

LEFKAS INTERNATIONAL FOLKLORE FESTIVAL

A celebration of culture and youth in the island of Lefkada



Since its establishment in 1962, the Lefkas International Folklore Festival has promoted the message of peace, friendship and brotherhood among nations worldwide through its cultural and traditional folk forms in the art of music and dance.

Antonis Tzevelekis, a charismatic personality and pioneer in his time, was the founder of the festival.

In the festival folk dance groups from the five continents reinforce, through their performances, the message of friendship, communication and cooperation.

The participation of the folk groups in the Lefkas International Folklore Festival gives the opportunity to thousands native and foreign visitors of the island to get acquainted with, to appreciate and enjoy the folk art and cultural heritage of other countries.

More than 600 groups have represented the folklore of almost 150 countries at the festival until today.

The festival takes place during the third week of August, from one Sunday to the other, commencing with the great parade of peace and friendship, the evening's ceremony marking the opening night (on that first Sunday night) with a very short appearance by all dance groups. During the week the groups present full appearances and performances and finally reaching the peak on the second Sunday with the farewell parade and the majestic ending ceremony to include the exchange of gifts and the final dance of peace on stage by all groups. The host of the festival is Mr Alexis Kostalas, famous TV presenter.

During the 10 days of the festival the participants are offered a lifetime experience on the island of Lefkada by combining their performances with a number of leisure activities such as sightseeing, sports, excursions, night life.

This aspect of the festival makes all the participants happy and points out the versatile character of the event.

The Lefkas International Folklore Festival is the oldest of its kind in Greece and the second oldest festival in Europe –following the Fêtes de la Vigne of Dijon.

Up until today the festival preserves its non-profit orientation focusing on high artistic spectacles in a mix of professional and amateur creation.

The festival is organized by the Lefkas Cultural Center- which is a body of the Municipality of Lefkada- and the President of the Organising Committee is the Mayor of Lefkada.

The festival relies a lot on its volunteers who happily execute a great number of tasks.

Over the years the festival has established solid co-operations with Embassies, University departments, Institutions, Foundations all over the world and it is included in the global cultural agenda as a remarkable annual summer event in Greece. Recently the festival has gained the EFFE (Europe for Festivals Festivals for Europe) label.

The current difficult financial situation in Greece has of course affected the festival setting limitations to its horizons. On the other hand it has proved that the festival is a timeless event which manages not only to survive but to emerge even more glorious regardless of the harsh financial status.

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