

20 April 2010

2010 BRISTOL BALLOON FIESTA TAKES SHAPE

12-15th August 2010, Ashton Court Estate, Bristol

Plans for the 32nd Bristol Balloon Fiesta are already taking shape with a range of new attractions coming to the biggest event in the West.

Taking place from Thursday 12th – Sunday 15th August, the number of hot air balloons will be back to full strength, with 150 of all shapes and sizes providing an unforgettable spectacle as they take to the sky in mass ascents each morning and evening from Friday to Sunday.

Some of the classic favourite special shaped balloons like Monster.com, the Churchill Dog and the Scottish Piper will be joined by new special shaped balloons making their maiden flights at the world class ballooning event. They are currently being built in strict secrecy to be revealed to the half million people expected to flock to the Fiesta this summer.

Keen to promote local ballooning, the organizers have reserved a third of the places for balloonists from the immediate area. They will get a chance to take part in one of the world's most spectacular hot air balloon festivals alongside pilots from across the UK and beyond. Fiesta twinning partners in France, Switzerland and Belgium have already booked their places at the event and they will be joined by teams from Germany, the Netherlands, France, Ireland, America and the Middle East.

It is part of the fiesta's constitution to promote businesses in the local area and the organizers are keen to see as much local involvement as possible with the event. Nearly 20 local sponsors have already signed up for the '100 Club' which is being formally launched to the West's business community at an event next week (Monday 19 April). For an investment of just £2,000, members receive a package of benefits including corporate hospitality, balloon flight vouchers, brand advertising and VIP tickets to the event, plus entry into the draw to become the Fiesta's main sponsor.

New to the event this year will be a Bristol food court, with local food and drink makers including Pieminister showcasing their wares at the festival. Local brewer Zerodegrees will also be providing the bars around the site.

Muir Moffat, chairman of this year's Bristol Balloon Fiesta Organizing Committee says: "Plans are progressing well for this year's event and we're delighted with the support we have already had from local businesses which is vital to enable us to put on a really spectacular free show for the public.

"We're also keen to get more local involvement throughout the event and have started by increasing the number of balloonists from the area and bringing in more local food and drink, which is such a strength of the region. The Fiesta is a major national tourist attraction and provides a fantastic place for local companies to showcase what is best about the West."

The West lawn in front of the Mansion House will be home for the first time to a 'Fiesta Activity Zone', featuring water walkers, giant transparent balls which enable people to walk on water, a Go-Ape assault course, climbing walls and archery where people can try out their skills and burn off excess energy.

The hugely popular Red Arrows team will be making heads turns to the skies for the third year in a row with their aerial displays on Sunday afternoon and parachutists will test their skills by aiming to land their jumps in the central arena.

The event offers great entertainment for the whole family. Some of the largest crowds are drawn to the famous Night Glows on Thursday and Saturday evenings, when the balloons tether in the main arena and light up in sequence to music, like giant light bulbs.

Arena and air displays, over 250 trade stands, local and international food stalls, a funfair and a variety of other entertainment complete the fun-packed festival.

The Bristol International Balloon Fiesta is recognized as one of the UK's top five outdoor events. The fiesta is an icon for Bristol, as synonymous with the city as Brunel's famous Suspension Bridge.

Held in the rolling hills of Ashton Court on the edge of Bristol, it is a hugely popular free event and tourist attracting, with people flocking to see the balloons from across the country and beyond.

For more information, visit www.bristolballoonfiesta.co.uk.

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For more information, please contact the Balloon Fiesta press team at Spirit Public Relations.

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