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Backstage with Green Rocker Jack Johnson



Focus Earth's
Kevin Chupka
blogs the Village
Green Concert.

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It's not everyday you get

unfettered backstage access to a rock concert but my assignment for Focus Earth wasn't to go backstage at an "everyday" anything. This is Jack Johnson, king of green rock and roll (though he is careful to point out that nothing about him is rock and roll, his music is of a different brand). It is evident from the moment he steps off his tour bus; no entourage, no mirrored sunglasses, no assistant with a clipboard running up to him to get approval on schedules. Jack just grooves off the bus in jeans and a t-shirt (and shoes he said he was only wearing because it was still wet out from the recent rains). He introduced himself to us with his trademark crooked, gracious smile and soft-spoken manner. No one unfamiliar with the man's music would EVER suspect him of being a platinum selling star.

And so the first thing Jack likes to do is decidedly un-rockstar. He greets the volunteers that are helping him spread his environmental message. They staff the "[Village Green](#)," a line-up of tents where both local and national non-profits gather to help get the word out. As fans mill about before the show they can stop

in, get educated, get a stamp on their Village Green Passport and enter to win backstage access. It helps to get people interacting with these groups instead of taking a pamphlet and disappearing into obscurity. So Jack, ever mellow and ever humble shakes hands with the small battalion of green troops, snaps a few pictures and meanders through the tents himself to see what groups are getting the word out in THIS town.

When he's done, Jack heads backstage again for sound check or rehearsal or relaxation or some of the amazing food prepared by traveling chef David Thorne (or the very accurate "Delicious Dave" as his business card suggests). Thorne and his crew make every effort to use fresh, local and [organic foods](#) for the band and crew and we were lucky enough to partake. Not only is eating organic good for you and the Earth it's some of the tastiest stuff out there. It's been two days and I'm still thinking about the ribs, and the tomato/mozzarella salad, and the berry pie.

The greening backstage comes care of a company called [Reverb](#). Created by fellow musician Adam Gardner of the band Guster and his wife Lauren Sullivan the company consults with the likes of Johnson, Dave Matthews Band, Red Hot Chili Peppers and a host of other rockers to make their tours environmentally friendly. From biodiesel in tour buses and trucks to waste reduction to helping find green friendly venues Reverb has taken the touring world by storm. From it's roots as a company seeking a band to green it now has band banging down the door to take advantage of its services.

So after a little food, a little relaxation and some rehearsal Jack is ready and around 9pm saunters out on stage to 20,000 adoring fans of all ages. He strums and sings for about two hours. No one in the seats sees the recycling containers everywhere backstage, the crew with their aluminum [water bottles](#), the food that is harvested hours, not days or weeks before. No to them this is a rock show; \$7 beers and fried food that came out of a freezer -- little do they know, they may have helped save the world by coming out to hear a little music...or at least that's what Jack hopes he's fostering.

Our report will be featured in an upcoming [Focus Earth with Bob Woodruff](#) so make sure to keep watching, Saturdays at 6 on Planet Green.

Also, don't miss the [Jack Johnson Video Interview Series](#) on TreeHugger.