



**GreekTown on the Danforth Business Improvement Area**  
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**GREEKTOWN'S TASTE OF THE DANFORTH**  
**Celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

**Come for the Food ... Stay for the Fun!**

**ROAD CLOSURE ALERT**

**FESTIVAL PROGRAM FOR 25<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY YEAR**

**TORONTO'S FAVOURITE (AND CANADA'S LARGEST) STREET FESTIVAL OFFERS FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY**

**Friday, August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018 to Sunday, August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2018**

**FOR RELEASE: Thursday, August 9, 2018 - TORONTO**

**Section 1: Road Closures**

Danforth will be closed, from Broadview to Jones, starting 10:00 AM on Friday, August the 10<sup>th</sup>. It will re-open on Monday, August the 13<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 AM.

**Section 2: A "Taste" of What to Expect**

Canada's favourite Festival is back! Come join us as we celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Canada's largest street Festival, welcoming approximately 1.6 million attendees - Friday, August 10<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, August 12<sup>th</sup>.

We will be having a Special Opening Ceremonies in memory of the violent attack that took place on Sunday, July 22, 2018. Please see attached.

The GTA lays claim to more than 200,000 residents of Greek ancestry, the third largest Hellenic community outside of Greece. At the Festival, visitors have the opportunity to experience being 'Greek for the Day', but the Festival is much more than the celebration of the Danforth's Greek heritage -- it is also a celebration of Canada's multiculturalism. A few highlights for this year include: our Celebrity Stage presented by OLG, with performances by Cuban Bands, Aboriginal singers, over 40 Bollywood dancers, as well as the Mr. & Miss Asia Toronto Pageant Competition. We also offer a "Let's Dance" program, presented by the City of Toronto, where participants can learn different cultural dances from around the world, including Chinese, South Asian, Filipino, Egyptian, Greek, Japanese, Israeli, Cuban, Afro-Caribbean, and Azerbaijani dance groups.

Restaurateurs along the Danforth will be offering “Tasting Menus” for no more than \$6 so that attendees can enjoy a multitude of tasty multi-ethnic treats.

Yes, there is Food, Food, and *more* Food – but the Taste of the Danforth is so much more! There will be loads of free, family-friendly entertainment on our Celebrity Stage presented by OLG, Greek Stage, and Showcase Stage programmed by NXNE. Don't miss the Kids' Fun Zone featuring a great EverBlocks experience, the Sports Zone featuring activations and guest appearances from our Toronto professional sports teams, the “It's All Greek To Me” plate-breaking experience, and the *Hollywood on the Danforth Zone* presented by 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox. There is also our new DIY experience -- “Art on Sneakers” -- powered by MARTK'D.

Here is a “Taste” of what to expect during TOTD25:

**1. Three - Free Entertainment Stages**

**1. Celebrity Stage presented by OLG**

Featuring a wide range of music and performances from around the world.

For schedule: [www.tasteofthedanforth.com](http://www.tasteofthedanforth.com)

**2. Showcase Stage**

The Danforth BIA Showcase Stage, programmed by NXNE, features top new Toronto bands, dancers, and more. For schedule: [www.tasteofthedanforth.com](http://www.tasteofthedanforth.com)

**3. Greek Stage**

Our Greek Stage features the finest Greek singers, dancers, and musicians.

For schedule: [www.tasteofthedanforth.com](http://www.tasteofthedanforth.com)

**2. Sports Zone**

Featuring activities and challenges from the Leafs, Raptors, Argos, Toronto FC and Toronto Rock. Don't be surprised if you bump into one of your heroes at the Festival!

**3. Kids' Fun Zone**

**“EverBlocks for Kids”**

The Kids love it and we've got it! Back for their 3rd year, Creative Club presents their EverBlocks Clubhouse where kids can build and design with over 18,000 LEGO Bricks! Have a seat on the EverBlocks couch or take a picture with our giant TOTD25 EverBlocks installation. Share your photo on social media for a chance to win dinner on the Danforth. Bricks...Blocks...FUN! See you there!

**4. “It's All Greek To Me”: Breaking Plates - OPA!**

Breaking plates after a meal is an ancient Greek tradition (banned in Greece since 1969). Let out some tension and experience the pleasure of smashing plates, in partnership with the Battle Sports' Rage Room.

**5. Celebrating Canada's Cultural Mosaic**

**“Let's Dance”**

Take a trip around the world right on the Danforth. Our friendly instructors will teach you a traditional dance from their home country. Take a quick 15-minute dance lesson from our Greek, Chinese, South Asian, Filipino, Egyptian, Japanese, Azerbaijani, and Afro-Caribbean dance groups.

