

Myth vs. Fact: Medical Marijuana



By Shonna
McGrail R
yan

Whether you are in support of medical marijuana or opposed to it, the voters of Massachusetts spoke in November 2012 and decided that patients should have safe access to medicinal cannabis. Since the referendum was passed the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) has been working on developing laws and regulations to build a safe and professional medical marijuana industry. As of last week, the DPH received 181 applications from organizations looking to open licensed dispensaries. Only 35 of the applicants will receive licenses and of these 35 we can expect 1 or 2 will be stationed in Bristol County. Nine organizations have applied in Bristol County to contend for those licenses.

What does this mean for New Bedford?

To find out more, I spoke with one of the applicants, Coastal Compassion, a group that has applied to open a dispensary in New Bedford. Through them I was able to learn more about the application process and to find out about the possible impact of medical marijuana on greater New Bedford. Their team was very well informed and professional and they provided me with some insightful information about the realities of medical marijuana, and how a dispensary in New Bedford can bring a lot more positive aspects than one might expect.



Myth vs. Fact: Medical Marijuana Patients are Only Interested in “Getting High”

When it comes to getting the patient perspective on medical marijuana, I was fortunate to be able to speak with JoAnne Leppanen who is the Executive Director of the Rhode Island Patient Advocacy Coalition (RIPAC) and Coastal Compassion’s Patient Education Director. Ms. Leppanen, a New Bedford resident, is the first to admit that she never expected she would be an advocate for medical marijuana patients. However, after six years of working in Rhode Island with those whose lives have been improved by safe, legal access to medicinal cannabis she honestly feels that “there are patients who would not be alive if not for medical cannabis.”

The patients Ms. Leppanen works with have a vast range of debilitating medical conditions, many of which are so serious that they are living with severe chronic pain that prevents them from being able to function in society. As Ms. Leppanen explained it, “If narcotics worked long term that would be great, we wouldn’t need medical marijuana. But narcotics have serious side effects and many people can’t take them. When they are taken for long periods of time they have intense, negative side effects. So if it weren’t for medical marijuana, these patients would be sentenced to a life of pain.”

In fact, in Ms. Lepannen's experience with RIPAC, many of the patients start off being very wary of using medical marijuana. "These are not kids looking to get high, they are most often older people who have never tried marijuana or who tried it once years ago and had a negative experience. They are looking for pain relief without the 'high'. It's really not about getting high, it's about a plant with medical properties capable of helping with nausea, pain, spasm, loss of appetite and many other health issues."

Ms. Lepannen addressed the fact that there is often a misperception that those who are recommended medical marijuana will spend their days sitting on the couch smoking marijuana and watching TV, but that the reality is the opposite. Many of the patients have lived in pain for so long that when they find a strain and form of medical cannabis that benefits them they are actually able to manage their pain and live more fully, "they can live again, relate again and become members of their families again."



Myth vs. Fact: Those Involved in the Medical Marijuana Industry are "Stoners"

There is often a negative stereotype of the type of people who

are involved in the medical marijuana industry, however, based on meeting with board members from Coastal Compassion, I found these stereotypes to be meritless. The team members were not only professional and highly informed on any topic I brought up, but they were also very dedicated to their mission of getting high quality medication to those in need of it.

Although I was only able to talk to one team, they signified to me the dedication and organization that is required to work in the medical marijuana industry. The founding team members of Coastal Compassion are all from Massachusetts and have years of experience with the medical marijuana industry through their involvement in Rhode Island's program as growers, policy advocates and businessmen. When I asked them why they got involved in the marijuana industry in the first place, they responded that every one of them knew someone who had personally benefited from medical marijuana, or who could have benefited if they had safe, legal access. Having seen the effects of medical marijuana on friends and family members who were struggling with debilitating chronic health issues, they felt that they could bring compassionate care to patients by becoming involved in Rhode Island.

RIPAC Director JoAnne Leppanen told me that before the caregivers of Coastal Compassion became involved in the Rhode Island Medical Marijuana Program, many patients were struggling to find access to the medication they needed. Some patients had such progressive illnesses that finding the right form and strain of medication was challenging.

Since any form of smoking has adverse health effects, patients are advised to use a vaporizer or take their medication in an edible or tincture form. This means that patients need to have a supplier who knows how to create effective medication in all its various forms. Additionally, different strains yield varying ratios of THC to cannabinoid ratios, which effects the reaction the patient will have to it in regards to their medical needs. Thus, the grower must have experience with

producing various effective strains. When the growers of Coastal Compassion came to Rhode Island, they were able to provide both.

“Having them form a network of Caregivers was a blessing. The feedback from patients was incredible because they were able to get them effective medication, even for the most difficult patients” said Ms. Leppanen. “They brought variety, people skills, and a genuine compassion for the patients they were servicing. I’ve seen the results of what they can do and I am amazed.”

When Massachusetts voted medical marijuana into effect, the team members of Coastal Compassion decided that seeking to operate a dispensary was their next logical step in helping patients. Since the law passed, the board members of Coastal Compassion and other applicants statewide have been preparing for the application process by expanding their teams and preparing for the financial, legal and logistical aspects of opening a dispensary.

Here’s an example of the type of teamwork and commitment that goes into applying for a Massachusetts dispensary license. The founding members of Coastal Compassion are South Coast residents with much experience in growing via the Rhode Island MMJ program, but they knew that they would need to confer with nationally respected experts in order to become effective cultivation and dispensary operators in Massachusetts. Thus, they focused on reaching out to experts locally and nationally. Coastal Compassion’s advisory and support team now includes members like RIPAC Director JoAnne Leppanen, Canna Advisor’s Jay Czarkowski who is a facility design and operations expert from Colorado, Kris Krane of 4-Front Advisors who is the nation’s leading dispensary operations expert and Chapman Dickerson of Dickerson Farms who has spent years cultivating medical marijuana. Additionally, Coastal Compassion has been working with Evans Cutler, a Massachusetts-based law firm that specializes in medical

marijuana law and Beacon Strategies Group, a Boston-based public relations expert.

Having Coastal Compassion describe to me all that went into just preparing for the application process alone made me aware of the magnitude of organizational skills and the expertise needed to become a dispensary operator.

Myth vs. Fact: A Dispensary in New Bedford Will Attract Great Rates of Crime

One of the major concerns I have heard people voice about medical marijuana dispensaries is the fear that they will attract crime. To learn more about this I brought the topic up to the team members at Coastal Compassion and found that they had some very interesting things to share.

