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International Festival returns for 28th year

“Featured country” Italy one of 50 to have customs, culture and cuisine for festival-goers to experience and enjoy at Barnet Park

SPARTANBURG, S.C. (September 23, 2013) — Organizers of one of Spartanburg’s most popular events are poised for record crowds this year, as Italy will be the “featured country” at the International Festival (www.cityofspartanburg.org/international-festival) at Barnet Park on Saturday, Oct. 5. The festival runs from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. and admission is free.



With five nations new to the festival this year (Bangladesh, Belarus, Iran, Jordan, and Singapore) and 50 total represented, this year’s International Festival will feature a

variety of attractions, including:

- International Boulevard of Food: Perhaps the most popular part of the festival, more than 30 food booths representing cuisines from more than 20 different nations will be available, providing the perfect opportunity for festival-goers to sample old favorites as well as try something they’ve never had before. Food is purchased with coupons that are sold at the Currency Exchange for \$1 each.
- International Kids Zone: We think it’s so cool when kids are learning but they don’t even really know it because they are having so much fun! From crafts to games to entertainment and cool giveaways, the International Kids Zone is always a big hit — and everything is FREE.
- Global Sports Zone: Watching or playing sports is a universal love that people all over the world share. In this area of the festival, visitors can watch demonstrations of various sports from around the globe, and actually play some of them, including kyudo (Japanese archery), fencing, kubb (a Swedish game), martial arts, soccer, and much more.
- Entertainment: With three stages, there is a lot to take in throughout the day. Visit www.cityofspartanburg.org/international-festival for the complete entertainment schedule.
- Avenue of Nations: Featuring 33 educational booths for nations around the globe. Pick up your passport at the gate and get it stamped as you visit and learn about each country!

“From the arts and music to the local economy, the history and culture of our community has been shaped in profound ways by people, businesses and visitors from other countries,” said Mandy Merck, the City of Spartanburg’s Special Events and Festivals Manager. “For nearly 30 years, the International Festival has celebrated this cultural diversity, and its combination of entertainment, education, hands-on experiences, and amazing international cuisine makes it one of the region’s ‘can’t-miss’ festivals.” Since 2007, a country (or continent) has been selected to be the honored country for the International

Festival. The honored country (Italy this year) is spotlighted by being placed “up front and center” at the entrance to the park with eight to 10 displays representing the country. Exuberance — the sculpture at the main entrance to the park — is outfitted to represent the country. She will be wearing a toga this year. A huge Roman Soldier Encampment (Legio VI Ferrata Fidelas Constans) will occupy the middle of the park. Olive oil tastings, glass blowing, wine tastings, children’s book readings & crafts, Fiats on display, and booths representing Florence/Tuscany, Rome and the Vatican, Assissi, Padua, Venice, Milan, Sicily and Napoli will all add to honored country’s presence at the festival this year.

The City’s International Festival has long been considered one of the best festivals in the Carolinas, drawing people from all over the region. In 2009, it was named Event of the Year by the South Carolina & North Carolina Festival and Event Associations. Last year, more than 12,000 people attended the festival.

