

Turks turn out for community festival

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More than 5,000 people were expected to have sampled fare such as gozleme, manti, donairs and more as the second Ottawa Turkish Festival unfolded at Confederation Park this weekend.

With 3,000 attending last year, organizers were pleased with the turnout for what they describe as both an educational and enjoyable lesson in the cuisine, art and culture of Turkey.

"Thanks to the community support last year, we're able to put on a larger event with a bigger stage and more entertainment," said organizer Kerim Khan.

"We have performers from Montreal and Toronto here, there are many booths, and an employment corner with the Canadian Forces, RCMP, the OPP and the Ottawa police. The Turkish community has many new immigrants and many of them are young, so it's good to offer them a chance to discover new career

possibilities."

Tahir Ozcan said the festival was a good meeting place for those who would like to do something positive.

"It's a great opportunity for people who would like to join the community and contribute. There are many things people can do to help."

Khan smiled as he watched the park fill up early yesterday morning. "We simply want to provide an atmosphere of fun for everyone," he said.

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DARREN CALABRESE/SUN MEDIA

A girl in a traditional Turkish folk dance outfit performs during the Turkish Festival at Confederation Park on the weekend.