

vendors will provide the anticipated 30,000 guests a variety of dining options, and you can go bottoms up at the event's legendary beer garden. Performances begin at 7:30 each night, with a 2:30 p.m. Sunday matinee. *From \$20; vafest.org*

NEWPORT BEACH, CALIFORNIA

APR 24 **Newport Beach Film Festival**

Newport Beach has provided a home base for many of the 20th-century's biggest movie stars, including James Cagney, John Wayne, Humphrey Bogart, Shirley Temple, and Errol Flynn, so it only makes sense that the Orange County coastal haven would host a world-class film festival. Although Sundance continues to hog the lime-light when it comes to indie cinema, the Newport Beach Film Festival, now in its 15th year, screens a celebrated combination of classic and contemporary movies from around

the globe, with more than 400 films on 15 screens over eight days. Festivals past have honored Oscar winners like actor Alan Arkin, composer Elmer Bernstein, and legendary director Robert Wise, while acclaimed names like Aaron Sorkin, the Academy-Award winning scribe of *The Social Network*, have offered free workshops in recent years. Crowd favorites include the Family Film Series and the Youth Film Showcase, as well as free industry seminars on film music composition, directing, animation, and writing. *From \$14; newportbeachfilmfest.com*

CHICAGO

APR 25 **Baconfest Chicago 2014**

Even if the best of the Windy City's chefs weren't sizzling up over three tons of juicy pork goodness, creating bacon-infused cocktails and imaginative desserts, we'd still have to attend the sixth annual Baconfest Chicago

because it promises a singular contest for the best poetry written about, you guessed it, bacon. With three shifts over two days (a Friday night dinner, a Saturday afternoon lunch, and a Saturday evening dinner), this year's fest will host more than 4,000 rasher fans at the UIC Forum to sip tasty cocktails—all featuring bacony twists—and sample creative dishes from 150 restaurants. Last year's celebrity chefs included Dan Smith (one of Food Network's *The Hearty Boys*), *Top Chef*'s Heather Terhune, and staff from Chicago restaurant Table Fifty-Two, who whipped up dishes like slow-poached egg with bacon ragout, bacon dashi and nori; bacon scrapple with bacon sriracha and bacon-salt cured egg yolks; and bacon-wrapped hickory-smoked ribs with bacon-guajillo BBQ sauce. The ticket price includes unlimited food samples and up to seven beverages from Baconfest's liquor partners. *From \$100; baconfestchicago.com*

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