

VISF 2016 Official Press Release:

Cultures unite at the 12th Annual Vancouver International Soccer Festival and Tournament: Recognized as one of the first and only continuing Fairtrade Designated Sporting Events in the country by Fairtrade Canada.

VANCOUVER, BC, CANADA – The Vancouver International Soccer Festival (VISF) is lacing up to kick off its 12th year on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, July 8-10, 2016 when hundreds of athletes, officials, and volunteers will descend on Empire Fields in Vancouver for a tournament that promotes inclusion, respect, and equality.

The VISF is a 7-on-7 World Cup-style soccer tournament that brings together up to 32 women's and co-ed soccer teams and players from Canada, the U.S.A., local international schools, and multi-cultural communities to celebrate "the beautiful game" and showcase diversity and cultural harmony. Five First Nations teams from BC will also participate. First Nations elders and local dignitaries will officially open the festival on Friday, July 8th at 7:00PM at the Historic Empire Fields, 3311 East Hastings St, Vancouver.

Admission to the festival is free! It takes place from 9:00am to 9:00pm on both Saturday and Sunday. In addition to exciting soccer action, festival highlights include globally inspired cuisine, a beer and wine garden, house DJ, wide-screen tournament TVs, games, and more.

The Vancouver International Soccer Festival continues to include fair trade products wherever possible. All matches will be played with Fairtrade Certified and FIFA Approved performance soccer balls, and various Fairtrade Certified food and beverage options will be available to participants. As a result of these efforts, VISF continues to be recognized by Fairtrade Canada as one of the first and only ongoing Fair Trade Designated Sporting Events in Canada, meaning fair trade goods were specifically chosen over conventional products.

The principles of fair trade and the Fairtrade City designation held by the City of Vancouver align with the values of inclusion, equality, and respect that are espoused by the Vancouver International Soccer Festival.

"Soccer has an incredible power that can be used to make this world a better place. We work within this powerful platform to promote peace, equality,

health, and education for everyone," says Adri Hamael, the Founder and Executive Director of VISF and the One Team for Peace Society. VISF 2016 will be accepting donations to help provide humanitarian aid to those displaced by violence, conflict or persecution by supporting United Nations Refugee Agency.

"We fully support this worthwhile initiative and all those involved in it. The Vancouver International Soccer Festival and Tournament has continued to offer an inclusive sporting event, bringing together various communities and promoting human rights for all, which is a message that goes to the core of UNHCR's work," says Furio De Angelis, UNHCR Representative in Canada.

Lead sponsors include: City of Vancouver, Vancouver Park Board, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, Granville Island Brewing, VOLO Athletics, Simpson Family Foundation, University of British Columbia, Simpson Thomas & Associates, Switch United, American Fabricators, Oasis Tents, and CIBC. For more information, visit www.oneteamunited.ca

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VISF 2016 schedule of events and time line:

Day 1
Friday, July 8
Soft Launch

6:00 pm - 7:00 pm
volunteer check in.

Info and Registration tents open: teams and

7:00 pm -7:45 pm

Friendly soccer matches featuring: special guests, first nations teams, visiting teams, and VISF teams. Details TBA.

8:00 pm - 9:00 pm **Reception: opening remarks, light healthy middle eastern snacks, refreshments, and entertainment.**
#Refugees Welcome.

Day 2
Saturday, July 9th

9:00 am Info and Registration tents open: teams and volunteer check in.

9:15 am Hospitality tents open: complimentary tea, coffee, banana, healthy bars, ..etc

10:00 am Round 1 of soccer matches starts

11:00 am Fun zone opens: Food, beer and wine gardens, music, entertainment..etc

6:00 pm Last soccer match of the day

7:00 pm Music, entertainment, games, Prizes, ..etc

8:00 pm Last call for food and beverage services.

8:30 pm Closing time. Good Night- See you tomorrow!

Day 3
Sunday, July, 10th

9:00 am Info and registration tents open. teams and volunteer check in

9:15 am Hospitality tents open: complimentary tea, coffee, banana, healthy bars, ice cream ..etc

10:00 am Round 2 of soccer matches starts

11:00 pm Fun zone opens: Food,beer, wine gardens, music, entertainment, and LIVE BROADCAST OF EURO 2016 CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL MATCH

5:00 pm	VISF 2016 Women finals
6:00 pm	VISF 2016 Coed finals
7:00 pm Wrap-up	VISF 2016 Trophy Presentation and Festival
8:00 pm	Last call for food, and beverages service
8:30 pm	Closing time: Good night! see you next year!

Thank you all-- and WE look forward for an epic VISF!

Best,
Adri