

The Greek National Day of Independence Parade

March 25th is the Greek National Day of Independence a day marking the freedom from Turkish rule in 1829 after 400 years of oppression where they were deprived of basic human rights, considered rayas (beast in Turkish) and worked and lived only for their rulers.

The Greek National Day of Independence Parade will be held on Sunday as part of the festival to celebrate and commemorate Greece's historic struggle for national independence in the 1800's.

The parade will start on Pyrmont Bridge and the procession will make there way to Tumberlong Park where the students from the Greek Orthodox Community of NSW Greek Afternoon School will lead us in the singing of the Greek and the Australian National Anthems, followed by the last post, the laying of wreaths and special guest speakers including the president of the Greek Orthodox Community, George Angelopoulos and the Consul General of Greece, Ioannis Raptakis.

The parade will commence at Pyrmont Bridge 11am and will arrive at Tumbalong Park at 11:45am.

Growing up Greek in America with Basile

Basile will be cracking up the crowd when he unleashes his deranged and outrageously funny characters, voices and attitudes on the stage at Tumbalong Park for the annual Greek Fest Darling Harbour.

After performing to sell out crowds in the US and the UK BASILE will bring his critically acclaimed stage show "*Growing Up Greek In America*" to Sydney making his first appearance at the Festival.

Inspired by his bi-cultural upbringing, Basile's original characterisations of family and the precise observations about the absurdity of being caught between two cultures will have you laughing till you cry.

Basile is a powerfully diverse entertainer who is able to shift from frenzied airline passenger to tearful teddy bear to angry, antagonistic performer without missing a beat.

Be sure to catch his hilarious show at 5:40pm, 6:45pm and 7:30pm on the Tumbalong Park stage Darling Harbour

"The funniest Greek alive" – **Washington Post**

Groove to the funky sounds of new singing sensation Vassy

Sultry and street wise, she has worldly grace, gypsy fire and generations of music in her blood. Vassy's vibrant presence and infectious smile front an exquisite voice, vivid with subtleties and textures that will amaze even the most experienced musical ears.

After winning the 2003 Triple J unearthed competition Vassy has shot to stardom with hit songs like "Cover You In Kisses", "Get Busy" & "Loverman". Vassy and her band will be performing songs from her debut album on Tumbalong Stage from 7:55pm.

Live Oyster Shucking the pros show us how it's done!!!

Nicks Seafood Restaurant at Cockle Bay Wharf and Nicks Bar and Grill at Kings Street Wharf will be teaching you the old skills of oyster shucking. Throughout the entire duration of the Greek Festival of Sydney, March 20 – April 27, resident Oyster Shuckers Sam Kourepis and Con Mansy will show us how to 'shuck' daily from 10:30am – 12pm at both venues.

Life in the Lens with Mick Tsikas

Get a sneak preview of *Synopsis* the first photographic exhibition by acclaimed AAP photographer Mick Tsikas. Over the weekend, on Level 2 of the Harbourside shopping complex, Mick will display a selection of the images from his exhibition which opens at the Kudos Gallery in Paddington on March 23.

Synopsis, which means connection in Greek, is a powerful, inspiring and emotive display of images taken throughout Mick's career as a photographer.



Smashing plates, parades and patriotism at Greek Fest Darling Harbour

One of the largest community celebrations in Australia is happening down at Darling Harbour this weekend, Sunday March 20, 2005.

Greek Fest Darling Harbour is the headline event of the annual Greek Festival of Sydney, now in its 23rd year.

Kicking off at 10am this Sunday, *Greek Fest* is a celebration and exploration of Hellenic culture, traditions and history.

Visitors can taste traditional Greek food, watch and learn traditional dances from all regions of Greece and Cyprus, participate in a Mosaic workshop, meet some soccer stars, laugh at comedians or simply just soak up the culture and celebrate it with family and friends.

Some of the challenges of the day include the Loukoumades eating competitions, dancing competitions and best of all the opportunity to smash some plates in the name of fun.

Highlights during the day include up and coming singing sensation **Vassy**, winner of Triple J's 2003 'Unearthed' competition and internationally acclaimed comedian **Basile** with *Growing up Greek in America*, both of whom will be performing on the main stage in Tumbalong Park.

A spectacular parade commemorating the Greek National Day of Independence, which falls on March 25, starts at 11am at Pyrmont Bridge and will make its way to Tumbalong Park for the singing of the Australian and Greek National Anthems by the Greek Orthodox Community of NSW Greek Afternoon School and volunteers from the 2004 Athens Olympics.

Greek Fest Darling Harbour is just one of many events spread across Sydney throughout March and April covering many different genres including philosophy, photography, feasts, films, plays and parades, the Greek Festival is as fascinating and diverse as the culture itself.

For more information about the 23rd *Greek Festival of Sydney* program visit:
www.greekfestivalofsydney.com.au