



ADELAIDE - Sunday the 18th of November proved to many Croatians in South Australia just why we can be so proud of the communities achievements in regards to preserving Croatian culture, and exposing it to other cultures in such a great manner.

The annual Croatian Food and Wine "Fešta" was held at the Croatian Sports Centre in Gepps Cross with thousands of people - both Croatian and non-Croatian - intrigued in the day's food, wine and cultural performance program.

The event, attended by members of local council, local MP's, the Attorney-General and Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Justice the Hon. Michael Atkinson, President of the Croatian Sports Centre Mr Tony Kilic and various performers, proved to be a day of fun, festivities, Croatian cultural exposure and most of all, a great opportunity for the community to show case its great home made foods and wines.

The day showcased various options of exquisite meals from food stalls divided by region in Croatia, Croatian folkloric performances by three different ensembles and for the first time at the food and wine festival, a cross cultural performance between a Croatian singer and Aboriginal traditional dancers.

Melbourne's, 'Hrvatska Zora', helped the "Fešta" program get under way with their youngest group demonstrating their folkloric skills and commitment in the scorching 34 degree heat.

This was followed by the children of the Croatian Sports Centre's Language School performing a number of Croatian songs for the crowd, the children and teachers all getting involved with great spirit.

Adelaide's own LENEK folkloric group then performed the crowd wooing, "Podravski svatovi" (the Wedding Dance), and did the dance, which is believed to be performed by only a small number of Croatian ensembles throughout Australia, proud.

Zora's eldest group then performed for the crowd and did so in great style, proving to be a huge hit at their second "Fešta" in Adelaide.

Marinka then performed her Croatian hits with the Aboriginal 'Kurna' dancers. The days performances finished with KUD 'Hrvatski Pleter', a group of "mature" ladies, still young at heart, performing their folkloric dancing. Not only was the crowd entertained by these performers but also by various local Croatian bands and solo artists.

The crowd, certainly went home with a feeling of value for money, with the entry only being \$2, and a list of cultural performances not available at one the one place and time at any other Croatian Adelaide event in the year.

Aside from all of the on stage performances, it was the behind the scenes action that really had the crowd talking. One of the main reasons for the event is to display some of Croatia's finest foods and wines.

The ladies and men who prepared the foods certainly did not disappoint, and that was evident when at the end of the busy day, almost every stand had sold their quota of food. The chefs (volunteer ladies and men who love to cook, not professionals - but passionate) were thrilled when they realised that their food had almost all been sold.

More food was prepared at this year's food and wine festival than at the past three "Feštas", so it was exciting to see that the event is only going from strength to strength, year to year.

The beautiful foods, varying from 'Slavonske sarme' to 'Bosanske cevape' to Dalmatian style seafood (and many other foods), were all prepared to the highest quality. Lunch proved to be a tough time for most guests, with many ending up trying two different plates of food, just so they did not miss out on one or the other!



Not only did the food prove to be a hit but the various Croatian wines available also proved to be popular with the wine drinkers and the many others who taste tested.

This in itself was a massive success, considering some of the world's best wines are produced in South Australia, making them so readily available and meaning that many locals are used to enjoying world class wines!

Thanks must go to the many sponsors who donated prizes for the raffle and goods for the food and wine stands. Also a huge thank you must go to the performers who entertained the crowd for the day being from Adelaide or interstate.

Without these sponsors and performers the day would not be able to be as huge a success as what it was. All proceeds raised on the day will continue to go to the completion of the Croatian Sports Centre, a very exciting project for the Adelaide Croatian Community.

The day proved to be a job well done by the organising committee, a group who should be commended on their commitment to such a large project, and a job well done to all of the volunteers who helped make the day run as smoothly as it did.

The Croatian community in South Australia should be thrilled with the honour of holding such a brilliant event, enjoyed by the mainstream community and not just exclusively Croatians.

All in all, the day was a massive success for the local community and one that I'm sure will only continue to grow in Croatian cultural exposure and numbers. It was a true highlight of the year and something that should certainly be more than a great excuse for Croatians from around Australia to come to in future years.

By Ema Matulic
Croatian Herald - The New Generation