“It’s a myth that medical dispensaries bring crime to a neighborhood” 4-Front advisor Kris Krane explained, “the reality of the matter is quite the opposite. The dispensaries follow robust security protocols such as the installation of cameras and the hiring of well-trained security staff. Therefore, it’s often found that dispensaries actually make neighborhoods and the businesses surrounding them safer.”

But where’s the proof?

When I asked this question, the team members were able to site several instances nation-wide where even city officials were able to agree that crime rates have dropped due to the opening of well-run dispensaries. For example, in Oakland, California it has been stated that illegal drug dealing has decreased notably by instead providing safe access to medicine and patient education.

Jay Czarkowski also attested to the safety of the dispensaries in Colorado saying “I’m a parent so I understand concerns about safety... in Boulder there are dozens and dozens of dispensaries but I can honestly say we’ve seen no negative

impact. In fact, crime has dropped as has teen use.”

Even Boulder County District Attorney Stan Garnett seems like he would be inclined to agree with Mr. Czarkowski if you look at his 60 Minutes interview and many other interviews he’s done in the past year. Originally Garnett was skeptical of medical marijuana’s impact on the community, but after seeing the way that the dispensary system was regulated he actually sent a letter to U.S. Attorney John Walsh stating that the dispensary system was working effectively and that the federal government should not make the prosecution of medical marijuana a priority.

Myth vs. Fact: A Dispensary in New Bedford Will Only Benefit Patients

You may be thinking that if you have no chronic medical conditions, or if you simply aren’t interested in trying medicinal marijuana, you have no reason to care about a dispensary coming to New Bedford. Interestingly enough however, a dispensary in our city will actually bring a number of positive economic and community growth opportunities.

First is the fact that a dispensary is guaranteed to generate a numerous jobs for residents. The team from Coastal Compassion emphasized to me that as individuals who grew up in the South Coast region themselves they find it critical to provide job opportunities to those living in the area. These jobs vary from delivery drivers to administrative assistants to security guards.

Another way that a dispensary in New Bedford will positively impact the community is through outreach. For example, when speaking with the team they told me about their plan to set up the Coastal Compassion Community Foundation if their application is accepted. This nonprofit foundation would allow them to take a portion of the earnings from the dispensary and funnel it directly back into the greater New Bedford area. The

Foundation will “provide maximum impact on the local community in the areas of public education, alcohol, tobacco and substance abuse education, crime prevention and public safety, the marine environment, and green energy.”

In Closing

There are a lot of factors at play with the siting of cultivation centers and dispensaries within the City, and the eventual selection of teams. There is clearly a lot of interest in the emerging industry surrounding medical marijuana and it will be interesting to see how the process plays out. If you have any questions about the process, please comment below and I will try to keep New Bedford Guide readers up to date as new information emerges!

Connecting for Change Survival Guide



*Ben Gamache and Riley Mello perform at
Connecting for Change 2012*



By Shonna
McGrail R
yan

Having lived on the South Coast for the past 8 years, I have heard the Connecting for Change Conference mentioned many times, but it wasn't until recently that I actually discovered what this incredible three-day event is about.

Having corresponded with Connecting for Change manager Brooke Syvertsen, I was able to learn a lot about the upcoming 9th Annual Connecting for Change: A Bioneers by the Bay Conference. Thus, I have put together this "Connecting for Change Survival Guide" to answer any questions you might have.

1. What the Heck is Connecting for Change?

The Connecting for Change Conference is an internationally acclaimed, three-day conference that brings together over 2,500 teachers, innovators, business professionals, students, community leaders and many others. Participants discuss resilience, regeneration and solutions to key community issues such as:

- Food and farming
- Health and healing
- Green business
- Indigenous knowledge
- Environmental and social justice
- Women and youth empowerment
- Spirituality

- Sustainability

The conference is presented by the Marion Institute and features workshops, live keynote presentations, family and Youth Initiative programs, an exhibition hall, a farmers market, live music and local artwork.

To learn more about the conference and the Marion Institute, check out this brief video of 2012 highlights ([Connecting for Change 2012 Highlights](#))



Ameena Matthews, violence interrupter in Chicago at Connecting for Change 2012

2. When and Where is this Internationally Acclaimed Event?

The 9th annual conference will be held October 25-27, 2013 in Downtown New Bedford. The event encompasses three blocks of the city, but its main hub is located at the Zeiterion Theater (684 Purchase Street, New Bedford, MA).

The conference starts at 9:30 AM on Friday and goes until 6 PM, and the hours are the same for Saturday, with evening entertainment each night that is free and open to the public. Sunday also starts on 9:30 but ends at 3:30.

3. How Can I Get Involved in Connecting for Change?

Registration for Connecting for Change 2013 is now open, and prices are based on a sliding scale. The actual ticket price is \$100 per day, but accessibility to all is important to the event organizers, *"...so that income barriers will not prevent people from attending. To truly create change in our community, all classes, races, and creeds need to be present at the conference. We are asking you to pay what you can, per day that you attend, so that our conference can continue to create positive impacts in this world."* You are also able to pre-purchase locally-sourced, vegetarian buffet-style lunch for \$12 a day if you so choose. To learn more, check out their [registration page](#).

You can also receive a registration discount by volunteering. To learn more about volunteering opportunities click here: [Volunteer for Connecting for Change](#). For those who cannot afford the minimum donation, there are limited need-based scholarships available and they can be applied for through the registration page, [apply for a need-based scholarship](#).

There is no deadline for registration, however, event organizers do anticipate that the conference will sell out due to the world-renowned keynote speaker line-up.

Scholarships are made possible by donations from other attendees, supporters, local organizations, and make a great impact on the ability of community youth to attend. To learn more about the impact of scholarships at the conference, watch this video [Connecting for Change: The Need for Scholarships](#). To support the scholarship fund, click here: [Support the Scholarship Fund](#).



Arn Chorn-Pond, defender of Cambodian-American human rights with author of his story, Patricia McCormick.

4. Paid Features of the Event

For the registration cost, you will be able to attend keynote speeches and workshops under the categories of:

- Food & Farming
- Health & Healing
- Spirituality & Indigenous Knowledge
- Women Leadership
- Youth Leadership
- Social Justice
- Sustainability

These categories are referred to as “tracks” which is simply a system of organizing similar topics for those interested. As Connecting for Change manager Brooke Syvertsen explained it to me, *“If you were interested in Spirituality you would enjoy seeing keynotes Eben Alexander, Ptolemy Tompkins, and perhaps Princess Lucaj. Ideally, there will be at least 5 workshops for each track.”* For more information about the 2013 keynote speakers, click here: [Keynote Speakers](#).

Keynote speakers present from approximately 9:30 AM- 12 PM at the Zeiterion, and workshop sessions take place after lunch, from roughly 2-5:30 PM (with the exception of Sunday, which ends at 3:30 PM). The schedule is still being finalized, but there will be 50 workshops over the course of the three days.

