

IN SHORT: Bard on the Beach Shakespeare Festival continues its 27th season with [The Merry Wives of Windsor](#). This high-spirited comedy is a re-imagining of the award-winning 2012 production directed by **Johnna Wright**. The play runs from **June 17 to September 24** on the BMO Mainstage. Tickets: **604-739-0559** or bardonthebeach.org.

THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR JOINS THE 27TH SEASON OF BARD ON THE BEACH

IN FULL: [Bard on the Beach Shakespeare Festival](#) continues its 27th season with [The Merry Wives of Windsor](#). Back after its award-winning 2012 run at Bard, this is a big, bold, rollicking romp full of high-spirited fun. Directed again by **Johnna Wright**, the '60s music-filled production is set in Windsor, Ontario and runs from **June 17 to September 24** on the BMO Mainstage.

THE STORY: It's 1968 in Windsor, Ontario. Everyone is gathered at the Garter Inn on a Friday night, where Pastor Evans (**Andrew McNee**) listens to Justice Shallow (**David Marr**) complain about a British ex-pat, Sir John Falstaff (**Ashley Wright**). In an effort to change the subject, Evans suggests that Shallow's nephew, Slender (**Ben Elliott**), be matched with Anne Page (**Hailey Gillis**). At closing time, Falstaff confides in Bardolph (**Victor Dolhai**) and the Host (**Anton Lipovetsky**) that he's broke and plans to seduce and swindle Mistress Ford (**Amber Lewis**) and Mistress Page (**Katey Wright**). The next morning, Simple (**Dawn Petten**) asks Mistress Quickly (**Jennifer Lines**), housekeeper to Dr. Caius (**Andrew Chown**), to help Slender woo Anne. This gets Simple into trouble with Caius, who wants Anne for himself. While canoodling at the Page home, Anne and her boyfriend Fenton (**Daniel Doheny**) are interrupted by Slender, and then by her father, Page (**Tom Pickett**). Page sends Fenton away and invites Slender in, even though his wife prefers Caius for their daughter. Meanwhile, two identical love letters are sent by Falstaff, one to Mistress Ford and the other to Mistress Page. They decide to send a response to Falstaff from Mistress Ford, making a date for the next day. The husbands hear about Falstaff's seduction plans, and Ford (**Scott Bellis**) worries about his wife's fidelity. Disguised as Mr. Brook, Ford learns the details of Falstaff's plan from Falstaff himself. He attempts to catch Falstaff in the act, but Falstaff is smuggled out unseen in a laundry cart. Ford's friends tell him not to be so jealous, but still enraged (and again disguised as Mr. Brook) he learns that Falstaff plans to visit his wife a second time. Ford once again interrupts Falstaff's seduction, digging frantically through his own laundry cart while Falstaff escapes disguised as an old woman. Mistress Ford and Mistress Page finally tell their husbands the whole story, and plan their unique revenge on Falstaff. Everything comes to a head as the whole town gathers in the dark outside the abandoned Herne's Oak Curling Club, where nothing is quite what it seems.

Audiences will be taken back to 1968 Windsor, Ontario with this re-imagining by Director **Johnna Wright** (winner of the 2012 Jessie Award for Best Director). Scenery Designer **Pam Johnson** brings nostalgic period elements to the small-town pub setting, creating the backdrop for Costume Designer **Drew Facey**'s period-inspired prints. '60s pop and country music is performed by a live band led by Musical Director **Ben Elliott** and the mood is enhanced by Lighting Designer **Gerald King**. Choreographer **Valerie Easton** and Fight Director **Nicholas Harrison** create the comic near misses and love-fueled duels of Windsor's residents. Props are designed by **Heidi Wilkinson**; **Rohit Chokhani** is Apprentice Director.

Performance details for [The Merry Wives of Windsor](#) are as follows:

- **Previews:** June 17, 19, 21, 22, 23; **OPENS:** Friday, June 24 at 7:30pm
- Runs Tuesday through Sunday, June 17 to September 24, on the BMO Mainstage in Vanier Park
- Plays in repertory with [Romeo and Juliet](#), which begins previews on June 3
- [Bard-B-Q & Fireworks](#): Saturday, July 23, Wednesday July 27 & Saturday, July 30 @ 5pm - includes a performance of the play, dinner, on-site entertainment including a world-champion pipe band, and private fireworks viewing. Tickets from \$95.
- [Talkback Tuesdays](#): free post-show discussions following Tuesday performances, in both theatres; July 5 – August 30

Ticket prices for 2016 include all applicable fees and taxes and begin at **\$20** for every regular performance. Early booking is recommended for best seat selection; all seats are reserved and many performances sell out in advance. Play photography, the performance schedule and more site and event details are at bardonthebeach.org. Book tickets through the Bard Box Office at **604-739-0559**, (toll free) **1-877-739-0559** or [order online](#) through the Bard website. Bard on the Beach gratefully acknowledges its 2016 Season Sponsor, Goldcorp, and the production sponsor of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Polygon.

[About Bard on the Beach Shakespeare Festival](#)

Bard on the Beach is one of Canada's largest not-for-profit, professional Shakespeare festivals. Established in 1990, Bard is an annual summer festival with a mission to perform, explore and celebrate the genius of William Shakespeare, surrounded by the natural beauty of Vancouver, British Columbia. Play performances run [Tuesday through Sunday](#) with matinees on selected weekends and weekdays; numerous special events on Monday evenings. All evening performances start at 7:30pm.

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