## 6. **“Art on Sneakers” Powered by MARTK’D**

TOTD25 will be featuring an **Art on Sneakers** competition where local artists will be creating one-of-a-kind designs in 20 minutes on white canvas sneakers in live time. The art will be based on two themes:

1. TOTD25 - Celebrating Taste of the Danforth’s 25th Anniversary
2. 20th Century Fox blockbuster film *Bohemian Rhapsody* opening November 2, 2018

The competition will take place on Friday August 10th at 7pm, on Saturday August 11th at 6pm, and on Sunday August 12th at 6pm.

The competing artists’ sneakers will be on display throughout the weekend. Attendees who post the sneakers across social media will be entered into a contest to win VIP tickets to their film of choice.

During non-competition times, throughout the Festival, attendees will have the opportunity to create 3D paper sneakers as part of a DIY experience. An artist from the MARTK’D team will be on-site to demonstrate how to apply art on sneakers, and assist attendees in creating their own designs.

MARTK’D ([www.martkd.com](http://www.martkd.com)) is a community movement that creates, develops and hosts a wide range of events, programs, and initiatives celebrating art on sneakers as way to connect with communities and cultures.

## 7. **Hollywood on the Danforth - Presented by 20th Century Fox**

### **“Bohemian Rhapsody”**

Don’t miss the chance to be rocked by one of Queen’s most renowned tribute bands -- Sheer Heart Attack on the Celebrity Stage presented by OLG.

Show us your inner Freddie on the Karaoke Stage to win movie tickets.

Become Freddie Mercury by donning his iconic moustache and sunglasses, strike a pose next to his picture and post on social media for a chance to win movie tickets to see *Bohemian Rhapsody*.

The highly anticipated movie will be released in theatres on October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2018, starring Rami Malek, Lucy Boynton, Gwilym Lee, Ben Hardy, Joseph Mazzello, Aidan Gillen, Tom Hollander, and many more.

## 8. **Bud Light Radler Beer Garden**

Join us at the Bud Light Radler Beer Garden for a refreshing drink. There are also free samples as part of our exhibition spaces.

## 9. **Lots of Prizes, Challenges and Samples from our Sponsors**

Lots of activations, prizes and samples from Heinz Ketchup, Pure Leaf Tea, Président Cheese, Galbani Cheese, Casino Woodbine Entertainment, OLG, Rotary Club of Wasaga Beach, Freedom Mobile, Bell, Bud Light Radler, Rogers, President’s Choice Financial, Cranberry Resort, Toronto Area Ford Dealers, Labatt, State Farm, Seneca College, SkipTheDishes and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox.

## **10. Win A Vacation in Cancun!**

Festival-goers will have a chance to win a vacation to Cancun, Mexico courtesy of Sunwing Airlines. All they need to do is learn the secret passcode from the emcee at our Celebrity Stage presented by OLG, or find it in our Festival brochure, for a chance to enter and win.

### **Section 3: About the Festival**

#### **I. History of the Festival and the Organization that Runs it**

People are always surprised when we tell them that the Festival is run by a Board of Directors consisting of volunteers from the local community. There is only one full-time staff member. They're also fascinated by the fact that the concept began 25 years ago when a number of competitors decided to get together to participate in what is now known as co-op or coalition advertising.

The Festival is organized by the GreekTown on the Danforth BIA, a not-for-profit organization, run by a volunteer Board, and Chaired by Constantine Voidoncolas. 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 Festival 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 the 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. In fact, in 2017, 54% of respondents self-identified as being ethnic.

The Festival began in 1994 when a group of restaurateurs on the Danforth tried to find new ways to entice people to come to the Danforth, and enjoy their amazing Greek cuisine. They decided that rather than advertise individually, they would be better off pooling their resources and advertising together. The idea was to set up "Tasting Tables" - so that individuals could try food fare from a number of restaurants, and thus the "Taste" of the Danforth began. In order to encourage people to try various dishes, the prices were kept very low, and even today, no tasting item costs more than \$6.

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 Danforth Avenue had to be officially closed to vehicular traffic in order to accommodate over 500,000 visitors. Today, the Festival has grown to approximately 1.6 million visitors during the course of three nights and two days. They come to enjoy food, free entertainment and culture. The Taste of the Danforth is one of Toronto's signature events, showcasing the best of what our multicultural city has to offer – music, the arts, sports and -- of course -- food.

