

Fest brings a little bit of Italy to Scottsdale

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You might feel like you're in Venice if you visit the Italian Festival of Arizona this weekend at SouthBridge in Scottsdale.

Italian Festival of Arizona

When: 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Saturday, March 21.
11 a.m.-6 p.m. Sunday, March 22.

Where: Near Marcellino Restaurant in SouthBridge, 7114 E Stetson Drive, Scottsdale.

Admission: \$10; free for veterans, Italian Association members and age 11 and younger.

Details: italianassociation.org.

of Arizona. "People would be able to see and smell lots of Italian food such as pizza, pasta, Italian wine, and great music. It's going to be amazing."

This is the second year for the two-day event, which is projected to attract

Umbrella-shaded tables will be placed along the bridge to re-create the ambiance of the canal-laced city in northeastern Italy.

"People can look over the canal while they eat dinner, kind of like you're in Venice," said Christina Forrest, a board member of the Italian Association



JOHN SAMORA/THE REPUBLIC

Partake in all things Italian, including dishes from Pomo Pizzeria Napoletana, at the annual Italian Festival of Arizona in Scottsdale.

up to 6,000 people to enjoy the music, artists and vendors.

The La Zitella music and dance group will travel from southern Italy to perform. Three generations of singers and dancers perform in traditions passed down through the generations, Forrest said.

Event organizers said about 200,000 Italians live in the Valley. The association's long-term goal is to create a Little Italy neighborhood here, Forrest said.

Scottsdale resident Emily Specht and her husband plan to attend the festival again. The couple has taken culinary classes and are fans of wine tasting.

Specht remembered the delicious food at last year's event, including cuttlefish, bread and gnocchi, a kind of potato dumpling.

The food melted in the mouth, she remembered.

"I'm going back for one of those this year," Specht said.