

Multicultural Festival will span two locations in Culture Days kick-off

Culture Days in Aurora will kick off with a spicy celebration of the diversity that calls Aurora home at the Town's annual Multicultural Festival.

Set for Saturday, September 20, the Multicultural Festival will offer a full day of activities at both Aurora Town Park and Aurora Town Square, and include music, dancing, a film screening ? which come together in the perfect blend of sweet and spicy.

?Get ready to embark on a vibrant cultural adventure right in the heart of Aurora,? said the Town of Aurora in a statement. ?This celebration brings together the rich traditions, flavours, and rhythms of cultures from around the globe ? all on one unforgettable day.?

The international showcase begins at Town Park with cultural dance performances at the band shell from 9 a.m. until 12 noon. Cultures to be represented on stage include Brazilian, Egyptian, Ukrainian, Chinese and South Asian ? with representation from India in the form of a Bollywood presentation.

The fun continues at Aurora Town Square from 12.30 ? 6 p.m. with further cultural performances ? including a Chinese lion and changing face dances ? and a special film screening in the Davide De Simone Performance Hall of the documentary ?Honeyland,? which ?follows the last female wild beekeeper in Europe as her traditional, sustainable way of life is threatened by new neighbours who exploit natural resources.?

While the Multicultural Festival closes on a sweet note with the documentary, spice will be the order of the day, according to Shelley Ware, Special Events Coordinator for the Town of Aurora.

?Last year, we celebrated desserts from around the world, the year before it was appetizers from around the world, and this year it is spices,? says Ware. ?This year, we're celebrating flavour. We're going to have different spices throughout the building with food samples, so people can taste the dominant spices for different countries and see how it's used. We're even going to have a station where you can make your own little spice kit, take it home and try it with your dinner that night.?

The Optimist Club of Aurora is also lending a hand in the Multicultural Festival's culinary fare, offering a free corn roast where participants can try out a variety of spices on the sweet late summer staple.

?Last year was the grand opening of Aurora Town Square, and last year we held the Festival over two locations and it worked out really, really well,? Ware continues. ?Having morning shows when the Aurora Farmers' Market is bustling works out really well, and then having additional amenities at Town Square, and Town Square being the shortest walk ever away, it enabled us to lengthen our day, expand our program, and offer more enhanced experiences, such as the documentary Honeyland.

?There will be six different back-to-back cultural dance performances at Town Park, then we move over to Town Square, where there will be six different back-to-back cultural performances outside in the Square. If you're coming to both sites, they're two totally different experiences.?

Another point of pride for Ware and her team is the Multicultural Festival kicks off Culture Days, the Province-wide celebration of Culture, and, here at home, events are being organized by a number of the Town's Cultural Partners, including the Aurora Cultural Centre, Aurora Public Library, the Aurora Museum & Archives and more.

?I think it is amazing that this can start Culture Days,? says Ware. ?We can help promote all the other activities that are happening because it's not just one day; we're moving into other experiences because a lot of community organizations do fantastic work. No two years are the same. I think every single year is an enriching experience. Sometimes the experiences are too short and you wish they were longer, but the Multicultural Festival itself is about packing a variety of cultures into your suitcase in one day!?

For a full lineup on Aurora's 2025 Multicultural Festival, visit aurora.ca/multiculturalfestival. To book your ticket for the documentary screening of Honeyland, visit auroratownsquare.ca/events-tickets/whats-on.

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