#### **II. GreekTown Gives Back to the Community - Profits Donated to Charity**

The Festival combines exquisite food, culture and music, with extraordinary philanthropy, to benefit the local community. Profits from the Festival are donated every year back to the community by the GreekTown on the Danforth BIA and its Chair -- Constantine Voidoncolas.

Over the years, GreekTown has donated more than \$2 million to Toronto East General Hospital (now renamed Michael Garron Hospital). In 2015, GreekTown made a commitment to a joint hospital project between SickKids and a children's hospital in Greece - Agia Sofia.

The Festival and GreekTown have also supported additional charities and causes such as Prostate Cancer, Athletics Ontario, among others. GreekTown has donated to a number of other local charities, including Toronto Crime Stoppers, 55 Division's Youth Scholarship Fund, Riverdale Share Community Association, The East York Seniors' Foundation, local soccer clubs and to Dr. Phyllis Billia's cancer research at Toronto General and Toronto Western Hospitals.

GreekTown naturally supports a number of Greek initiatives, including donating to the Greek Community of Toronto to help families and schools, SOS Villages -- which gives orphans and mothers a home, the Smile of a Child, University of Toronto's Greek studies program, the Hellenic Canadian Federation of Ontario, Nefeli (theatre and dance), Greek Community of Mississauga, and the Hellenic Home for the Aged.

As part of GreekTown's annual "March of the Santas", monies are raised for Princess Margaret Hospital through the sale of Toronto Firefighters' Calendars, and toys and donations are gathered for the CP24/CHUM Christmas Wish.

### **III. Big Economic Impact for Toronto**

The Festival and GreekTown on the Danforth BIA contribute significant impact to the Province and City. In 2017, the Festival's single weekend economic impact was **\$106** million. These numbers are based on governmental economic models tied to tourism. They don't take into account the great economic impact that the Festival has on the GreekTown on the Danforth BIA's members, which consist primarily of small retailers and restaurateurs.

The Festival is a tourist magnet: 38% of attendees (608 000) travelled 40 kilometres or more to attend the Taste of the Danforth last summer. The Festival was the primary reason for visiting the Toronto region for **97%** of visitors. For a significant **38.5%**, their sole reason for coming to Toronto was the Festival.

Equally important to the province's economy is the fact that **86%** of out-of-towners plan to return this year.

People continue to love the Festival – **97%** rated it as Good, Very Good or Excellent.

For more information visit: [www.tasteofthedanforth.com](http://www.tasteofthedanforth.com)

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**For additional information, please contact:**

Howard Lichtman – 416-402-4948 – [howard@lightning-group.com](mailto:howard@lightning-group.com)



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**TASTE OF THE DANFORTH**

**SPECIAL OPENING CEREMONIES**

**IN MEMORY OF THE VIOLENT ATTACK THAT TOOK PLACE ON SUNDAY JULY 22, 2018**

**FOR RELEASE: Tuesday, August 7, 2018 - TORONTO**

On Friday evening, at 8:00pm on August 10<sup>th</sup>, the official Opening Ceremonies of the 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Taste of the Danforth will begin.

Prior to the formal launch, we will observe a minute of silence for Reese Fallon and Julianna Kozis, whose lives were tragically taken on Sunday, July 22, 2018.

We will also acknowledge the heroic actions of the first responders, both the official first responders and the informal first responders, represented by a police officer, a firefighter and an EMS responder – whose presence on the tragic evening ensured that more lives weren't lost. We will also honour the "unofficial" first responders, who were ordinary citizens that helped those in need. While there are many who assisted the dying and the wounded, they will be represented by Tanya Wilson who runs a tattoo shop on the Danforth called Skin Deep Tattoo Studio.

This will be followed by a rendition of "Hallelujah", sung by local 18-year-old Danforth resident Alexander Stewart.

Spontaneous memorials have been established at three locations along the Danforth. As we would like to preserve these tributes, we will consolidate the three in one location on the Danforth (near St. Barnabas Church – 361 Danforth Avenue), during the course of the Festival, so that Festival attendees can visit and pay their respects.

When the Festival is concluded, we will move this temporary memorial to the Logan Green Field Parkette, slightly north of the Alexander the Great Parkette on Logan. Plans will be made to create a permanent memorial in the near future.

We will also be raising funds on behalf of the victims. The proceeds from this donation will be given to the **#TorontoStrong** fund, organized by the City of Toronto and the Toronto Foundation.

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