



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Tickets on sale now for the Sarasota Opera Food and Wine Festival**

Sarasota, FL— Area residents are invited to experience the culinary delights of Sarasota while supporting and celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Sarasota Youth Opera. Local restaurants will serve up tasty samples of food and wine at Sarasota Opera’s Annual Food and Wine Festival. The event will take place from 1- 4 p.m., Saturday, September 21 at the Opera House downtown.

The Youth Opera chorus and Sarasota Opera artists will perform during the festival. There will be drawings for prizes and other fun activities throughout the afternoon.

Tickets are \$75 per person for general admission and are available for purchase in advance at [www.sarasotaopera.org/foodandwinefest](http://www.sarasotaopera.org/foodandwinefest), at the Box Office, 61 N. Pineapple Ave., or by calling 941- 328-1300. A limited number of tickets will also be available at the door for \$85.

All proceeds go to support the Youth Opera & Education programming. Sarasota Opera’s events are produced by Mary Kenealy Events.

**What:** Sarasota Opera Food and Wine Festival

**When:** Saturday, September 21

**Where:** Sarasota Opera House, 61 N. Pineapple Ave., Sarasota

**Tickets:** VIP: \$100 (sold out) | \$75 purchased in advance | \$85 purchased at the door

**Online:** [www.sarasotaopera.org/foodandwinefest](http://www.sarasotaopera.org/foodandwinefest)

### **Participating Restaurants**

East West Catering

EVOQ – Westin

Five-O Donuts

Happy Soul

Jack Dusty

Mattison's

Marcel

Michael's On East

Molly's Pub

Nothing Bundt Cakes

Pier 22/Grove

Rose & Ivy

Sage Restaurant

Selva Grill

Wolfie's Delicatessen

### **Libation Tastings**

99 Bottles

Gold Coast

Nautical Gin

### **ABOUT SARASOTA YOUTH OPERA & EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

For 40 years, Sarasota Youth Opera has given thousands of young people an opportunity to experience opera first-hand through participation in after-school choruses, Sarasota Opera mainstage productions, summer workshops, and fully staged Youth Opera productions. As the only program in the United States committed to presenting annual full-scale opera productions for young voices, Sarasota Youth Opera is a national model for opera education.

**Youth Opera Choruses:** Beginning at age 8, singers are placed in one of two chorus levels. Each chorus provides a setting for everyone to participate and progress at their own level as they gain greater skills and experience. Selections performed are made up of classical music, which includes opera and choral pieces in different languages. The choruses perform throughout the community in formal concerts and outreach events.

**Opera Mainstage Season:** Members of the Youth Opera are selected to join Sarasota Opera's Winter Festival season, appearing in the mainstage children's chorus, as supernumeraries (extras who perform non-singing roles) and for special roles written by the composer for children's voices. In recent seasons these have included roles in *La bohème*, *Tosca*, and *Carmen*. Singers are involved in the complete production process – from early music and dramatic rehearsals to performing alongside opera professionals.

**Youth Opera Productions:** Part of Sarasota Opera's commitment to young people includes the commissioning of new operatic works written for children and young adults. This fall, Sarasota Youth Opera will present the legendary story of *The Hobbit* by composer, Dean Burry. Six new works have been presented as part of this mission: *Deadline* (1989), Polly Pen's *Her Lightness* (1993), Tom Suta's *Eye of Ra* (1998), John Kennedy's *The Language of Birds* (2004), Daron Hagen's *Little Nemo in Slumberland* (2012) and Rachel J. Peters' *Rootabaga Country* (2017). Members take part in the making of each opera, complete with professional staging, costumes, lighting, sound, and orchestral accompaniment.

Sarasota Opera's broader education programming works to introduce a life-long love of opera to students in the greater Sarasota/Manatee region. Taking performances to schools and inviting students to the Opera House for dress rehearsals and tours, Sarasota Opera Artists and education staff expand the mission of Sarasota Opera into the community.