5. Free Features of the Event

There are several features of the event that you do not have to register for to participate in. They are as follows:

Family Area

The family area includes family friendly activities that relate to the sustainability theme of the conference. For example, last year families could participate in a recycled art activities. The family area also includes music, live animal presentations such as The Birds of Prey Exhibit, and much more.

Farmers Market

A Farmers Market stationed on Purchase Street at Union Street will be open all three days of the event. It will be open from 12 PM- 4 PM on Friday and Saturday, and 11 AM- 3 PM on Sunday. The Farmers Market is a great way to pick up delicious, high quality local foods while also directly supporting the community. Food items include fall vegetables, locally grown apples, apple cider, jams, jellies, honey, baked good and many other delicious options.



Lunch Intermission during Connecting for Change 2012

Youth Activities

The organizers of the Connecting for Change conference feel strongly about getting young people (ages 13-25) involved in learning more about interconnectedness, social justice and environmental sustainability. Thus, there are free youth events offered that vary from hands-on activities to musical and artistic performances. There will also be many youth programs, schools, and colleges tabling in the Youth Tent to promote student involvement and “next steps” for those looking to further their education or enter into a certificate program.

To learn more about how the Youth Initiative element of the CFC conference is beneficial, check out this cool video ([Youth at Connecting for Change 2012](#)).

Exhibitor Hall

The exhibition hall features sustainable businesses and organizations, music, art installations, live demonstrations, a book vendor, coffee and delicious snacks.

Movie at the Zeiterion Theatre

A movie that is still to be determined will be featured at the Zeiterion Theatre with free admission on Saturday evening of October 26th. Stay tuned for more information!

Free Concert

Grammy-winning saxophonist Paul Winter will be performing for at the Zeiterion for free (open to the general public) as part of Connecting for Change on Friday, October 25th at 7:30pm. He will be performing Flyways, which is a musical celebration of the great bird migration from Africa through the Middle East to Eurasia interweaving the voices of the birds with indigenous music from the cultures over which they fly. To read more about the project and to watch some short clips on the performance click here [Flyways Video](#).

There is a Facebook event here: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1430946260460447/>. Invite your friends!

The Pasta House Restaurant Spotlight



100 Alden Road Fairhaven, MA 02719

Restaurant Type:

Italian

Hours:

Monday- Thursday, 11:30 am- 9:30 pm

Friday, 11:30 am- 10:00 pm

Saturday, 4pm- 10 pm

Sunday, 4pm- 9 pm

Contact:

Telephone – (508) 993-9913

Email – info@thepastahouse.net

Website – <http://www.thepastahouse.net>

Menu – [The Pasta House Menu's & Specials](#)



Restaurant Reviews:

- [Yelp Customer Reviews – The Pasta House Yelp Reviews – Like The Pasta House?](#)

[Give them a review!](#)

- [Google Places Customer Reviews – The Pasta House Google Reviews – Like The Pasta House? Give them a review!](#)
- [Trip Advisor Customer Reviews – The Pasta House Trip Advisor Reviews – Like The Pasta House? Give them a review!](#)
- [Standard Times Review – The Pasta House Standard Times Review](#)
- [Phantom Gourmet – The Pasta House on Phantom Gourmet](#)

Restaurant Features:

- A full bar including draft beers and an extensive wine offering
- A fireplace (lit seasonally)
- Flat screen TVs in the lounge area
- An outdoor dining patio (seasonal)
- A stone deck pizza oven

History :

The Pasta House building has been a part of Fairhaven since 1968 when it was built by Victor Fleurent as a steak house with exposed wooden beams called “The Paddock Pub”. In 1975 the business changed hands, and for five years it was known as the “J.W. Western Steakhouse”. It was in 1981 that the Raikkonen family bought the property and changed the cuisine from a steak house to a five star Italian restaurant.

The Pasta House as we know it today was bought by Mario Ribeiro in 2001 and while the menu remained oriented around Italian food, he aimed to make The Pasta House more of a casual dining affair through a major renovation in 2009. Through renovations the ambiance was transformed from a “white table cloth” style eatery to a more laid-back ambiance. A stone deck pizza oven was also added, and in addition to top-notch Italian food, steak and seafood, pizza was made available to customers. Despite the many changes made, the exposed wooden beams are still an architectural feature of The Pasta House.

Awards and Recognition:



- New Bedford Seaport Chowder Festival Winners

-Best Seafood Chowder: 2006, 2009, 2011

-Best Clam Chowder: 2008, 2012

- Featured on the Phantom Gourmet in 2011
(<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VLjsbM2tEEY>)

99th Annual Feast of the Blessed Sacrament Survival Guide



*99 years of great music, food, and folks!
(Photo by Ed Camara)*



By Shonna
McGrail R
yan

The New Bedford Feast of the Blessed Sacrament, a.k.a. the Portuguese Feast, a.k.a. Madeira Feast is the largest event the city has every year. More than that, it is the largest Portuguese feast in the world and the largest ethnic festival in New England. The feast was founded in 1915 by four Madeiran immigrants who wanted to recreate the festivities of their home island.

Between my own experience with the feast, some careful research and some very helpful guidance from Ed Camara, the Director of Media and Public Relations for Clube Madeirense S.S. Sacramento I have come up with an overview of the feast

which has become a major attraction for visitors from all over who come to celebrate the Portuguese culture through food, drink and entertainment.

For this year's 2013 feast, thousands of attendees are being anticipated. If you are considering being one of them, here are some things you should know about the feast:

1. Time and Location

If you have never been to the feast it naturally makes sense to let you know where to go and when to be there. The feast is a four day event, officially kicking off at 6:00 PM on Thursday, August 1st. The grounds close at midnight each night.

On Friday the grounds re-open from 6 PM to 11:45 PM. The weekend hours start a bit earlier with Saturday festivities beginning at 10 AM for the 5k road race followed by Kid's Day afternoon. The last day of the feast is Sunday which starts off at noon and will feature a parade at 2:00 PM. For more information on when and where events will be taking place, go to the Portuguese Feast Entertainment Schedule.



One of the city's favorite festival packs 'em in!

Most of the events take place at Madeira Field, which is permanent location in New Bedford's north end, which comes to life one weekend a year for the festivities. The address of

Madeira Field is 50 Madeira Avenue, New Bedford, MA. Parking can be a bit tricky, you may have to plan to search a bit to find a spot and walk a few blocks, or pay to park in a nearby lot.

