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Updated Sept 6, 2009

BACKGROUND

Profile of the Great Canadian Beer Festival

The Great Canadian Beer Festival Society presents this craft beer tasting event each year in September on the weekend after Labour Day, at the Royal Athletic Park near downtown Victoria, British Columbia, Canada

- The festival's aim is to introduce consumers to new brews and to raise awareness of craft brewing in the local community and beyond. In its 17th year, the GCBF is the longest running, largest craft-only festival in Canada.
- Attendees purchase tickets in advance at beer-related businesses in Victoria, Sooke, Sidney, Cobble Hill, Duncan, Nanaimo, Vancouver, Portland, Seattle, and Port Angeles. Tickets are \$25 for Friday 3-8 pm and \$30 for Saturday 12-6 pm. As usual, tickets were sold out within days of going on sale.
- Tokens are purchased for each tasting. Tokens cost \$1.25 each. Most 4-oz tastings are one token. Premium tastings cost two tokens.
- 53 breweries total, including 28 from BC, 5 from other parts of Canada, 17 from the US and 3 booths with beer from other parts of the world: 172 different beers. (Over 20,000 litres of beer)
- Local restaurants have booths selling their wares. The food vendors this year are: Ali Baba Pizza, Smoken Bones Cookshack, Caribbean Village, Naanwich and the Edelweiss Club.
- Music, dancing and performers keep attendees entertained while they sip, including jugglers, magicians, Morris dancers and your average, run-of-the-mill, 14-piece gypsy marching band!
- The Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) has a booth for more information about brewing, craft beers, or home brewing techniques.
- The first Great Canadian Beer Festival was held in 1993 in the Victoria Conference Centre. The festival continued to grow, and it now takes place outdoors in the Royal Athletic Park, where over 8000 people are expected over the two-day event.
- The Festival is managed by a non-profit society, chaired by Gerry Hieter, an experienced member of the beer industry. Proceeds are donated to charity. This year's beneficiaries are CFAX Santa's Anonymous and bursaries for Camosun College hospitality students.
- The festival counts on many volunteers to pour beer, sell tickets, haul kegs, and many other jobs.
- Sponsors include CFAX 1070, 107.3 KOOL FM, Phillips Brewing, Industry Images Creative Studios, and Ali Baba Pizza.