



Which would you prefer? The comfort of a VIP package or the adrenalin of the mosh?  
(Pictures from the Azkena Rock Festival in Vitoria)



## Are VIP Packages Ruining Rock Festivals?

*"Watching some guy get a pedicure in an air-conditioned tent is not very rock & roll"*

**BEFORE YOU READ THE COMPLETE ARTICLE LOOK AT THIS VOCABULARY AND FIND IT IN THE TEXT**

**muddy:** mud is a mix of water (rain) and earth  
**sweaty:** when we get hot our body sweats (perspires)  
**to shuttle:** to move regularly between two places  
**couch:** a sofa or a reclining seat with a headrest  
**restroom:** (American English) a toilet in a public area  
**to check out:** get information about something  
**bunk:** a narrow bed, typically one on top of another  
**hot tub:** a typically round container filled with hot water  
**sweltering:** to be uncomfortably hot  
**to offset:** to compensate for something  
**fees:** a payment made to a professional for their services  
**headline band:** the most important band at a festival  
**revenue:** money that comes in from selling products/services  
**huge:** very big

This summer, all over the world, you'll be able to pay to watch stars like Depeche Mode and Ed Sheeran while standing in a huge, possibly very **muddy**, field amid tens of thousands of other, probably very **sweaty**, music fans.

Or you could paid several hundred, or thousand, euros to get **shuttled** to the side of the stage from the nearby air-conditioned safari tent, which has a comfortable **couch**, wooden flooring, a queen-size bed and charging points. You'll be able to drink from a private bar, use a private, air-conditioned **restroom**, swim in a private pool and get advice on the next band to **check out** from a personal concierge. That's just one example of how some music festivals cater more and more to rock's one percent. At the Bonnaroo festival in June (Tennessee, USA), well-off fans can opt for the 'Roll Like a Rockstar' package, which for \$30,000 per group gets you a **bunk** in an air-conditioned tour bus and three gourmet meals a day. At the Alabama festival Hangout, the beach in front of the main stage has \$1,600 **hot tubs**.

Andy Cirzan, of Chicago-based promoter Jam Productions, sums it up: "While you are **sweltering** in 30-degree heat you can see some asshole sitting in an air-conditioned tent getting a pedicure. It's so not rock & roll."

"When I look at the VIP section, I see people folding their arms, looking serious," says Alex Chorosevic, a 22-year-old graduate who attends Lollapalooza regularly. "It's like they paid \$1,000 to say, 'I have more money than you.'"

However, promoters say that the VIP areas help **offset** the increasingly high **fees** of the **headline** bands, as much as \$4 million, according to concert-business sources.

VIP packages for concerts began in the early Nineties, when stars, promoters and Ticketmaster executives created a "golden circle" program for high-priced prime seats. Over time, the gap between the cheapest and the most expensive tickets has grown into airline-style "dynamic pricing," a way of separating first class from economy, to the point that regular tickets for the upcoming Beyoncé-Jay Z stadium shows cost as little as \$35 yet platinum seats cost \$1,750.

As prices have risen, though, VIP packages have come to account for five to 10 percent of a festival's overall **revenue**.

Festivals say that they work hard to design high-end "experiences" that avoid dividing music fans into social classes. But as sales of albums continue to fall, VIP sections have become accepted as a necessity by many artists and managers. "Festivals are a **huge** risk to organise," says Buck Williams, agent for Widespread Panic. "Selling sponsorships or VIP packages is a way to guarantee enough revenue."

**adapted from:** <http://www.rollingstone.com/music/news/why-vip-packages-are-ruining-rock-festivals-20140522>

## Weekly English Practice

15th June 2017

English Coaching Projects S.Coop.

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### "Let's chat about that!"

Write your answers in an email and send them to your ECP coach!

- Have you ever been to a music festival?
- If so, describe the experience (the price, the weather, the music, the atmosphere, etc).
- Have you ever paid extra to fly in Business Class or First Class on an airplane?
- If so, describe the differences with economy class
- Describe any 'luxury' or 'VIP' experiences you have had (restaurants, hotels, breakfast in bed, etc).



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And if you didn't have much money to spend this weekend, what would you prefer to do? Choose one of these three possibilities and explain why.

1

If you had €300 to spend on yourself and one other person this weekend, what would you do?

Choose one of these three possibilities and explain why.

- 1) Go to a music festival
- 2) Go away for the weekend and stay in an expensive hotel
- 3) Eat in a Michelin-starred restaurant



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## Matrícula 2017-18 now open!

Don't forget to ask your coach how to reserve your place on the 2017-18 course.

Let us know if you need to change the time and day of your current course.



- 1) Play sport with friends
- 2) Go for a walk in the countryside
- 3) Visit a museum or art gallery