2. Costs

The festival allows free admission and free entertainment thanks to the hard work of the 53 committee members who comprise the 2013 Feast of the Blessed Sacrament Committee. While admission is free there are also many vendors at the grounds selling everything from handmade Madeiran souvenirs to cigars.

Tickets may also be purchased to buy authentic Portuguese cuisine or, if you're over 21, an impressive selection of alcoholic beverages. Tickets cost a dollar each and can be purchased at ten machines located throughout the grounds by placing a five, ten or twenty dollar bill inside. Tickets are non-refundable. There are also stands with employees who sell the tickets.

Prices of food are kept reasonable, and there is a great deal of variety to choose from. To give you a general idea of the prices of items at the feast, a full meal is 12 tickets (which equates to 12 dollars), most sandwiches are around four tickets, and a soda or a water goes for one ticket. Still a phenomenal deal after all these years.

3. Food

One of the greatest features of the feast is the delicious Portuguese fare. There are many food stands located throughout Madeira Field that serve your favorites from the simple delights of linguica and cacoila sandwiches to full on Portuguese cuisine plates of chicken, beef, goat or tuna with potatoes, rice and vegetables.



Go ahead...drool!

Another major culinary draw is the Carne de Espeto, a massive, 40 foot barbecue pit where beef sirloin cubes can be cooked over an open flame on massive skewers. This is hard to miss since the aroma is absolutely mouth watering. Visitors are able to buy the meat for eight tickets a pound and a delicious aromatic salt is provided to cook with.

Visitors are then able to roast their own dinner over the gas-fired lava rock grill. Mr. Camara, (who has been a part of the organization since 1982) advised me that if someone tells you to pour Madeira wine on the meat it is not advisable (it does not help the flavor and causes the meat to burn faster!)

In case you are not accustomed to the flavorful cooking style of Portuguese cuisine, go to the Food & Drink page of the Portuguese Feast website for definitions of some of the food you might expect to see:
<http://portuguese Feast.com/page/food-drink>.

4. Drink

One of the draws of the feast is the consumption of Madeira wine, which is a central part of the festivities as it is part of a long tradition. Madeira wine is a sweet, fortified red wine. Genuine Madeira wine is made on the island of Madeira, and exportation of actual barrels are restricted due to regulations. However, thanks to a special agreement made between feast officials and the President of Madeira, casks

are able to be delivered to New Bedford and served for the weekend, making this a very rare treat for those who attend.

For those who don't find the taste of Madeira wine suits their pallet, there are a great variety of additional options including a full liquor bar for mix drinks. Alcohol stands also serve sangria and white wine and Budweiser beer is on tap.

If you wish to partake in the consumption of alcoholic beverages, you will need to have your ID scanned when you enter the feast grounds in order to receive a wristband that proves you are legally old enough to be served.

5. Entertainment

There is a great deal of quality free entertainment at the feast each year from Portuguese and American cultures. There are three stages throughout Madeira field, and each host a variety of performance types throughout the weekend. In addition, the Museum of Madeiran Heritage will be featuring musical performances each night of the feast. These performances will be featuring fado music, a Portuguese genre of music that can be traced back to the 1820s but is believed to be even older than that.



Special guest this year:

Everclear (Photo by Ed Camara)

One of the cultural acts that you may see take the stage at Madeira field is Grupo Folclorico Clube Madeirense S.S. Sacramento. This group of dancers present traditional dancing performances to authentic Madeiran music and in traditional clothing. These performances are always very spirited and interesting to see.

There will be many bands on the smaller stages during the feast, but the largest stage is reserved for a special performance at 10:00 each night. Thursday night the band Everclear will take the stage. Everclear was a very popular rock band in the '90s with hits like "I Will Buy You a New Life", "Father of Mine", "Wonderful", and "Santa Monica".

Friday night will feature Eratoxia, a Boston-based American/Portuguese rock band. On Saturday The Field Effect will be playing their infectious indie music for the crowds. Scarab will be taking the spotlight slot on Sunday, finishing up the weekend with their Journey tribute music.

6. Families

Since Madeira feast involves alcohol consumption, some readers may be wondering if it is a family appropriate event. You will be glad to know that family values are integral to the foundation of the feast. While it is probably not advisable to bring young children later in the night due to large crowds and loud music, it should be mentioned that there are many features of the feast that children will love. Also, the feast takes great measures to prohibit underage drinking. All who wish to consume alcoholic beverages are required to undergo a license verification process in order to receive a specially printed wristband.

A cool part of the feast is that it features carnival rides

and games all weekend. Saturday is probably the best day for families with young children thanks to Kids Day Afternoon which follows the 13th annual 5k road race. Kids day kicks off at noon and involves family friendly music, a magic show and distinguished performer Jody Scaise, the “motion man”.

For senior citizens in the community, there is “Senior Citizen Afternoon” which also takes place on Saturday from noon to 4 pm. During this time a shuttle is is being offered (courtesy of the City of New Bedford) from the parking lot of Lincoln Elementary on Saturday so that seniors can attend the event without having to worry about parking. On this day they are also offered a special deal of half price meals for only 6 dollars instead of 12 (eat in only). Special entertainment is featured as well.

7. History

The Feast of the Blessed Sacrament gains its roots from the island of Madeira which is located 390 miles off the coast of Morocco. Traditionally, each Roman Catholic parish in Madeira would observe a festival to celebrate their patron saint. A committee of four men called festeiros would be responsible for preparing the village for the celebration by decorating the streets, contracting entertainment (often in the form of a brass band and fireworks) and holding a ceremonial meal after mass on Sunday.



Tradition that goes back centuries to the “Old

World."

There are many versions of the tale of why the Feast of the Blessed Sacrament was first begun in New Bedford 97 years ago. What is certain however, is that the feast was initiated as a means of preserving basic values of the Madeiran culture. Of course, since it was first begun the feast has changed in many ways to accommodate thousands of eager participants and modern elements of celebration.

While there have been many changes in the feast, many aspects still remain central to the celebration. The tradition of Madeira wine is a very old one, dating back to the 15th Century when the Malvasia vine was planted on the island of Madeira to see it would yield an alternative supply of wine for England. When growth was successful Madeira wine quickly took to the market, but did not become a major export until many years later. It wasn't until the 16th Century that the flavor we know of today was created when they discovered that the flavor of the wine was actually improved by being repeatedly heated up. Follow the link for more information on the history of Madeira wine (<http://portugueseifeast.com/page/madeira-wine-history>).

The religious aspect of the feast also remains a part of proceedings. As it did in 1915, the feast still takes place near Our Lady of Immaculate Conception which is located on the corner of Earle and Madeira Street in New Bedford. The Portuguese feast pays homage to its religious traditions by beginning the weekend festivities with a procession to the church where Father Daniel O. Reis gives a Benediction to the Blessed Sacrament. Throughout the weekend the church also hosts a wonderful musical series of organ music and vocalists. The details of this schedule are still being finalized.

