

Three-day Aurora party set for Canada's 157th birthday

Aurora is known as 'Canada's Birthday Town' and will once again live up to its name with three days of festivities beginning June 29.

Kick off the anniversary of Confederation early on Saturday, June 29, with the Aurora Farmers' Market at Town Park from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The party will get into full swing back at Town Park on Sunday, June 30, as the Town and the Rotary Club of Aurora, team up for the traditional Dance in the Park show featuring popular local bands and artists Tangent and the Louisa Barbosa Band.

Aurora will be a sea of red and white on Monday, June 1, as the Canada Day Parade marks the start a full day of activities in Aurora's historic Downtown Core and at Lambert Willson Park.

'We start July 1 with our very patriotic Canada Day Parade. Very few municipalities still have a parade, so it is quite special for Aurora,' says Shelley Ware, Special Events Coordinator for the Town of Aurora. 'We'll be stepping off at 10 a.m. on Yonge Street and Murray Drive, travelling north to Aurora Heights. This year, we have dynamic bands and we have a really good number of entries of multicultural dancers and performers that will be doing the parade route in their traditional and authentic textiles, which is always completely mesmerizing.

'With parades, one of the enticing factors is marching bands; you don't see them throughout the year, except for the Santa Under the Stars Parade, but they are a huge attraction for all demographics. This is your chance to stand back, appreciate, and take it all in.'

Following the Parade, the Canada Day extravaganza continues at Lambert Willson Park, just behind the Aurora Family Leisure Complex off Industrial Parkway North ' as well as within the Complex itself, which will host free swimming, skating and drop-in gym times.

The park, however, will offer plenty of fun under the summer sky, beginning with a pancake breakfast flipped by the Optimist Club of Aurora, family-friendly activities, and music throughout the day and evening.

'We know Aurora loves live music, so we will have bands like Off The Rock - Tribute to Great Big Sea, moving into Classic Lightfoot Live and then in the evening we will be going into a Regional band called Crosswinds and closing with From the Hip, a tribute to the iconic Canadian band Tragically Hip,' says Ware.

'What's also unique about Aurora's Canada Day festivities is the daytime activities. Yes, we have inflatables, yes, we have mini-fishing, yes, we have tried-and-true activities we know families enjoy doing, but we really put in a lot of resources and creativity into creating an interactive and educational activity based on each Province and Territory. When you visit Yukon, you're mining for gold. This year when you visit Manitoba, you're meeting some friendly reptiles based on the cool facts or interesting inventions we've learned throughout the year. I think just the creativity and uniqueness of that angle, I really think it I just another reason why Aurora is special.'

The celebrations will, of course, end in a bang with a spectacular fireworks display at dusk.

For a full roster of Canada Day celebrations, visit www.aurora.ca/canadaday.

By Brock Weir