

Planning for 2009 Knysna Oyster Festival in full swing

With more than 70 events already confirmed for this year's Pick n Pay Knysna Oyster Festival taking place from 3 - 12 July 2009, planning is in full swing and everything points to a great event this year.



Says festival manager Nicci Rousseau: "All the favourites which have made the Oyster Festival one of the most popular and enduring festivals in the country are back, thanks to our sponsors. And the good news is that despite the present state of the economy, entries are selling well for the top events. This year the Pick n Pay Cape Times Knysna Forest Marathon and Half Marathon organisers have increased the number of race entries to 8,000. Entries opened on 1 April and online entries for the Half Marathon have sold out in two weeks. Entries for the Cycle Tour are also going well and are 20% up on this time last year."

The SA Navy has confirmed that they will be upholding the tradition of attending the festival and will arrive in Knysna (weather permitting) on Tuesday, 7 July in two minehunters under the command of Chief Director of Maritime Strategy Rear Admiral B Teuteberg. An Admiral's Ball will be held in honour of the Navy on Thursday, 9 July.

New events on this year's programme include the Geo Oyster Geocaching competition from Monday 6 to Friday 10 July, an outdoor treasure hunting game which uses GPS and smart phones to locate a series of 12 way points in and around the Knysna Basin.

Nights of 1000 Pictures will give festival-goers the opportunity to buy local art at just R100 per photograph, illustration or painting. These will be donated for the two-night event to raise funds for Knysna Hospice.

The Navigation Drift Dive Challenge on Saturday 11 July will see teams of scuba divers attempt to navigate their way underwater from The Heads to Thekensens Jetty without surfacing!

Oyster lovers will be able to purchase the tasty mollusc from a number of Tabasco Oyster Hotspots at a good price. Hotspots will use approved oyster suppliers and be subject to strict health inspections throughout the festival. These hotspots will be easily identified by signage outside the establishment.

This year festival organisers are filling up the programme with numerous exciting mid-week events.

"Historically the two weekends of the ten-day festival are full, but we've found that visitors are not always aware of the exciting midweek events. The programme has filled up tremendously and visitors should really stay the full ten days to experience it all," says Rousseau.

Midweek sporting favourites include the Salomon Featherbed Trail Run on Tuesday, 7 July which this year will consist of a Breakfast Run and a Supper Run; a two-day festival of golf on 9 and 10 July; and Duesouth XTERRA on Thursday, 9 July at the Pezula Field of Dreams.

Other midweek highlights are the lifestyle events - the Wade Bales Wine Festival at Pezula Golf Club on Monday 6 and Tuesday 7 July; the Pick n Pay Oyster & Wine Mardi Gras presented by Tabasco on Wednesday 8 July at the Heineken Pavilion; the popular Knysna Oyster Company Oyster Shucking competition on Tuesday, 7 July; and the Longbarn Oyster

Eating Competition on Thursday, 9 July.

For more information about the festival programme or accommodation in Knysna visit www.oysterfestival.co.za.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>