

Ferragosto

Italian Cultural Fair a Family Oriented Event

By Pat Cash

It has been awhile since Italians and those who love Italian culture have celebrated in Salt Lake city, Utah. On August 16, 2003 a group of volunteers, mostly Italian, staged a street festival in an area that boasts a collection of Italian eateries and the best park in downtown Salt Lake City, which is evolving into our "Little Italy." It was a celebration of Italian food, drink, entertainment, crafts, and of course Ferraris and Vespas. It even included a Bocce tournament.

At least 5,000 people turned out to celebrate the one-day event which promised to become an annual Ferragosto. One of the highlights of the day included an Italian-American photo tent that told the story of numerous Italian families that immigrated to Utah. Even the Mayor of Salt Lake City, who attended the festival, was impressed by the contributions Italians have made to the history of Utah. It was truly an event that generated interest from the city at large in what the Italian culture has meant to Utah. It was also a day that gave Italian-Americans from Utah a tremendous sense of pride.

I am a second generation Italian. My relatives came from northern Italy and settled in Utah and Wyoming. I was one of the proudest Italians at the festival. The highlight for me was that my grandson, Michael Vincent Devin, was named "Mr. Ferragosto" along with "Miss Ferragosto," Regeina La Guardia. These two young people will act as public relation ambassadors for the Italians in Utah. I watched Michael, as Master of Ceremonies, open Utah's first Italian street festival along with Dr. Giovanni G. Maschero, Vice Consul of Italy, the Knights of Columbus 4th Degree Honor Gurard, Father Dave Bitman and our Mayor Rocky. Michael is fourth generation Italian and a freshman at Southern Utah University. He hopes to inspire the young people to be involved in their Italian culture. I could not help but think of how proud his great great Nonna, Lucille Sarcletti, would be of him.

E' stata una bella giornata! It was a Great day!



Mr. and Miss Ferragosto

Photo courtesy of Donatella Winward