8. Madeira Field

The grounds on which the Feast of the Blessed Sacrament takes

place are quite expansive and easy to lose people in. Be sure you have a plan for finding lost party members whether it be by cell phone or a designated area to meet up at.

When entering the feast you will need to get in line for a wristband if you wish to purchase alcoholic beverages. One of the most prominent features you will notice upon entering the festival grounds is the Santana House. The house is designed after the colorful architectural styles of the homes in the village Santana, Madeira and is where the Madeira wine is served from.

Across from the Santana House is Stage One, which is massive and where the main attractions will be hosted throughout the weekend. There are also two other smaller stages, one that is inside the gates and the other which is outside and amongst the souvenir vendors. You will also see many food and drink stands throughout the grounds, and towards the back you will find the barbecue pits for Carne de Espeto (or just follow your nose).

5 Divine Dive Bars



Five iconic dive bars you have to check out!

In comedian Eugene Mirman's bizarre and hilarious novel "The Will to Whatevs: A Guide to Modern Life" he offers a very apt description of what a dive bar is. Allow me to start this article by borrowing his definition: *"Dive bars are the classic American bar full of all kinds of people... art students, elderly divas, atheists, others, writers, rockers, trannies, regular folk"* and many other grace these establishments.



By Shonna
McGrail R
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When I read Mirman's definition, I found it funny but also true; dive bars are indiscriminate, laid back, and often a great place to meet diverse and interesting characters if you are open minded. I have listed five dive bars in this article

that I have fond memories of. There are certainly many others in Greater NB, and I'd love to hear about them in the comments section below!

1. Knuckleheads

85 MacAuthur Drive, New Bedford, MA

Ever since I moved to NB at the age of 21, Knuckleheads has repeatedly been mentioned to me as one of the most eclectic, dive bar-esque hangouts in the city. While the quality of food and drink set Knuckleheads a bit higher than the typical dive bar standard, the prices are very reasonable and overall, Knuckleheads embodies that local vibe that "divers" cherish.

One of the things that makes a good dive a good dive is the combination of affordable drinks and affordable, fun entertainment. It's a big check in both columns when it comes to Knuckleheads, which features live music (no cover charge!) Tuesday-Saturday as well as beer pong tournaments.

2. The Oriental Pearl

576 State Road, Westport, MA

The Oriental Pearl, or The "OP" as we regulars like to call it, looks exactly the same way it probably has since it was first built. As a result, I always get a feeling that I stepped back in time to the '80s when I'm there which is a simultaneously strange and interesting feeling. What I really like about The OP though, is that it isn't pretentious. On a karaoke night you will find everyone from 21-year-old locals to 80-year-old married couples picking up the mic.

The drinks are affordable, and since it's a Chinese food restaurant you can grab something tasty to split while you hang out. There's a pool table if you get there early in the evening, but that is often moved aside on nights when there's karaoke or bands playing because YES, there will be dancing.

With a disco ball and other fancy lighting, the dance floor is a judgment free zone. I've been there on nights when elderly couples were schooling us on how to waltz, and I've been there nights when twenty-something year olds were jumping around to metal renditions of Britney Spears songs. You never know what you'll find at the Oriental Pearl, and that makes it one of my favorite divine dive bars.

3. The Garden

133 Union Street, New Bedford, MA

The Garden doesn't need a whole lot of mentioning, because it's well known to anyone who spends time in downtown New Bedford. The Garden is a simple equation for dive bar goodness; cheap pitchers of beer, a jukebox and pool tables. It's a magnet for locals and has a lot of regulars, so you're always likely to see someone you know there. At the same time, its crowd is diverse, ranging from frat boys to retirees, so it's an easy place to strike up a conversation with complete strangers (if you're into that kind of thing).

4. Bayside Lounge

125 Sconticut Neck Road, Fairhaven, MA

The Bayside Lounge is the sort of bar where anyone and everyone feels welcome. It has a kitchen that serves delicious specials at certain hours, and the prices are always reasonable for food and drink alike. The Bayside Lounge has a fisherman's bar sort of vibe, and there's always plenty to do there, whether it's ordering a pitcher of beer and playing pool with friends, going to trivia night, or checking out some of their live entertainment. I've seen a couple really fun bands (and one time, a great rendition of "Free Bird") that got people up and dancing like fools.

5. Paul's Sports Corner

19 Howland Road, Fairhaven, MA

I will always remember being at Paul's Sports Corner one day

and meeting one of the owners, simply because of how funny and down-to-Earth she was. She took pride in the fact that Paul's is a family owned establishment and that it's a sort of "What you see is what you get." neighborhood bar. You can tell that it has been supported by the same local regulars for years, and as a result people are very at home there, which makes it feel like a place that's easy to relax and unwind at. Paul's features pool and a jukebox, as well as a decent number of TV screens for sports fans. Of course the drinks are very affordable as well!

Do you have a local dive bar that you love? Tell us about it!

5 Restaurants with Wonderful Wings

Five of the best wings joints in the area!



By Shonna
McGrail R
yan

For anyone who has ever seen the movie "Forrest Gump" there's one line that really sticks in your mind. The part when Bubba lists the many ways you can prepare and eat shrimp. I share Bubba's enthusiasm for variety, but instead of shrimp, my passion is for chicken.

As Bubba so eloquently states, "You can barbecue it, boil it,

broil it, bake it [and] sauté it". Chicken can be flavored and cooked in a vast variety of ways, but my favorite is the simple bone-in chicken wing. Bone-in wings are delicious with a cold, crisp beer, making this a perfect (albeit messy) game-time treat.

If you are craving some wings, here are five restaurants with wonderful wings to check out in the Greater New Bedford area.

1. Rose Alley Ale House

94 Front Street, New Bedford, MA

In a poll of NB Guide readers, Rose Alley Ale House was a clear favorite for wings. It's no wonder why- RAAH has hands down some of the best chicken wings I've ever tasted in my many years as a wing connoisseur. They offer a variety of sauce types and dry rubs. Be cautious of "Suicidal"- it is incredibly hot, but delicious for those who can handle the heat!

2. Ayur-Shri

387 State Road, Dartmouth, MA

I was surprised to hear a few people recommend Ayur-Shri to me for their wings. I've eaten there several times, but given that it specializes in fine Indian cuisine, chicken wings aren't something I typically think of. However, when I checked out the menu and read the description of their wings, my mouth watered instantly; "Tandoori Wings: Chicken wings marinated in herbs and spices, cooked in tandoor."

