

A taste of the Seafood festival

■ Event may break last year's
record of 25,000 people

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Thousands from around the Emerald Coast and beyond are anticipated at this weekend's 29th annual Destin Seafood Festival, which is sure to be the best yet, says Elizabeth Spies, vice president of communication for the Destin Chamber of Commerce.

Anticipating traffic on U.S. Highway 98, the Florida Department of Transportation even took the step of forbidding lane closures from the resurfacing project on Friday through Sunday.

"We had 25,000 people come and enjoy the festival last year, and we're expecting even

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Log photo by KATHY HARRISON

GETTING READY: Levy Blue sets up an art display tent Thursday afternoon in preparation for the 29th annual Destin Seafood Festival.

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more than that," she said. "With four headliners performing and 10 local seafood restaurants serving up delicious food, we've really upped the festival this year."

This year's Destin Seafood Festival is sponsored by Legendary Inc., which has brought three local restaurants to the event, Rutherfords 465, Tony's Ristorante and Grande Vista Bar & Grill. The five local restaurants owned by the Southern Restaurant Group — The Back Porch, Pompano Joe's, Louisiana Lagniappe, Fisherman's Wharf and Café Grazie — are also serving up dishes.

Here's a sampling of what festival-goers are tasting:

- The Back Porch: tuna dip, amberjack sandwich, chicken tenders.

- Pompano Joe's: seafood gumbo, reggae rolls, shrimp boil.

- Louisiana Lagniappe: jambalaya, crab claws, red beans & rice.

FESTIVAL ENTERTAINMENT

Today (Saturday)

2 p.m. - Chuck Lawson

4 p.m. - Ambrosia

6 p.m. - Atlanta Rhythm Section

8 p.m. - Mark Farner, formerly of Grand Funk Railroad

Sunday

12 p.m. - Jones and Company

2 p.m. - Sal Salaz Project

- Fisherman's Wharf: fried grouper sandwich, corn dog, buffalo shrimp.

- Café Grazie: toasted ravioli, meatball sandwich, calamari, Italian sausage sandwich.

- Rutherfords 465, Tony's Ristorante, Grande Vista Bar & Grill: Spicy grilled redfish with jubilee potatoes, green bean salad with onions, bell pepper and feta cheese; served with drawn butter and condiments. Also served will be low country boil; shrimp nets filled with jumbo shrimp, crawfish, andouille sausage, corn on the cob and new

potatoes; Served with drawn butter and condiments.

Hammerhead Fred's Seafood and Landry's Seafood House are also serving local seafood dishes. Other local food service establishments participating include Caribbean Cafe, Cuppy's Smoothies and More, Destin Marble Slab Creamery, Dippin' Dots of Navarre, McGuire's of Pensacola Root Beer, Ruben's Oriental Concession, Ted Roberts Funnel Cakes, Tropical Smoothie Cafe and Tropical Sno.

More than 60 vendors are also set up at the festival displaying items, such as jewelry, purses, glass, soap, candles, metal, clothing, artwork, potpourri, wood, tin and photos.

The festival continues today and Sunday at the Morgan Sports Complex in Destin. Hours are 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. today and 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday.

Admission is \$5 per day. Event parking is available at The Track Recreation Center, Emerald Coast Centre, and Grace Lutheran Church. Parking is available at the Church Saturday and Sunday after 12:30 p.m.