

Get your fill of cherries during 77th annual festival in TC

TRAVERSE CITY — The National Cherry Festival returns again this year with many all-time favorites.

Back on the schedule are cherry pie-eating contests for all ages and cherry spit-spitting contests, too. On opening day, July 5, the nation's largest Cherry Ice Cream Social will be presented. Hundreds of volunteers will scoop free cherry ice cream for festival guests following an 11 a.m. ribbon-cutting ceremony.

The Taste of Cherries Food Fair will be held Sunday, July 6, from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Open Space Park. Visitors will be able to taste culinary creations made from cherries by students and staff in the Northwestern Michigan College Hospitality Program. Prices will range from \$3 to \$10.

The feast of cherries continues with a Grand Cherry Buffet Luncheon hosted by the Holiday Inn on Friday,

July 11, at noon. Presented by the Michigan Cherry Committee, the buffet will include salads and breads, all prepared with cherries, an entrée table featuring everything from poultry in cherry salsa to cherry BBQ meats and pasta. Tickets for the all you can eat meal are \$15 for adults and \$8 for children and may be purchased at the Holiday Inn or at the Festival office.

Cherry pie-eating contests for grown-ups will be held Sunday, July 6, at 4 p.m. and Tuesday, July 8, at 8 p.m. Cherry Pit Spit competitions take center stage throughout the week. The longest pit spitter from each day will be asked to compete in the finals on Saturday, July 12, at 5 p.m. Cherry Pit Spit competitions will take place Saturday, July 5; Monday, July 7; Wednesday, July 9; and Friday, July 11, all at 6 p.m. in the Festival Open Space.



Record-Eagle file photo

A competitor at the 2002 cherry pie-eating contest.

Just-picked cherries and cherries transformed into all kinds of specialty products are presented throughout the week in the Festival Farm Market Tent located at the Festival Open Space. The Festival Open Space, with restaurants, entertainment, exhibits, restrooms and baby-changing areas, is open July 5-12 from 10 a.m. to 11 p.m.

For details, call 947-4230.

National Cherry Festival 2003 Highlights

SATURDAY, JULY 5

8 a.m.
Northern Waters Disc Golf Tournament
9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Beach Volleyball Tournament
11 a.m.
Opening Ceremony, Queen's Arrival and Ribbon Cutting
Noon-1:30 p.m.
World's Largest Cherry Ice Cream Social
1-3 p.m.
Festival Air Show featuring aerobatic maneuvers and flight demonstrations over West Grand Traverse Bay
9 p.m.
Loverboy on the Bay Side Entertainment Stage

SUNDAY, JULY 6

9 a.m.-1 p.m.
Old Mission Peninsula Bike Tour
9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Beach Volleyball Tournament
10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Classic Car & Truck Show
10 a.m.-7 p.m.
Arts and Crafts Fair
11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
Taste of Cherries Food Fair
1-3 p.m.
Festival Air Show
4-11 p.m.
Festival Wine Tasting
9 p.m.
Three Men and a Tenor on the Bay Side Entertainment Stage

MONDAY, JULY 7

9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Putt n' Pizza
9 a.m.
Very Cherry Distinguished Senior Breakfast
4 p.m.
NeXt2Y Night

TUESDAY, JULY 8

9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Heritage Day
10 a.m.-noon
Pet Show
1:30-2:30 p.m.
Cherry Industry Program
6-7 p.m.
Planters Go Nuts! Bed Race
7 p.m.
AAA Michigan Heritage Parade
10 p.m.
Blake Shelton on the Bay Side Entertainment Stage

WEDNESDAY, JULY 9

9 a.m. - noon
Fun and Games for Special Kids
9 a.m.
State Sanctioned Seniors

Shuffleboard Tournament
Noon-2:30 p.m.
Royal Pageant of Fashion & Luncheon
4-8 p.m.
Kids Cherry Town Fun Night
7 p.m.
Very Cherry Swing Dance Lessons
8 p.m.
Very Cherry Swing Dance
9 p.m.
1964 The Tribute on the Bay Side Entertainment Stage

THURSDAY, JULY 10

Kids' Day
9 a.m.-noon
Fun and Games for children
6:30-8:30 p.m.
Touchstone Energy Junior Royale Parade
9 p.m.
Eddie Money on the Bay Side Entertainment Stage

FRIDAY, JULY 11

8:30-11:30 a.m.
Seniors Golf Day and Tournament
9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Sand Sculpture Contest
1-4 p.m.
Historical Tour of Cherry City USA
1-3 p.m.
Youth Chalk Art Contest
6 p.m.
Great Wolf Fun Run and Walk
6-11 p.m.
Queen's Coronation Ball
7-10 p.m.
Seniors' Euchre Tournament
9 p.m.
Bay Side Blues

SATURDAY, JULY 12

Festival Finale
7:30-10:30 a.m.
A Cherry Pancake Breakfast
7:50 a.m.-noon
Festival of Races
8:30 a.m.
Medical Wheelchair Mile
9:30-10:30 a.m.
Meijer Golden Mile
11:15 a.m.
DTE ENERGY Cherry Royale Parade
2-3:30 p.m.
Hole-In-One Golf Final Shoot Out
2-5 p.m.
Semi-Finalists Drawing for 2003 Commemorative Pin Program
7 p.m.
2003 Commemorative Pin Final Drawing
8-10 p.m.
Milk Carton Boat Regatta
9 p.m.
WAR on the Bay Side Entertainment Stage
10:30 p.m.
Festival Fireworks Finale

For a complete schedule, watch for the National Cherry Festival Official Program in the July 2 edition of the Record-Eagle, or visit the Web site, www.cherryfestival.org



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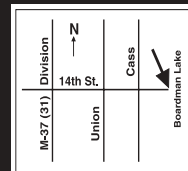
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