

STC NOW



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St. Charles Jewish Festival

Third Annual St. Charles Jewish Festival to Feature New Shtetl Village and Petting Zoo

Record crowds are expected to celebrate the ‘Year of Gathering’ at the St. Charles Jewish Festival on August 13th.

The third annual St. Charles Jewish Festival will take place on Sunday, August 13 from 11 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. outside the Foundry Art Centre, celebrating Jewish life and culture and bringing Jewish sights and sounds from around the world to St. Charles.

This year, organizers are planning a new addition: the ‘Shtetl Village,’ which will take participants back in time to a whimsical reenactment of life in the shtetl — the small Eastern European Jewish town that was a hallmark of Old World Jewish life for centuries. The shtetl, made famous in Fiddler on the Roof, will include crafts, traditional delicacies, and a petting zoo to complete the rural village feel.

Attendees will also encounter other characters dressed in costume, representing Jewish communities from across the globe who will share the history of Jewish life and culture. With a unique blend of storytelling and charm, participants will be welcomed into a lesser-known world, as an array of international Jewish guests invite them to explore Jewish culture and tradition.

The festival is organized by the Chabad Jewish Center of St. Charles County and The Gan St. Charles Preschool, which serves the estimated 6,000 Jews who live in St. Charles County.

“We’re excited for year three and to share this new immersive shtetl experience with St. Charles,” said Bassy Landa, who, together with her husband Rabbi Chaim Landa, directs the Chabad Jewish Center of St. Charles County. “It will be a joyful opportunity for our county to come together, celebrate our diversity and learn about Jewish culture.”

This year’s festival carries added significance as Jewish communities worldwide celebrate the Year of Hakhel or “Gathering,” a once-in-seven-years Jewish tradition, and organizers are expecting record crowds. Admission, music, and family activities are free. Food will be for sale.





Participants will enjoy world-class live Jewish music, with the festival’s musical lineup anchored by Boruch Sholom, a popular Jewish vocalist from Brooklyn, New York.

Building on the shtetl theme, U City Klezmer — the region’s newest Jewish music group — will bring their unique blend of Jewish folk music to this year’s festival. The musical lineup will also include a musical performance by Pre-College Strings of St. Charles County, a local youth music group, whose beautiful renderings of classic Jewish string-instrument pieces are sure to inspire.

Attendees will enjoy Jewish cuisine from around the world, adding to the popularity of the varied food options at previous years’ festivals. This year’s festival will offer a smorgasbord of delicious Jewish-themed foods, including Mediterranean dishes such as chicken kebabs, falafel and shawarma.

Other favorites will include kugel and matzah ball soup, as well as various kosher deli sandwiches.

The festival promises to be especially exciting for children, as a wide variety of kid-friendly activities will be on offer, including a massive bubble party featuring bubble machines and giant wands, cultural crafts, inflatables, and a wide range of family entertainment and activities.

“A major focus is families with young children — it will be nonstop fun and excitement for all,” says Landa. “The entire family will have the opportunity to learn about, and engage with, Jewish culture and traditions in a fun and meaningful way.”

For more information and to secure your FREE ticket, visit: www.JewishStCharles.org/Festival.