

## The buzz on stoner comedies

**H**arold & Kumar Escape From Guantanamo Bay," opening Friday, may be the rare pot-smoking comedy to tackle political issues, but it's only the latest in a long line of comedies that mine marijuana use for humor.

From the unintentional campiness of 1936's "Reefer Madness," to the casual toking in 1993's "Dazed and Confused" to Cheech and Chong's string of hits in the 1970s and '80s, cannabis comedy has a long, noble history.

What better day than 4-20 — the unofficial slang for sharing a joint and the even more unofficial holiday celebrating said usage — to list some of the seminal moments in stoner cinema? None, dude. *Michael Giltz*

### FRIDAY (1995) ▶

**WHAT'S IN THE PIPE:** Enough with the tales of urban woe! Ice Cube's woozy comedy showed that a day in the life of a young man in the 'hood could be goofy and funny enough to spawn not one but two sequels, "Next Friday" and "Friday After Next." They would have made another sequel but no one could figure out what to call it.

**THE BUZZ:** Then-unknown Chris Tucker lit it up playing Smokey, a brother who loves marijuana so much he makes Cheech and Chong look like straight apples.



### ◀ EASY RIDER (1969)

**WHAT'S IN THE PIPE:** The ultimate road movie (funded by a drug deal, naturally) directed by and co-starring Dennis Hopper mixed in pot with LSD, alcohol and other drugs for good measure. A counterculture IED.

**THE BUZZ:** The drunken and hopelessly unhip ACLU lawyer played by Jack Nicholson took a hit, smiled devilishly and launched a legendary career.

### FAST TIMES AT RIDGEMONT HIGH (1982) ▶

**WHAT'S IN THE PIPE:** This comedy-drama, written by Cameron Crowe, boasted a cast of up-and-comers, including Jennifer Jason Leigh, Phoebe Cates, Judge Reinhold, Nicolas Cage and Forest Whitaker. It was praised for its brutally honest look at a girl losing her virginity in the most unromantic manner followed by even harder lessons to come.

**THE BUZZ:** Though admired for its frank treatment of teenage sexual hijinks, it was loved for the pizza-ordering Jeff Spicoli, a hilariously absurd stoner student played to dazzling perfection by a young Sean Penn.



### THE BIG LEBOWSKI (1998) ▼

**WHAT'S IN THE PIPE:** At the center of this Coen brothers lark combining weed with bowling is the Dude, a pot-smoking, White Russian-gulping, wisdom-spouting, laid-back hero played by a thoroughly mellow Jeff Bridges.

**THE BUZZ:** The Dude abides. Bridges is so iconic that he assays similar daffy spiritual guidance in the animated mockumentary "Surf's Up."

### SMILEY FACE (2007)

**WHAT'S IN THE PIPE:** Don't ask us why, but stoner comedies love to focus on one day in the life. This time it's an actress (Anna Faris) who eats some sweet-tasting cupcakes on her way to completing typical errands — like paying off a dealer and auditioning for a role.

**THE BUZZ:** Faris gets the rare chance to play a female stoner (a most underrepresented community, which is bogus) and makes the most of it with her zonked-out blissfulness.

