

Zeiterion unites the top Portuguese cultural organizations to create downtown New Bedford's first festa: "Viva Portugal"

The Zeiterion Performing Arts Center is proud present an entire day of programming dedicated to the arts and cultural of Portugal on Saturday, May 7! It begins with "Viva Portugal," downtown New Bedford's first "festa" or street fair, from 1:00-7:45PM. This free, family-friendly event features four city blocks, centered at the intersection of Purchase and Spring Streets, of lively Portuguese culture and entertainment, organized by The Z and eight leading Portuguese cultural organizations. After 7:45PM, as "Viva Portugal" winds down in the streets around The Z, audiences will transition inside the theater for a mainstage concert of Portuguese fado music by the "fresh faces of fado" Nathalie Pires and Marco Rodrigues at 8:00pm. Concert tickets: \$35-\$49. Following the concert, the final event of the day is a fundraiser supporting the non-profit Portuguese School and The Z. Guests will have the opportunity to mingle with performers and enjoy Portuguese food and drinks. Tickets \$35-40. The "Viva Portugal" festa is free, and the tickets for the evening fado concert and fundraiser are available at www.zeiterion.org, 508-994-2900 or at the Zeiterion box office, 684 Purchase Street, New Bedford.

The Zeiterion Performing Arts Center is located in New Bedford, the heart of the Southcoast's Portuguese population. The area is also home to a host of Portuguese cultural organizations, all of whom produce events and programs that create a strong cultural identity for the area and its residents. When the Zeiterion decided to create a Portuguese

feira to complement the evening fado performance, Executive Director Rosemary Gill thought it was an opportunity to do something unique – to invite all the Portuguese clubs, feasts, festivals and government groups to collaborate on the project.

“I have admired the work of these groups for a long time, and knew this was the perfect opportunity to bring them all together to showcase the best of Portuguese culture,” said Rosemary Gill. The partner groups she brought together to create “Viva Portugal” include the Azorean Maritime Heritage Society, Club Madeirense S.S. Sacramento, Consulate of Portugal in New Bedford, House of the Azores of New England, New Bedford Day of Portugal, Portuguese United for Education, the Prince Henry Society of New Bedford, and Tagas Press, Center for Portuguese Studies, UMD. Additional partners include The City of New Bedford, and The New Bedford Whaling Museum.

These partners have pooled their creative resources to produce “Viva Portugal,” a feira showcasing the food, performing arts and folkloric culture of Portugal. The streets around the Zeiterion will have a live music stage, a food demonstration tent, art exhibits, roaming performers, parade floats, food vendors, café tables, whale boat demonstration, craft vendors, classic Portuguese decorations, and kids activities.

“Viva Portugal” highlights include:

- In the Portugalia Tent, renowned Portuguese chefs and cookbook authors Ana Ortins, Maria Lawton and Joe Rego will offer cooking demonstrations.
- On the outdoor Viva Portugal stage, The Z will presents comedians The Portuguese Kids, Pianist Renato Diz, Raizes, and the Madeiran folkloric dance group Grupo Folclorico do Clube Madeirense S.S. Sacramento, among many others.
- Portuguese food vendors will offer the classic selections of caçoila and linguica sandwiches,

malassadas, cod fish cakes, favas, and tremoços – a signature Portuguese salty snack made from lupini beans.

- The Azorean Maritime Heritage Society will showcase their authentic Azorean whaleboat “Pico” and present master boat builder, Joao Silveira Tavares from Pico, Azores. He will demonstrate the art of oar making.
- Club Madeirense S.S. Sacramento, also known as “The Feast,” will set the visual tone of the event with decorations and parade floats that include, The S.S Brinquinho, a replica of Columbus Santa Maria ship; Madeira Wine Press Float, dedicated to the traditional wine making on the island of Madeira; and Madeira land Float, a replica of the Island of Madeira.

“Viva Portugal,” a celebration of Portuguese art and culture, is a free event. Tickets for the “Nathalie Pires & Marco Rodrigues” 8:00PM fado concert are \$35-\$49; and tickets for the post-show Portuguese School and Zeiterion Performing Arts Center fundraiser are \$35-40. All tickets are available for purchase at www.zeiterion.org, by calling 508-994-2900, or in person at the box office at 684 Purchase Street, New Bedford, MA. Box Office Hours: Tuesday-Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Saturday 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and two hours before each performance.