3. Dublin's Sports Bar N Grille

1686 Acushnet Avenue, New Bedford, MA

Sometimes I think people forget about Dublin's because it isn't downtown, but it's really one of my favorite places for watching sports, getting a beer and eating wings. There's plenty of TVs and sitting space at Dublins which I like, but I also find the food to be very tasty. Dublin's wings can be ordered in a variety of sauce flavors and are cooked to perfection.

4. The Gateway Tavern

371 Marion Road, Wareham, MA

I don't spend a lot of time in Wareham, so I had never heard of The Gateway Tavern until it was mentioned in the NB Guide poll. I decided to check out the menu and quickly deemed that The Gateway Tavern must go on my "restaurants to check out this summer" list. Their menu looks great and the overall vibe of the place seems laid back, fun and very summer oriented. In terms of wings, they offer buffalo sauces ranging from mild to "4-alarm" as well as dry rubs. Additionally, they have something called "sesame ginger wings" which sound incredible.

5. The Sail Loft

246 Elm Street, Padanaram, MA

If you're looking for a bar/restaurant with a quaint New England vibe, check out Sail Loft. While most of their food is a bit upscale they do actually serve wings on their Starters menu. Naturally they have buffalo wings, but they also offer some other unique flavors like garlic butter, sweet chili, Thai peanut and sesame teriyaki.

Did I miss any wonderful wings locations in the South Coast? If so, please comment below as I'd love to know about it!

**10 Tempting Summer
Blockbusters You MUST See**



Summer equals blockbusters!



By Shonna
McGrail R
yan

Although summer is a time for beaches, barbeques, and lots of other outdoors activities, it is also known for big blockbusters. When heat waves hit, the refreshing AC is a wonderful retreat, and kicking back with an ice-cold soda and a good movie isn't a bad way to cool off.

We have already seen some major blockbusters release as summer approaches, but with more on the way and promise some big budget, star studded entertainment. For the purposes of this list I have provided a brief synopsis of ten movies that I

think will be big in terms of the entertainment factor. There are certainly many more films being released, so please share in the comments section below which movies YOU are most excited to see this summer!

1. Iron Man III- Released May 3, 2013

With Robert Downey Jr. under the mask of the vigilante Iron Man, this Marvel comic franchise has seen great success. Iron Man III continues to step up the intense special effects and adrenaline rushing action sequences that have made these movies great. Pepper Potts (Gwyneth Paltrow) and Colonel James Rhodes AKA War Machine AKA The Iron Patriot (Don Cheadle) return for Iron Man III as Tony Stark faces The Mandarin, a deadly terrorist.

Overall, I didn't think this movie was all that different than any other Iron Man film, and it was possibly the least exciting of the trio. However, it was still entertaining.

2. The Great Gatsby- Released May 10, 2013

A classic literary novel like The Great Gatsby was a shoe-in for attracting some attention as a film remake, especially with a cast that includes Leonardo DiCaprio, Carey Mulligan and Tobey Maguire. I haven't gotten the chance to see it yet but I would definitely like to, despite the mixed reviews. Director Baz Luhrmann (of Moulin Rouge and Romeo + Juliet fame) has a wild method of cinematography and a flair for dramatic storytelling, which entices me but may annoy others.

For those of you who haven't read the book or seen the 1974 Robert Redford version, here's a short synopsis. Set in the 1920s, The Great Gatsby follows Nick Carraway (Maguire), a fairly ordinary guy who is drawn into the rich and lavish lifestyle of his neighbor, Jay Gatsby (DiCaprio). It's a story of power, classism, doomed romance and ultimately, tragedy.



Iron Man 3 w/
Robert Downey Jr.

3. Star Trek Into Darkness- Released May 17, 2013

I'll admit it; I have never been much of a Trekkie. While I love sci-fi, Star Trek never clicked with me until J.J. Abrams directed his first Star Trek film in 2009. I thought the first one was so great that I was sure to make my way to see Star Trek Into Darkness on opening weekend. I must say, I was not disappointed. The special effects were incredible and the personalities of Kirk, Spock and the rest of the crew of the USS Enterprise continued to develop in intriguing ways.

4. This is the End- Release June 12, 2013

From Seth Rogan comes a film overflowing with comedy stars such as James Franco, Paul Rudd, Jay Baruchel, Danny McBride, Craig Robinson and Joah Hill. Even more interesting is that every actor and actress in this film will be playing themselves as they face the apocalypse in what looks like a bizarre and uproariously funny way. In addition to a solid cast of comedic actors, this movie boasts some interesting cameos including Emma Watson, Rhianna, Michel Cera, Mindy Kaling and many others. I will definitely be seeing this one!

5. Man of Steel- Release June 14, 2013

We've all seen plenty of Superman movies and TV shows over the years, and while they're ranged from pretty awful to pretty decent, I feel that we've never seen a Superman movie with Dark Knight Trilogy quality. I am optimistic that Man of Steel might be the film that DC fans have been waiting for.

Based on the trailer, Man of Steel seems to focus a lot on Clark Kent/Kal-El's background and reluctance to don the cape and embrace his alien heritage. However, when Earth is threatened he has to make a decision about what kind of man he wants to be and embrace who he truly is.

6. World War Z- Release June 21, 2013

When I heard they were making World War Z into a movie, I was very excited. The book was one of the best things that has ever happened to the zombie genre- it is a poignantly written novel that captures stories from around the world left by survivors of a zombie apocalypse. World War Z was smart, powerful and captivating as a book. As a movie, I don't see that the two have anything in common.



Elysium
featuring Matt
Damon & Jodie
Foster

That being said, it is clear that this movie has a major budget thrown behind some awesome effects and that it will likely be a huge draw to the box office. Although I feel uncertain about how good World War Z will be as a film, I am still willing to give it a shot. The movie adaptation will feature Brad Pitt as Gerry Lane, a UN employee who joins the efforts to stop a worldwide zombie infection.

7. The Wolverine- Release July 26, 2013

The Wolverine makes the list of movies I want to see this summer simply because I love all things X-Men. I know I'm not alone in this, so be sure to check out the trailer for this upcoming segment of the ongoing X-Men movie franchise. As usual it features Hugh Jackman as Wolverine but it's unclear when it's meant to take place as Jackman has said it's a "stand-alone piece" coming after X-Men Origins but the trailer does show Famke Janssen as Jean Grey. Either way, it looks like an interesting movie about Wolverine's ongoing struggles with life and his immortality as he faces a nemesis in Japan.

