



PRESS RELEASE
For immediate release

FESTIVAL DU VOYAGEUR 2015: THE WORLD'S LARGEST KITCHEN PARTY!

SAINT-BONIFACE, February 24, 2015 – After 10 days of programming, the 46th edition of Festival du Voyageur turned out to be, once again, a great success with over **91,000 visits** to all the official festival sites! Despite the cold weather, a large number of visitors enjoyed the festivities and celebrated the “joie de vivre” at The World’s Largest Kitchen Party!

FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS

A plethora of events, workshops and concerts were presented during Festival du Voyageur 2015 and many of them were great successes. This winter, Festival du Voyageur offered many **special events** for its patrons, amongst the most popular we should mention the brand new Winter Feast, a fundraising event which raised over \$8,000 for Fort Gibraltar, **Cajun Night** presented by Club Regent Casino and the **Beard Growing Contest** at the Voyageur Trading Post, the **Fashion Show on Ice** at the Rendez-vous on Ice, the **Rendez-vous des chefs** in Maison du Bourgeois.

Historical interpretation inside **Fort Gibraltar** once again took visitors back in time to the fur trade era for the duration of the festival. On the second floor of the Maison du Bourgeois, the **Voyageur Apprenticeship Workshops** were back for a third straight year and were just as popular as last year. They offered visitors a chance to take in traditional demonstrations and participate in workshops touching on a variety of subjects, including aboriginal artifact reproductions, canoe paddle carving and fishnet weaving. Still in Fort Gibraltar, the **lunches and dinners in Maison du Bourgeois** as well as the **Soirées du Bourgeois** offered by Festival du Voyageur and Gibraltar Dining Corporation were also a hit. Finally, with the help of visitors Festival du Voyageur was able to create the **largest “living” Métis flag in the world** during Louis Riel Day with nearly 250 participants!

The **musical programming** once again took centre stage at Festival du Voyageur. In all, **130 artists** were in concert at Voyageur Park as well as in our Official Sites during the 10 days of the festival. Among the most popular acts we can list **Elliott Brood, Moses Mayes, JP Hoe, The Dead South, Sierra Noble, Radio Radio** and **Bon Débarras**. Many of the artists from a variety of musical styles played to jam-packed crowds.

Festival du Voyageur’s Executive Director, Ginette Lavack Walters, could not be more proud of the latest edition and its celebrations. “This festival was a great success. Despite the cold weather, visitors came out in large numbers to celebrate winter and francophone culture with us. On behalf of the entire Festival du Voyageur team and our Board of Directors, we would like to send out a big thank you to all those who participated in this 46th edition of the largest winter festival in Western Canada!”

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THE WINNERS

The Beard Growing Contest was once again one of the winter festival's most popular activities. Taking place at the Voyageur Trading Post, the contest featured more than forty contestants who competed in four different categories: the Festival Beard (contestants shaved on December 18 and grew their beards until February 20), the Voyageur Beard (wild and wooly), the Novelty Beard (groomed mustache or beard) and the Open category (homemade beards). The winners were Collin Ward in the **Festival Beard** category, Roger Prince in the **Voyageur Beard** category, Anthony Uprichard in the **Novelty** category and Bess Hamilton in the **Open** category. The contest was also a fundraiser and managed to raise **more than \$5,200** for the Heart and Stroke Foundation. As for the **Rendez-vous des chefs**, our very popular pea soup competition, the people's choice award went to **La P'tite France** and the Judges' prize was awarded to **Marion Street Eatery**.

The winners of the **Fiddling Contest** were: in the under 7 category, Emaline Windsor; in the 8-10 years old category, Anne-Sophie Régnier; in the 11-13 years old category, River Sawchyn; in the 14-17 years old category, Sophia Rivera; in the 60+ category, Brian Granger; and in the open championship category, Alex Kusturok. As for the **Jigging Contest** the winners were: in the 9 years old and under competition, Clarissa Spence; in the 10-13 years old category, Thalia Ducharme; in the 60+ category, Claudette Penner; and in the open championship category, Ryan Richard

The **Winter Feast door prize**, a trip for two to Churchill presented by Calm Air, was won by Jean-François Bérard. Also, the **Fill out and win contest** was won by Glen Nanka who earned a trip for two to any destination in North America where **Air Canada** flies.

A survey is currently available on the Festival du Voyageur website at www.heho.ca to gather visitors' feedback and comments on this 46th edition. Respondents are eligible to win a flight for two to an international destination served by Air Canada.

Festival du Voyageur's staff would like to thank its volunteers, sponsors, partners and many visitors who contributed to the resounding success of the 2015 edition of Festival du Voyageur. We hope to see you next year for the 47th edition of Festival du Voyageur from **February 12 to 21, 2016**.

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