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- Food
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- Music



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- Big Calendar
- Social Wall
- Columnists



Greek church pairs food and wine for charity

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If you are lucky enough to spend much time around Greek families, you know they love to feed you — and they will feed you well.

So when you show up for the annual food and wine tasting at **St. Paul's Greek Orthodox Church** (<http://stpaulsgreekorthodox.org/>), be prepared to feel like a part of their family while they serve you some of the tastiest treats in town paired with a selection of more than 50 wines from around the world.

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The 13th annual **Savannah International Food and Wine Tasting**

(<http://stpaulsgreekorthodox.org/groups-ministries/philoptochos-events/>) takes place from 3-6 p.m. Sept. 12 at St. Paul's Hellenic Center, 14 W. Anderson St. The event also features a silent auction from 3-5 p.m. Tickets are \$30 in advance and \$35 at the door. All proceeds benefit the scholarship fund and other charities of the Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society.

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IF YOU GO

What: 13th annual Savannah International Food & Wine Tasting

When: 3-6 p.m. Sept. 12

Where: St. Paul's Hellenic Center, 14 W. Anderson St.

Cost: \$30 in advance; \$35 at the door

Info: www.stpaulsgreekorthodox.org (<http://www.stpaulsgreekorthodox.org>) or 912-236-8256

According to committee member Alexia Pittas, each restaurant serves small plates of the signature dishes from their menu and each item is paired with wine. The foods range from Greek cuisine to Mexican and Italian and more, as well as desserts and breads.

Participating restaurants this year are **45 Bistro** (<http://www.45bistro.com/>), **Asian River** (<http://asianriversavannah.com/>), **Basil's Pizza & Deli** (<http://www.basilsonline.com/>), **The Chromatic Dragon** (<http://chromaticdragon.com/>), **Crystal Beer Parlor** (<http://www.crystalbeerparlor.com/>), **Edible Arrangements**, **FORM**, **Jalapeño's** (<http://jalapenosinc.com/>), **Leoci's Trattoria** (<http://www.leocis.com/>), **Olympia Café** (<http://olympiacafe.net/>),

Papa's Bar-B-Que & Seafood (<http://www.papasbar-b-que.com/>), **River House Seafood & Bakery** (<http://liveoakstore.com/riverhouse>), **Taste of India** (<http://tasteofindiasav.com/>), **Toucan Café** (<http://www.toucancafe.com/>), **Vic's on the River** (<http://www.vicsontheriver.com/>) and **Yia Yia's Kitchen** (<http://www.yiayiasav.com/>).

Restaurant and wine reps are also on hand to help educate guests on their selections and pairings and to answer questions — or just



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Pittas adds that there is a waiting list for restaurants wanting to participate in the event, but the group likes to keep the number down so guests have plenty of room for seating and they don't have to worry about those long bottlenecks that always seem to slow everyone down.

"This event is uniquely Savannah," Pittas says. "We have this great collection of local restaurants and then to have professional sommeliers make the wine selections and pairings, it makes it upscale but fun ... We also want to make this event appeal to a younger audience who might not typically go to charity events."

Guests have time to stroll through the menu selections and try a little bit of everything. And then when they need a break to make room for dessert, they can walk over to the next room and check out all the great items in the silent auction.

This year's silent auction includes more than 100 items, including wine collections, bar sets, jewelry, kitchen supplies, travel vouchers, gift cards, art and more.

"We are doing more baskets this year, too, since those were so popular last year," Pittas adds.

Proceeds from the silent auction will go to **Senior Citizens Inc.'s Meals on Wheels program (<http://www.seniorcitizensinc.org/>)** and **America's Second Harvest of Coastal Georgia Food Bank (<http://www.helpendhunger.org/>)**.

"Both of those programs have missions similar to ours," Pittas says. "Both programs have benefited from us in the past and we love their work."

The Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society's mission is to help the poor, the destitute, the hungry, the aged, the sick, the unemployed, the orphaned, the imprisoned, the widowed, those with disabilities and victims of disasters.

"We try to raise money and give it to organizations that also fulfill our same mission."

Locally, the St. Barbara's Philoptochos group at St. Paul's has donated money for scholarships and has given money, goods and services to groups like Ronald McDonald House, We Care at Memorial Hospital, Savannah Union Mission,

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funded 10 scholarships for **Camp CoDiaK**
<http://www.sjchs.org/classes-and-events/classes-and-events---details?ceid=1563e7fd-74d4-4553-b7cc-984f824e8b9e>
for kids with diabetes.

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"Some people have us confused with the **Savannah Food & Wine Festival**
<http://www.savannahfoodandwinefest.com/>

," Pittas adds. "I'd like to think we are a great warm-up to that event, but we've been around longer ... I know there are a lot of events going on in Savannah the same day, but since we are in the middle of the day, you can take advantage of hitting one event early ... and then walking over to see us for a bit before heading back out.

"This event features such a high level of food with professional wine pairings and with ticket prices at \$30, it's also a really good deal ... Plus, the money goes to worthy causes. It's a win-win."

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