8. Elysium- Release August 8, 2013

Matt Damon and Jodie Foster will star in this big budget sci-fi that features a dystopian future where the poor are forced to toil away on a destroyed planet Earth and the wealthy live lavish lives on a space station called Elysium. Foster stars as Secretary Rhodes, a woman who is dedicated to preserve Elysium for the fortunate few. Damon plays the Max De Costa, a man who takes on a mission to end the classism that is destroying so many lives on Earth.

The trailer looks rather cool, showing Damon's character being suited up with some sort of body modification that makes him strong and powerful. However, it is unclear if this movie will be all cliché action sequences and fight scenes or something unique.

9. Kick-Ass 2- Release August 16, 2013

When Kick-Ass hit the theatres in 2010, it was received quite well. Amidst a world that has become saturated in vigilante films, Kick-Ass brought a crude, gritty humor that made it stand out from the crowd. Thus, Kick-Ass 2 has brought a lot of excitement and anticipation from those who loved part one.

The trailer actually looks pretty funny as it shows Kick-Ass and Hit-Girl are building a team of vigilantes who were inspired by their heroics, including Jim Carey as Colonel Stars and Stripes. In response, Red Mist decides to build his own evil army to avenge his father. With chaos escalating the police start to lock up anyone and everyone found wearing a mask, which only makes the job harder for Kick-Ass and Hit-Girl as they continue in their mission to save the city.

10. Riddick- September 6, 2013

Riddick is the third installment to the Chronicles of Riddick series. The Chronicles of Riddick films have been received with mixed reviews but for those sci-fi buffs who like Riddick, the gruff anti-hero played by Vin Diesel, the series has been a lot of fun as it blends brutal fighting with some horror elements. In this latest installment Riddick has been stranded on a desolate planet and he sets off beacons which bring bounty hunters down upon him. Of course, Riddick's plans for escape and revenge are far more complicated.

**2013 New Bedford Folk
Festival**



By Shonna
McGrail R
yan

You may know it as Summerfest, but the weekend long folk music extravaganza will be back again this summer with a new name but the same excitement and energy. Now called the New Bedford Folk Festival, this will be the 18th year that arts and music will be celebrated in the streets of New Bedford the weekend of Saturday July 6th and Sunday July 7th. Tickets are already up for sale and the music roster is coming together with another promising line-up of incredible talent and variety.

One of the things that has makes the New Bedford Folk Festival truly remarkable every year is the variety of musicians that take the stage over the course of the weekend. For two days, from 11 AM to 9 PM, performers from all over the world showcase the many different sounds and styles that fall into the eclectic folk music category. Take for example this year's [list of talent](#). Some groups fall into a more traditional category, like The Beans who have had a long history of performing in New England and are a vocal trio performing classic folk harmonies. Other groups are experimental or have a fusion element, like the Grand Slambovians who have been called "the hillbilly Pink Floyd".

Of course, there will be plenty of fiddle, banjo and guitar as can only be expected at a proper folk festival but another thing that is really striking about this year's performers are the number of awards and accomplishments that many of these musicians have under their belts. Take for example Michael Johnson, a guitarist and songwriter who has had several Billboard-charting hits including, "Bluer than Blue", "This Night Won't Last Forever" and "Almost Like Being in Love".

There's also Jeremy Kittel who has performed with the Grammy winning Turtle Island String Quartet and helped arrange and record strings for the rock band My Morning Jacket.



As in past years, the New Bedford Folk Festival will also feature their incredible “workshops”, which entail jam sessions where musicians with different styles come together on stage to perform something truly unique to the moment. For music lovers, this type of creative expression is a rare treat and something that makes the New Bedford Folk Festival stand out amongst many other summer music festivals.

I for one am very excited about the talent and variety that the New Bedford Folk Festival will be bringing to our city this summer.

Of course, the vendors present at the festival are another major factor to the fun of this weekend long event. As in years past, the New Bedford Folk Festival will feature artisans from all over who will be selling their art, jewelry, furniture and other handmade items (<http://www.newbedfordfolkfestival.com/vendors.html>). The 2013 list of vendors is still being finalized, but expect to find rare and unique artisan crafts lining the cobblestone roads of Downtown New Bedford during the festival!

Another factor of any good festival is the food. This year's food vendors include the Seafood Hut for your surf, JTL Enterprises for your turf, and Timi's food for your Mediterranean and veggies. It is likely that more food vendors will be added as the date draws nearer, and of course you will be in walking proximity to all of the wonderful Downtown [NB restaurants](#).

Ticket prices have been lowered this year with some great deals for those who buy advance tickets as the festival is intent on getting more people from the Greater NB area to come out and have a good time at this event. A weekend pass is now \$20 if purchased online (plus \$1 PayPal fee) in advance: <http://www.newbedfordfolkfestival.com/ourstore.html>.

Tickets can also be purchased at an even greater discount if bought in person- only 15 dollars for the weekend! The Whaling Museum has New Bedford Folk Festival Tickets on sale Tuesday-Friday 10 AM- 5 PM and Saturday 11 AM- 4 PM. The Zeiterion Performing Arts Center has tickets on sale Tuesday- Friday 10 AM- 5 PM and Saturday 10 AM- 3 PM. It should be noted that these tickets or wristbands DO include admission to shows that are taking place exclusively at the Zeiterion (i.e. Cheryl Wheeler, Lori McKenna, John Gorka, Ellis Paul, Anais Mitchell, the Celtic Extravaganza on Sunday night, etc.) There is no extra charge for admission into the Zeiterion and the shows on the other 6 stages including the Whaling Museum Theater are part of the deal! Simply an amazing bang for your buck.

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Taste of Southcoast 2013



By Shonna
McGrail R
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The weather is slowly and reluctantly warming up as summer approaches, which means that New Bedford's festival season is nearly upon us. For food lovers, no New Bedford festival is more exciting than the annual Taste of South Coast. Over twenty of the South Coast's best restaurants and eateries will be gathering on Pier 3 of New Bedford's historic waterfront to compete for the People's Choice awards. **Sunday, May 19th** will mark the 7th annual Taste of South Coast and yet again it promises to be one of the best deals of the year thanks to the incredible quantity and quality of food, as well as the fun that is bound to be had.

Every year this event gathers a great crowd of eager foodies, so be sure to get your tickets in advance. The tasting starts at noon on May 19th and ends at 3:30 p.m., but the music will go on until 5 p.m. This year's musical performers include "Butch and Dori" and "Johnny Edwards and the Power of Soul." Butch McCarthy and Dori Legge are a popular local act, which I'm sure many of you have heard perform before. "Johnny Edwards and the Power of Soul" are a New England based band that performs many rhythm and blues favorites such as Hendrix, Clapton, Stevie Ray Vaughn, B.B. King and the Allman Brothers. Every year I find that Taste of South Coast has great music to accompany its incredible food; music that sets a fun, block party type of atmosphere.



