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今日版面

European cultures sampled by many at Oxford St fair

By Betty Lin

THE Four Corners Band composed of English tenor saxophonist Darrell Rea, American acoustic bass guitarist John Ulrich and English percussionist Harry Callaghan performed on European Day in Oxford Street, Wanzaisha, a week ago Saturday. French DJ nicknamed Slim Buddha played combined classics and pop music to keep the enlivened atmosphere going.

Founded in December 2010, the Four Corners, whose members have been playing music since their early teens, aims to re-invigorate classical jazz and blues while utilising a few modern pop hits. The band debuted at the Old Chinese Junk in Tangjiawan in May and since then have appeared at a few other restaurants and bars.

In addition to western music such as Pink Panther, Blue Moon and Caravan, the band played Hui Jia (Going Home), arousing applause from the predominantly Chinese onlookers.

Also on tap were barbecued German sausages, a variety of cheeses and beers, French Brittany pancakes, dishes from Gina's Café Bar and cuisines of other countries and regions.

Image Food & Beverage of Zhongshan, sole agent of certain South American leading wine producers in the Chinese Mainland, Hong Kong, Macao and Vietnam, displayed wines and provided free tasting. The Mine 33 wine series, which won the Brussels gold and silver medals 2011, were set out for tasting.

Paul Andre Gerny, founder and general manager of the company, visits South America regularly to test and choose the exclusive range of products. He said he is happy to introduce the highest quality wines to Chinese people, and that three restaurants in Zhuhai already buy his products and the number is expanding.

Brittany pancakes, with butter, sugar, honey, or lemon or strawberry jams brushed on top before being folded on a piece of delicate white paper, were popular.

Children sported different national flags of European countries painted on the back of their hands before entering the street. They showed excitement and curiosity towards the exotic cultures.

A mother surnamed Liu said that such showcases of different cultures, including food and beverage, music and other elements, are eye-opening to their children and also fun to enjoy. She and her 9-year-old son had a good time at the Irish Culture Festival in April and the Nepal Cultural Festival in May in the street.

In the evening, a farewell party for Columbian Nancy Munoz Diaz and her husband, Karsten Loewe, president and CEO of Epcos, was hosted at Beishan Theatre and ran through early Sunday morning. Coincident was the 40th birthday of JJ Verdun, a Frenchman who is founder of deltabridges.com.

Guests ranged from foreign-funded senior management such as Klaus Porath, president of the Zhuhai Foreign Investors Sports Club; Karl Inninger, general manager of wholly German-owned Trolli (Guangzhou) Confectionary co Ltd, to western and Chinese friends of the departing couple and to staff of Epcos.

Over a background of vibrant music and with beer or wine in hand, people chatted over tables in the theatre or in groups inside or on the patio. Epcos staff played poker as a pastime while children chased each other up and down the stage

Nancy was busy embracing and talking to friends. While living in Zhuhai for nine years, she became active in the expat community by organising parties and participating in events. She speaks fluent Chinese and has made many Chinese and western friends.

"It was a great time, and I have a lot of things that I'm really happy about," she said.

Karsten was also actively toasting friends and colleagues. Although German, he will move with his family to Italy early in July.

"It was a very good time here, but it's also very good to move on," said Karsten.

"I think Zhuhai is a lovely place -- very comfortable, very nice living. I'll miss it here," he said. "All those people are from my company, and we have made good colleagues. I'm not sure if they'll miss me, but I'll miss them. We did our best to bring the city forward."

Having resided ten years in China, nowhere else but Zhuhai, JJ said he has deep feelings for this city because a quarter of his life has been spent here.

"What I like is I have grown in these ten years and Zhuhai has grown in these ten years as well. We have grown together, and so it's teamwork. I look forward to the next ten years. I'm not planning to go anywhere, as it's a little bit of magic for me and the city to get along together," he said with emotion.

Three Chinese men and a woman joined JJ to celebrate their birthdays. The four of them made wishes in front of two birthday cakes and blew out the candles. Surrounding people sang "Happy birthday" to convey their kind wishes.

"I think it's wonderful that Chinese and westerners have established such close ties in the City of Romance," a staff worker from Epcos said. "It shows that Zhuhai is an open city and people here are open-minded."



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