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One of the biggest celebrations of Italian culture in the country is making a welcome return to Peterborough this weekend and everyone is invited.

The tenth annual Peterborough Italian Festival will be held in Cathedral Square on 8 and 9 September and returning for the event is celebrity chef and restaurateur Aldo Zilli.

Aldo, famed for his TV appearances and string of Zilli-themed restaurants, will share his culinary expertise and sign books for Italian food lovers.

The free event is organised by Peterborough's Italian Community Association and supported by Peterborough City Council, offering a wide range of tantalising sweet and savoury food.

Aldo will be present on both days of the festival and his appearance adds to a bumper list of activities planned for both days.

As in previous years the Mediterranean extravaganza will also feature an Italian market, classic Italian cars and motorcycles, confectionery, ice-cream, pasta, football, scooters and much more.

Papa Luigi (the UK's first pizza delivery service) will be aiming to sell 900 pizza slices to mark the cathedral's 900 anniversary, with funds raised going to the 900 fund.

Two dance groups from Italy will be showcasing their authentic talents - the Principi dance and music group from Bovino, Foggia and the Boomerang Street Band from Ariano Irpino, Avellino.

Performing the famous songs of classic crooner Frankie Valli will be 'The Jersey Boy' Pip Brown, whilst opera singers Teresa De Roberto and Sergio Marinaro will also delight the crowds.

Peterborough street dancing group 'Dance no End' will show off their moves, whilst Eurosound DJs Sav Russo and Dan Grassi keep the tunes coming.

Peterborough boxer Cello Renda will make a special guest appearance and talk to visitors about his career.

Councillor Steve Allen, Peterborough City Council's cabinet member for recreation, said: "The Italian festival has been running for a decade and each year gets bigger and better, with something for everyone to enjoy.

"If you love Italian cuisine and culture then you're in for an absolute treat, so come along and enjoy another fantastic free event right in the heart of the city."

A special dinner will be held at The Fleet community centre in Fletton for organisers of the festival, city dignitaries and the festival's exhibitors.

The event is a treat for these guests and ingredients for the meal are being shipped from the Puglia region in Italy, with the food prepared by professional chef Giuseppe Demonte.

He teaches courses all over Italy and is working with ENAC in Foggia, which is a non-profit association working in the educational sector for teenagers and adults. ENAC partnered with Peterborough City College last year, when trainee chefs from Puglia visited and prepared meals with students.

The festival runs from 12noon to 5pm on both days. For more information visit [the council website](#).