

Gouda top again

Hamilton's Moira Cheese has won the Cheese World Awards, a competition of international cheese lovers, for the second time in a row.

Second prize (Best of Show) and bronze prize (Best of Show) were awarded to the cheese. The award is a testament to the quality of the cheese and the skill of the cheesemakers. The award is a testament to the quality of the cheese and the skill of the cheesemakers.

The award was presented at the Hamilton Hotel in Hamilton on February 28.



ITALIAN FEAST: Caffe Centrale second chef Alessandro Bressi and head chef Marco Scarpa enjoy a game of cards, wine, and gelato with Circolo Italiano in Hamilton vice-president Beppe Carrozzino and Paolo Lisignoli ahead of the Hamilton Italian Festival this Sunday.

Photo: NICK REED

Festival brings best of Italy to Hamilton

By SHAYNE ELDRIDGE

Mozzarella, Gucci and Ferrari.

What do they all have in common? Italy. And this Sunday, some of the best things about Italy will be coming to Hamilton for the inaugural Hamilton Italian Festival.

The free event, hosted by the Circolo Italiano in Hamilton NZ club, will showcase some of the best food, drinks and activities that Italy has to offer from local Hamilton vendors, as well as some from Auckland, Taupo and Tauranga.

Organiser Vicki Ravlich-Horan said successful Italian festivals were held in Wellington and Nelson during two days every year, which is something the Hamilton organisers aspire to have.

Vicki said it would be good to have local Italian-themed car enthusiasts join in and show off their Ferrari, Lamborghini or Vespa.

"We would like it to grow beyond food and to highlight Italian culture so much more; the culture, design, fashion," she said.

Local community groups have jumped on board too.

"The only requirement [we have for the stalls] is that it must be Italian-themed because we are trying to promote the Italian circolo," Circolo Italiano in Hamilton vice president, Beppe Carrozzino, said.

Local singer Katie Trigg will perform renditions of famous Italian songs. There is also the chance to learn Italian folk dancing with Dance Folkus, try your hand at pizza spinning or perhaps Italian bowls.

Children will also be able to get in on the action by making their own pizza.

"There are a lot of people that use Italian-sounding names in recipes ... this will help people to understand and experience the authentic ingredients," Beppe said.

The Hamilton circolo, which means club or community, was founded by Italians living in Hamilton in the 1980s, including former Hamilton City councillor Joe Di Maio, with the aim of keeping Italian people and their descendants in

touch with one another. But a lot of the members were older now and the younger generations had assimilated to the Kiwi culture, Vicki said, so the club was on the brink of closing.

The Italian Festival was an idea of Beppe's to create a resurgence of the club.

Fans of Italian culture, those who have travelled to or are looking to one day travel to Italy, are all invited to join the circolo too.

"A lot of people don't know there's an Italian community in Hamilton," Beppe said.

Currently the circolo has about 65 members, about 10 of whom speak fluent Italian.

For those who would like to join or to find out more about the circolo, email circoloitaliano_hamilton@hotmail.com, or check out their stall at the festival.

■ Hamilton Italian Festival, Sunday, March 10, 11am till 4pm, Hamilton Gardens courtyard outside the pavilion. Visit facebook.com/HamiltonItalianFestival for more information.

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