to know about festivals within easy reach, and about far-flung events like Tanglewood that attract thousands of visitors each summer. Many may not know about one of the best, Tahoe Summerfest, three weekends of classical music in an idyllic setting in Incline Village, on Lake Tahoe's north shore.

Summerfest provides music fans with a rare opportunity to enjoy great music made by our greatest musicians. Artistic director/ conductor Joel Revzen and his performers are an all-star team gleaned from the best orchestras in North America.



Sponsored by JetBlue, the performance venue on the campus of private Sierra Nevada College is intimate and informal. Program selection and musicianship are superb, with a different theme for each performance: August 7's was "Spanish Fire" with works by Albeniz, Arriaga, Rodrigo, and Argentine tango master Astor Piazzolla.

We were astounded by classical guitarist Ana Vidovic, a native Croatian now residing in Baltimore. Revzen calls her "among the world's best." Vidovic also performed the following night in a program of Spanish chamber music, in a concert sponsored by Dolan Lexus.

This is Summerfest's fourth year and the organizers hope that it will eventually become an annual destination event to rival Tanglewood. The entire event is the embodiment of grace and civility. The star attraction this final weekend is cellist Paul Watkins, of whom Yo-Yo Ma has said "I am in awe of this guy." The theme for Friday, August 14 is "Hero's Passage," with works by Wagner, Richard Strauss, and Hayden. The following evening is "White Nights, Golden Moons" with works by Rimsky-Korsakov and Tchaikovsky. Watkins stars in Sunday's "The Danube-Baltic Express" showcasing Mozart, Tchaikovsky, and Beethoven.

Should you want some theater with your classical music, you need look no farther than Tahoe Shakespeare at nearby Sand Harbor, where the resident troupe is performing "Romeo and Juliet" in rotation with "The Fantasticks."

Of course, the entire Tahoe area has many tremendous restaurants. We especially enjoyed "Artemis," a Mediterranean café with at least two locations in the South Lake Tahoe area. You could have a very full weekend should you wish to pursue it. Our experience was wonderful.