

Flippin' Kooky



By [Ruth Cooper](#)

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Just as sought after as a magical golden ticket to the Willy Wonka Factory so were those elusive #5GumExperience tickets. With three successful 5 Gum party activations on their CV, indie on the menu, a top-secret venue and award-winning British band The Kooks as headliner it was no wonder that the procurement of those free tickets made many a fan a little "Kooky".

Kook guilt is a real thing (in musical terms); never before has the divide between the haves and have not's been so clear. Last-minute competitions, pleadings and prostrations, illegal selling and buying - it was all a little chaotic. And as it started so it ended ...



Beach Party



December Streets

Patiently and in an orderly manner we queued to board the coaches at the Maitland Secondary School (the pre-party meeting place) to shuttle us off to the much-mused-about venue. This was in direct contrast to the bus pick-up at the night's end. Booze-soaked, Kook-sated and who knows what else-influenced by (it was 4/20 after all) party-goers wildly chased the few pick-up buses that swung in and out with no apparent rhyme or reason as to where they would settle or where a queue of sorts could begin. It was a free for all - everyone for themselves, the reckoning is upon us and God help you if you are left behind.

Kookily chaotic it was at start and finish, but in-between it was most slick and enjoyable. The secret venue was revealed to be a film studio warehouse in Salt River, a cavernous space simply filled by stage, one of the longest stretches of bar I've ever seen and some tripping lighting.

DJ Haasbroek kept the background tunes pumping. Support band Beach Party got everyone in the party mood with their simple bouncy beats, while December Streets followed suit with their radio-friendly hits and covers.



The Kooks



Kook countdown and it's impossible to get close enough but we weaseled our way as close as we could, never mind the giganotosaurus and girl on boy's shoulders trio in front of us. It's The Kooks and they were here and we were here and life is *Junk of the Heart (Happy)*. Starting things off with the singalong *Ooh La* followed by the likes of classics *Seaside*, *Sofa Song*, *Shine* and *Eddie's Gun* as well as more recent hits; *How D' You Like That* and *F**k The World Off* The Kooks brought it and then some. Ending to an explosive applause and demands of "We want more!" they obliged, punctuating their encore with definite crowd pleaser, *Naïve*. (Madly singing along "I know, she knows that I not from Nebraska" was illuminatingly revealed to be "I know, she knows that I'm not found of asking". Aha, well that does makes a lot more sense. Naïve indeed).

And before we knew it was over and done, far too soon, and we were adding our booze-soaked and Kook-sated bodies to the wild-eyed throng, scrambling for our ticket home amongst the dust and stones.

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