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ZATARAIN'S 'MOTION FOR MARDI GRAS' AIMS TO MAKE MARDI GRAS A NATIONAL HOLIDAY

Ultimate Sport Mom Olivia Manning Helps Drive Online Petition

NEW ORLEANS (February 4, 2009) – Nearly seven in 10 Americans said in a recent national survey that they support a motion to declare Mardi Gras a national holiday.¹ Zatarain's, the brand serving up New Orleans-Style cuisine for 120 years, wants to help America *let the good times roll* and is leading the charge to declare Mardi Gras a national holiday.

Zatarain's "Motion for Mardi Gras" is a national petition for 100,000 online signatures asking Congress to proclaim the final day in Carnival season an official holiday. Nearly half of all Americans already celebrate Mardi Gras, also known as Fat Tuesday, according to the survey.

To honor the spirit of the Crescent City and benefit the country's hotbed of Mardi Gras merrymaking, Zatarain's will also make a donation to the Rebuild Fund of the Greater New Orleans Foundation. Zatarain's donation will help support GNOF's housing and community revitalization activities in areas of the city still struggling to recover from the devastation of Hurricane Katrina.

An Authentic Celebration

While the majority of people surveyed associate Mardi Gras with beads, parties and parades, most Mardi Gras revelry takes place far from Bourbon Street in homes where families gather to enjoy authentic New Orleans cuisine.

"In my home, Mardi Gras is already an official holiday and the centerpiece of the party is the food," said Olivia Manning, mother of celebrated NFL quarterbacks Peyton and Eli Manning. "Our celebrations are always filled with close family, great friends and, of course, terrific New Orleans-Style cuisine."

For 120 years, the authentic flavors of Zatarain's make it "big easy" to recreate the bold tastes of New Orleans-Style Mardi Gras fare at home – all year long. Manning is a long-time fan of popular Zatarain's mixes such as jambalaya, dirty rice and gumbo. "These are my Mardi Gras menu staples," she said. "In fact, my family still eats Zatarain's jambalaya today when they want a taste of home."

Spreading the Spirit of New Orleans

Though the celebration of Mardi Gras is tied to the ancient tradition of feasting and merriment before the beginning of Lent, the fun didn't start in the New World until 1699. That's when French settlers first held an impromptu Mardi Gras party in Louisiana.

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¹ The survey was conducted online with a random sample of 1,022 men and women aged 18+ – all members of the Impulse Research proprietary online panel. The Impulse Research proprietary online panel has been carefully selected to closely match US population demographics and the respondents are representative of American men and women aged 18 +. Research was conducted in December 2008.





Today, Mardi Gras is celebrated from San Francisco to New York – and everywhere in between. Revelers partake in authentic New Orleans–Style festivities and often set the party mood with jazz music, vibrant masks and flavorful feasts. No celebration would be complete without beads in the traditional Mardi Gras colors of purple, green and gold, representing justice (purple), faith (green) and power (gold).

“Mardi Gras has such a rich tradition and is a fun way to enjoy the spirit of New Orleans far beyond our great city. We know America is already honoring Mardi Gras, which is why Zatarain’s is leading the push to have Congress make it official,” said Scott Bolonda, President of Zatarain’s.

Join in the Fun

Help Zatarain’s lead the charge to make Mardi Gras a national holiday and give back to the Big Easy. Sign the petition at www.MotionforMardiGras.com, and find all the essentials for hosting a Mardi Gras bash – everything from make-your-own Mardi Gras masks, paper float centerpieces, Mardi Gras trivia and delicious recipes to jazz up the celebration.

About Zatarain’s

Since 1889, Zatarain’s has been an authority on the fun and flavor of New Orleans. From its humble beginnings producing root beer extract, the company has grown to make more than 200 food products from Rice Dinner Mixes, Pasta Dinner Mixes, Breadings, Seasonings and Spices to Seafood Boils, Creole Mustard and other products based on authentic New Orleans–Style foods and seafood preparation. Now, people around the world recognize that to capture the true flavor of New Orleans–Style cuisine, you have to “Jazz It Up with Zatarain’s.” For information, recipes and Zatarain’s online store, visit www.zatarains.com.

About the Greater New Orleans Foundation

Founded in 1983, the Greater New Orleans Foundation (GNOF) provides a permanent and growing source of funding to hundreds of nonprofit agencies in the metropolitan New Orleans area. GNOF manages over 700 charitable funds and endowments with total assets of more than \$192 million. Through initiatives designed to improve the quality of civic life, GNOF is leading philanthropic efforts with special emphasis on housing, education and workforce training.

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