

12 events



(Seated, from fifth left) Hernandez, Khoo, Ecuador's Ambassador to Malaysia Lourdes Puma and Tunku Imran.

# Spicing up Latin American fiesta

Festival returns on Sunday with more excitement in anticipation of Rio 2016 Olympics

story by  
**YVONNE NATHAN**



yvonne.n@thestar.com.my

THE 8th Latin American Festival is taking on the flavour of Rio to mark the 2016 Olympics, which will be held in the Brazilian city in August.

Olympic Council of Malaysia (OCM) president Tunku Tan Sri Imran Tuanku Ja'afar was invited to the launch in the spirit of the games.

"There are actually 22 athletes so far, 12 men and 10 women who have qualified in their own right for the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro.

"We have athletes in archery, cycling, diving, sailing, shooting, swimming, athletics, weight-lifting and badminton.

"We may even have some qualifying for golf, one of the two sports that will be featured for the first time in the Olympics, the other is Rugby Sevens," said Tunku Imran.

Visitors will be transported for a day into the colourful sights, sounds and dishes of Latin America at BB Park on May 22.

It is organised by the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries (Grulac) in Malaysia in collaboration with Plaza Low Yat and nine Latin American embassies namely Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela.

Also supporting the event is the Latin Ladies Association of Malaysia and Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL).

More than a fiesta to introduce Latin culture, the festival will also raise funds for Kirtarsh Handicapped and Disabled Children's Home.

Venezuelan ambassador Manuel A. Guzman Hernandez said the festival was a

**This festival is a celebration of Latin culture but it is also a reason for the community to get together and a way to give back to Malaysia, a country that has given us so much.**

Manuel A. Guzman Hernandez

way to give the Malaysian public a taste of the great cultural wealth of Latin Americans.

It will be showcased through dances such as the salsa, mariachi and samba as well as delicacies such as empanada, ceviche, fritas and coxinha.

"This festival is a celebration of Latin culture but it is also a reason for the community to get together and a way to give back to Malaysia, a country that has given us so much.

"So all proceeds collected will be donated to the non-profit Kirtarsh Home for underprivileged children from all racial and religious backgrounds," said Hernandez.

Plaza Low Yat general manager Albert Khoo added that they were able to raise close to RM85,000 during last year's festival.

In addition to the lively music, art, craft and food, the festival will also feature a lucky draw.

Prizes include cameras, smartphones as well as meal and accommodation vouchers at participating restaurants and hotels.

The grand prize is a trip to Amsterdam, sponsored by Air France-KLM.

For details, visit [www.facebook.com/laf-malaysia](http://www.facebook.com/laf-malaysia)



A capoeira demonstration that gave guests a glimpse of what to expect at the multi-cultural Latin American festival.



Beef empanada which is typically filled with ground beef with a hint of spices. It will be one of the many delicacies to be served at the 8th Latin American Festival.



Arepa Reina Peplada or Curry Queen Arepa is a flatbread made of corn dough and filled with shredded chicken, mayonnaise and avocado.