This page was exported from - Caledon Citizen
Export date: Sun Sep 6 23:55:35 2026 / +0000 GMT

Caledon celebrates 7th-annual Caledon Italian Heritage Day

By Riley Murphy

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Downtown Bolton was alive with Italian culture and heritage this month as the community came together to celebrate Caledon Italian Heritage Day.

The annual event, organized by the Bolton Italian Cultural Centre, featured local vendors, classic dishes, and live performances for a day of fun celebrating Italian culture.

Walking along the streets downtown, attendees could spot everything from classic delicacies to cultural activities and even a song or two as various acts took over the massive stage gracing Downtown.

All day long, both local musicians and musicians from Italy itself took to the stage to entertain the huge crowds gathered around.

On the docket for Saturday were Bruno Monardo, Selena Villa, local band The Trio Kings, Vinz DeRosa and Rosita, NRG Band, and, directly from Italy, Romantic Italian Tenors and Collage.

Anna Meo, President of the Bolton Italian Cultural Centre, says the event itself takes a year of planning and organizing.

Over the past seven years, she's watched the annual event grow immensely within the community.

?We started with very few people seven years ago and it's becoming bigger and bigger and bigger. It gives us a lot of gratitude not only because there are Italian people here but because they see different cultures as well join in and having fun with us,? says Meo.

?Our philosophy is we really need to share our culture, and we really need to enjoy other cultures as well, so seeing all this, it's a blessing.?

With the expected growth in Bolton, she adds they hope to welcome more people for years to come.

While the day was under full swing, Meo said she's always nervous for the big day.

?But overall, when you see people enjoying themselves, it's a gratitude,? she says.

?I want to say thank you to all the people here that participated. I want to say thank you to my directors, my group, and also thank you to the Town of Caledon, the Mayor, the Council and all the people that work for the Town of Caledon,? added Meo.

?We got a lot of support, and it's wonderful because sometimes you don't get that, so we are very lucky and we're privileged, we're privileged by God.?

Councillor Tony Rosa said the day of celebration is a personal event for him.

?When the government recognized June as Italian Heritage Month in Canada in 2017, it was about recognizing sacrifices that my family members made to really create a better life for those of us around,? explained Rosa.

His mother was just 11-years-old when she immigrated to Canada herself, and at 12, she went to work, arriving with just an empty suitcase.

?When we look at those types of sacrifices, young people don't have to go through that today,? said Rosa. ?For me, recognizing the contributions of Italian Canadians across this country is very important because there's a lot of immigration stories, not only with the Italian community, but it's an immigration story that really represents all of Canada, multicultural Canada, where people have chosen for a better life here, but it's not been easy to get to where we are today. So, having opportunities like this to celebrate those contributions is very important to me and very important to this community.?

He noted that seven years ago, less than 1,000 people attended the event, and now it's up to tens of thousands.

?I'm really pleased to announce that you can't find a hotel room anywhere. You cannot make a reservation in a restaurant,? said Rosa, adding that people have travelled from all over just to come to the event.

Not only were authentic Italian bands performing that day, but Rosa notes that iconic 1970s band from Italy, Collage, is celebrating their 50th anniversary this very year.

?We thought it was a great way to bring them here and share their music with us,? said Rosa.

?All I want to say is thank you very much to all the volunteers. This would not be possible without people giving up their time to help put this thing together, and it really puts Bolton, Ontario and Caledon on the map.?

The day continued on with the celebrations into the night, with dancing and singing for hours to come.