

# MARIN IRISH FESTIVAL & CEILI ON THE LAKE CHAMPIONSHIPS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Marin Irish Festival Celebrates Beltane with Music, Dance & Cultural Traditions this May**

### **The Fully Sanctioned Irish Dance Competition *Ceili on the Lake Championships Returns***

**Saturday & Sunday, May 16–17 | Marin County Fairgrounds**

**San Rafael, CA** (March 9, 2026) – The [Marin Irish Festival](#) returns to **Lagoon Park** at the **Marin County Fairgrounds** on **May 16–17, 2026**, inviting the Bay Area to a joyful Beltane celebration of Irish music, dance, food, and tradition. Produced by **Red Barn Productions**, creators of *The Great Dickens Christmas Fair* and the original *Renaissance Pleasure Faire*, the festival offers a full weekend of performances, hands-on cultural experiences, and family-friendly fun rooted in Irish heritage.

**Beltane**, the ancient Celtic festival marking the arrival of summer, inspires a weekend filled with maypoles, lively tunes, and revelry. Festivalgoers can explore **seven stage areas of live entertainment**, featuring acclaimed Irish musicians, high-energy dance performances and competition, storytelling, and free children’s game area.

More than **40 craft vendors** will offer handcrafted and rare goods, while food vendors serve classic Irish fare such as corned beef and cabbage, shepherd’s pie, fish and chips, and sweet treats, along with pints of Guinness, locally brewed ales, hard ciders, and soft drinks.

## The Return of the Ceílí on the Lake Championships

Back by popular demand, the festival will once again host an authentic **feis** (pronounced fesh) - a **fully sanctioned Irish dance competition** in partnership with the **Jackie Flynn Irish Dance Academy**. The **Ceílí on the Lake Championships** (pronounced KAY-lee) brings dancers of all ages together to compete for the coveted *Champion of Champions* title. Dancers can learn more and register to compete at [marinirishfestival.com/feis](http://marinirishfestival.com/feis).

In addition to watching the formal competition, festival attendees are invited to join **open set dancing sessions** led by instructors throughout the weekend.

## Live Music & Open Seisiúin

The 2026 lineup includes renowned Irish music acts such as **The Black Brothers** and **The Black Irish Band**, and more. For the latest entertainment line-up click [here](#).

Musicians of all skill levels are welcome to participate in **open seisiúin** (pronounced seh-SHOON), open jam sessions inside the Bearded Goose Pub — a relaxed, communal setting celebrating the shared joy of Irish music.

## Cultural Demonstrations & Interactive Experiences

Beyond music and dance, the festival offers immersive cultural experiences, including:

- [San Francisco Gaelic Athletic Association \(SFGAA\)](#): Hurling, Gaelic football, and Camogie (pronounced kuh-MOH-gee) an Irish stick-and-ball team sport played by women, and demonstrations of fast-paced 5v5 blitz matches.
- [United Irish Cultural Center \(UICC\)](#): Showcasing the “Keepers of the Steps” exhibit along with hard-to-find Irish imports, including rare books and traditional salty and sweet treats.
- **Falcon’s Court**: A captivating birds-of-prey environment featuring falcons, owls, and hawks. Guests will have the opportunity to meet these majestic raptors up close, with the option to hold them and take photos in exchange for a suggested donation.
- **Irish language workshops**: Learn basic phrases and a poem or song (or two) at the Poet’s Corner.

## An Expansive Marketplace & Two Irish Pubs

The festival marketplace showcases Irish craftsmanship, including jewelry, textiles, ceramics, artwork, and traditional goods. Returning favorites include the **Bearded Goose Irish Pub**, joined this year by a second pub, **The Gander**, offering even more space to enjoy drinks, music, and camaraderie.

“The Marin Irish Festival brings people together through shared traditions, storytelling, and celebration,” said event producer **Drew Patterson**. “Whether you’re honoring your heritage or discovering Irish culture for the first time, it’s a weekend filled with connection, music, and fun.”

## Festival Details

**What:** Marin Irish Festival & Ceílí on the Lake Championships

**Where:** Lagoon Park, Marin County Fairgrounds; 110 Armory Dr, San Rafael, CA 94903

**When:** Saturday & Sunday, May 16–17, 2026 | 10 a.m.–6 p.m.

**Tickets:** \$30 adults | \$15 children (ages 5–11)

**Parking:** Free onsite and street

**More Info & Tickets:** [marinirishfestival.com](https://marinirishfestival.com)

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