



GreekTown on the Danforth Business Improvement Area

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PILAROS TASTE OF THE DANFORTH – 20TH ANNIVERSARY

RECORD-BREAKING YEAR – 3 RECORDS BROKEN

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The 20th anniversary of the Pilaros Taste of the Danforth turned out to be an amazing record-breaking year. Three records were broken. The Festival broke the Guinness World Record for the Largest Zorba Dance in history (unofficially), the Guinness World Record for the Largest Yogourt Bowl (Greek, of course, and unofficially) and the most important record of all approximately 1.4 million attendees.

I. **Festival Breaks Guinness World Record for the Largest Greek Zorba Dance in History on Saturday August 10th**

In celebration of the Festival's 20th anniversary, we were determined to break two Guinness World Records. The first record was for the Largest Zorba Dance – ever. The second is for the World's Largest Greek Yogourt Bowl. The previous world record for a Zorba dance was set by the City of Volos, Greece in 2012 with 5,614 dancers.

As part of our “proof” with respect to the number of dancers, we sold commemorative blue and white bandanas (the colours of the Greek flag) to participants, for a minimum donation of \$2.00 to Prostate Cancer Canada. As an added bonus, the first 2,000 people buying the bandanas received a Pilaros Taste of the Danforth T-shirt, compliments of the Festival's title sponsor -- Pilaros.

Prostate Cancer Canada raises funds for the development of programs related to awareness and public education, advocacy, support of those affected, and research into the prevention, detection, treatment and cure of prostate cancer. For more information, please refer to: prostatecancer.ca

Over 200 Prostate Cancer Canada volunteers sold the commemorative bandanas on the Danforth from 12:00pm to 1:30pm.

The Festival installed speakers throughout the Danforth and broadcasted through a radio station from 12:00pm to 1:30pm, advising Festival attendees of the requirements for beating the record. Like a military operation, attendees were told that we would be counting down just prior to 1:54pm from ten to zero, and then

blowing a whistle to signify the start of the dance. The dance officially commenced at 1:54pm. A whistle was blown five minutes and sixteen seconds later to signify the end of the dance. The second whistle was blown at 1:59pm and sixteen seconds, slightly over the required five minutes.

In order to qualify as a Guinness World Record, there are numerous requirements, including: one steward for every 50 participants, official witnesses, videotaping, photography, time-keepers to authenticate that the dance went on for a full five minutes, stewards counting how many people participated for the full five minutes (versus joining and dropping out part way), and so on.

Our unofficial count is that 7,835 dancers participated for the full five minutes and sixteen seconds versus the previous record of 5,614. We will be submitting all of our documentation shortly, and we are hopeful that we will receive the official word over the next few weeks.

II. Festival Breaks Guinness World Record for the Largest Greek Yogourt Bowl on Sunday, August 11

The second Guinness record was for the World's Largest Greek Yogourt Bowl. Fair Cape Dairies in South Africa set the previous world record in 2010, which weighed only 1,133 pounds of Rooibos yogourt, but that included the yogourt and the container.

The Pilaros Taste of the Danforth, in conjunction with Parmalat and their Astro Original Greek Yogourt, built a yogourt container which measured 5.52 feet high, 4.58 feet wide, holding 1,322 pounds of yogourt, with a volume of 25.43 cubic feet. The combined weight of the yogourt and the tub was 1,616 pounds.

III. The History of the Festival and the Organization that Runs it

a. History

The Pilaros Taste of the Danforth was initially modeled after the enormously successful "Taste of Chicago". It began as a celebration of Hellenic cuisine and culture. It has grown to become a celebration of both its Greek heritage and the multicultural nature of the city of Toronto. While a number of events and programs are reflective of the area's Greek roots, the Festival programming and its audience have grown to encompass a much broader spectrum of the Toronto community.

The Festival began in 1994 when a group of restaurateurs on the Danforth tried to come up with ways they could entice people to come to the Danforth and enjoy their amazing Greek cuisine. They decided that rather than advertising individually, they would be better off pooling their resources and advertising together. Rather than suggesting that potential visitors come to eat at one restaurant over another,

they decided to set up “tasting” tables - so that individuals could try food fare from a number of restaurants.

In the first year, approximately 5,000 people attended the Festival. Twenty-three restaurateurs participated, selling an eclectic mix of "tastes" from tasting tables. The following year, attendance grew to 100,000. By 1996, the Festival was so large that the Danforth had to be officially closed down to vehicular traffic, so as to accommodate over 500,000 visitors. Today, the Festival has grown to approximately 1.3 million visitors during the course of three days and two nights. They come to enjoy food, entertainment and culture. The Pilaros Taste of the Danforth is one of Toronto`s signature events, showcasing the best our multicultural city has to offer - from music to the arts and from sports to food.

b. The GreekTown on the Danforth BIA

The Festival is run by the GreekTown on the Danforth BIA.

The concept of a Business Improvement Area was created in Toronto, but BIAs can now be found all over the world. In 1970, merchants in Bloor West Village formed the first BIA in response to competition from shopping centres. Toronto currently has 72 BIAs, representing more than 32,000 commercial property owners and tenants. That number is still growing.

The GreekTown on the Danforth BIA is an excellent example of how a BIA can unite local restaurateurs and retailers along a street to promote businesses. The GreekTown on the Danforth BIA is a not-for-profit organization, run by a volunteer Board, chaired by Constantine Voidonicolas. The Chair and the Board devote countless hours benefiting not only the local restaurateurs and merchants but all of Toronto.

c. GreekTown Gives Back to the Community

The Festival combines exquisite food, culture and music with extraordinary philanthropy to benefit the local community. Over the years, GreekTown has donated more than \$1.5 million to Toronto East General Hospital. Most recently, in 2012, GreekTown generously donated \$250,000 to the hospital to enhance paediatric care. This past year, GreekTown also donated two \$5,000 Smart Boards to local schools -- William McCordic School and William Burgess School -- for children with special needs.

d. Festival Delivers Big Economic Impact for Toronto

In 2010, the Festival conducted an Economic Impact Study. It was determined that the Pilaros Taste of the Danforth made a significant impact on the local economy that year, generating \$32 million in economic activity. Event-related spending alone supported the equivalent of 158 full-year jobs in a single weekend. The Festival also generated approximately \$4 million in tax revenue. Since then, the Festival has only grown.

The Festival's title sponsor is Pilaros International Trading Inc., a leading importer of Mediterranean food products, primarily olives and olive oil - what the ancient Greeks refer to as "The Essence of Life".

The Pilaros Taste of the Danforth is also supported by the Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation, Celebrate Ontario and the Government of Canada.

Torontonians love the Festival. In fact, in 2012, our satisfaction score was at 97%, and 93% of respondents said that they would be returning this year in 2013.

For the latest information on Canada's largest and most favourite street Festival, please refer to: www.tasteofthedanforth.com

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