2012 Table presentation
first place winner
Inner Bay Restaurant.

As always, the list of culinary delights that will be sampled are varied. This year's participating restaurants include; **Cork Wine & Tapas, Freestones City Grill, Inner Bay Cafe & Grill, Mike's Restaurant, Morton's Fork Catering, No Problemo, Olive Garden, Pub 6 at the Sixth Bristol, Ten Cousin's Brick Oven, Trio Cafe & Lounge, Urban Grille and Ying Dynasty, Celtic Coffee House and Bar, Cotali Mar, Fun in a Bun, Olive Garden, Panera Bread Catering and Texas Roadhouse.** For those of you with a sweet tooth there are also many desserts to be had and a few booths you should definitely check out include; **Flour Girls Baking Company, Artisan Bake Shop** (last year's 1st place winner for best dessert!), **Dorothy Cox's Chocolates** and **Pink Box Desserts.**

Of course, for many of us who are 21+, no food event is complete without a good beer or wine to wash it down with. New England craft beers will be available for purchase, as well as locally grown and bottled wines. For those of you who don't drink, there will also be water and soft drinks for sale.

This is the first year that Taste of South Coast will not be taking place at Custom House Square, so be aware of the change in location. The GPS location of Pier 3 is 228 MacArthur Drive. Parking is free in the downtown at meters, at the Whale's Tooth Parking lot, Elm Street Parking Garage, and the YMCA, with free shuttle service to the Pier.

Taste of South Coast always delivers a great time for the

ticket price. Take it from someone who goes every year; you will be stuffed by the time you make a full circuit of the sample tables! Normally, tickets are \$15 (plus \$1 fee) if bought in advance and \$18 for day of the event. For children ages 6-12 tickets are \$6 and they are free for children 5 and younger. Tickets can be purchased here: <http://www.downtownnb.org/tasteofsouthcoast.html>

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Seven Sufferable Romance Movies



By Shonna
McGrail R
yan

When it comes to taste in romance, choosing a movie is like deciding what to eat for dinner. People's palate for romance can range from hot and spicy to fluffy and sweet. If you are a big sucker for romantic classics like Casablanca, When Harry Met Sally or Pretty in Pink then you don't need help choosing a love story to set the Valentine's Day mood. However, if you're like me and prefer your romance sprinkled in lightly, you may find that most tales of star-crossed lovers make you gag. Don't get me wrong, I'm a fan of a good love story, but my palate is a bit touchy when it comes to what I consider romantic and what I consider sappy.

If you've decided that your Valentine's Day this year will consist of cuddling on the couch in front of the TV, here are seven romance films that I consider to be sufferable, even for those who don't typically have the stomach for it.

1. Titanic

Okay, this is a given. While we may all have heard "I'll never let go Jack" quoted a billion times, this movie is a bit of a cinematic masterpiece and its blend of history and romance makes it an all-time favorite for many. Titanic pulls viewers in with the story of underdog Jack (Leonardo DiCaprio) winning over social elite Rose (Kate Winslett), and keeps us rooting for them despite the tragic end we know is doomed to befall them. It never fails to be romantic and is so epic a film that it's sappy level isn't unbearable.

2. Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind

If you've never seen this movie I recommend that you only venture into watching it if you're a fan of cerebral films that leave you thinking. I had to watch this movie several



times before I got all the intricacies of the way the plot is laid out, but it's rather genius and cunning.

Jim Carrey stars in this film about a man who discovers that his ex-girlfriend (Kate Winslet) has erased him from her memory. Angered and heartbroken by her rash decision he decides to seek out the same service and have her erased from his memory as well. Despite the sci-fi-esque nature of the plot, this movie provides an honest look at love and the pains and pleasures it brings.

3. Garden State

Zach Braff wrote, directed and starred in Garden State, and thus it's a rather strange movie. With dry humor and lots of

awkward moments, this film is centered around Andrew Largeman (Braff), a twenty-something-year-old struggling actor who has to go home to New Jersey for his mother's funeral. While at home, he decides to stop taking the heavy doses of antidepressants that he had been on since childhood and slowly starts to experience life again (with all its oddities). In the process of awakening he meets Sam (Natalie Portman), a pathological liar who he starts to fall in love with. It's an offbeat love story that I think fits great with my generation.

4. Friends with Benefits

If you are looking for a romance movie with a bit of steam to it and a lot of laughs, Friends with Benefits is an excellent option. It's basically about exactly what it sounds like; a guy and a girl (Justin Timberlake and Mila Kunis) believe that they can have a sex and stay friends without complications. Of course, feelings develop between them which leads to some LOL moments and a rather cute love story.

5. The Wedding Singer

I don't know why I like this movie so much. Maybe it's the ridiculous 80s fashion and references, maybe it's because Adam Sandler was still funny back then, or maybe it's because it's just a really sweet movie.



It's pretty typical as far as romance movies go; good guy falls for good girl, good girl already has jerk boyfriend, and thus good guy ends up making a spectacular gesture to win the girl. Despite the obvious plot it has a lot of goofy Sandler-esque humor, making it a nice, lighthearted romance.

6. Moulin Rouge

Baz Luhrmann set a new standard for bizarre when he came out with Moulin Rouge in 2001. Labeled as a "jukebox musical" this movie blends vibrant cinematic effects with a rocking soundtrack that features musical adaptations of songs that

range from Elton John to Nirvana.

If you and your Valentine love music, this is a great movie. Taking place in Paris at the turn of the 19th Century, this movie is a heartbreaking romance that promises to thrill. Impoverished writer Christian (Ewan McGregor) moves to Montmartre to join the Bohemian revolution and soon falls in love with the enchanting Satine (Nicole Kidman), who is a courtesan. Their forbidden love makes this film edgy and exciting from start to finish.

7. Forgetting Sarah Marshall

Forgetting Sarah Marshall is so funny that I didn't even think of it as being a romance at first. Yet, when I really thought about it I realized that this is a great story about heartbreak, finding love when you don't expect it and the general ridiculousness of human nature.

Composer Peter (Jason Segal) is devastated when his actress girlfriend (Kristen Bell) breaks up with him. Hoping to collect himself he decides to take a vacation to Hawaii, only to find his ex vacationing there with big time rock star Aldous Snow (Russell Brand). While the vacation is essentially ruined, it slowly improves when he starts to spend time with the attractive, witty hotel concierge (Mila Kunis).

If you haven't already seen this movie, it's hilarious. And if you have already seen it, it's still funny and a great pick for passing some time with your Valentine.

What are some of your sufferable romance movies? Post a comment!