

FESTAS DO ESPÍRITO SANTO

Irmandade do Divino Espírito Santo/ East Falmouth Holy Ghost Society. East Falmouth, Cape Cod, Massachusetts

BROTHERHOOD

Brotherhood	Autonomous
Year founded	1984
Members	<p>Around 150</p> <p>The founders were originally from Santa Barbara and São Mateus, Ilha Terceira. The Feast membership has expanded to include participation from the town's older Micaelense population as well as other of the town's Portuguese-speaking populations.</p>
Azorean origin of the members	<p>The original group of founders and their children however are still the primary workers at the Feast and are the most frequent group running the Feast as <i>Mordomos</i>. There has been a cross-generational changing of the guards recently, with many of the children of the original founders being selected to run the Feast as head <i>Mordomo</i>.</p> <p>There are few official activities by the Irmandade do Divino Espírito Santo of East Falmouth, even as the members are general close family and friends outside, even, the context of the Feast.</p> <p>Although the Irmandade does not hold other events during the year, the members of the society form a key group—along with those from the Fresh Pond Holy Ghost Society — in a civic association founded by a group of the town's Portuguese community around 1990, the Portuguese-American Association (PAA) of Falmouth.</p>
Year round activities	<p>The Club of the Portuguese-American Association was built through donations of money, land and labor by the town's Portuguese population, including the construction of the building which was put up by Falmouth's Portuguese companies and workers including electricians, masons, builders, and landscapers. Contributing in these</p>

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capacities listed above, include many of the members of the East Falmouth Holy Ghost Society.

Restricted by having to rent their hall from the Fresh Pond Holy Ghost Society, part of incentive for many of the East Falmouth Holy Ghost Society members in building the Portuguese-American Association club was to have their own hall in which to sponsor activities during the year.

The politics of how clubs are run in Portuguese-America however left some of the immigrant Terceirenses disappointed with some of the club's bylaws (including the particulars of financially restrictive bar policies).

Through the Portuguese-American Association, however, both of the Holy Ghost Societies in the town pool resources with other Portuguese in fundraisers, scholarships, and other beneficial contributions to the needy.

This is predominantly carried out through a series of monthly breakfasts at the Portuguese-American Association hall. The hall itself is also available to members who wish to hold special events there, provided that the only alcohol that gets served was purchased from the club's bar.

Hall

The Espírito Santo Hall is rented from the Fresh Pond Holy Ghost Society. According to one of the directors at Fresh Pond, the East Falmouth Group is "very very generous" for their use of the Hall.

THE FESTA: GENERAL INFORMATION

Year founded

1984

Date

The third Sunday in June. Reportedly to correspond with the *San Joaninas* in Terceira.

Azorean feast ritual model

Ilha Terceira (São Mateus, Santa Bárbara).

Organization of the festa

There is no *sorteio*. On the Sunday of the Feast, the next year's *Mordomo* is selected by the outgoing

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Mordomo of that year's Feast. The *Mordomo* is responsible for the final *Dominga*, which, in East Falmouth is the responsibility for running the entire Feast. Although the *Mordomo* changes from year to year, it tends to rotate inter and cross generationally among the same group of family and friends who founded the original Feast. Indeed, the family of the selected *Mordomo* is usually critical in his or her being chosen. The *Mordomo* may change from year to year, but with only rare exceptions, is a *Mordomo* chosen who does not have a close family member, or who has not been a long time worker in the kitchen. Being the *Mordomo* of the Feast certainly confers stature within the community, but one also has to have had enough stature to even be considered in the first place. Having the political capital necessary to unite the diverse groups required to run a Feast is not easily come by and a *Mordomo* will either possess such capital, or be related to one or more people who do.

In their operation Feasts—and East Falmouth is no different—essentially run themselves. The organizers and work crews that put on a Feast are generally composed of individuals who occupy the same roles year after year. There may be differences of opinion and minor conflicts, but there are few insurmountable surprises that take place during a Feast that the crew hasn't already seen some year before. East Falmouth has had essentially the same group of families running it since mid-1980.

The *Mordomo*/President will appoint his or her Feast committee, individuals with specific responsibilities in the running of the Feast.

Number of Workers

25-30. Workers mount the hall, including raising decorations, cleaning and painting, setting up tables and concessions, preparing the kitchen and cooking the *sopas* and items sold for consumption. They deliver and pick up food and attend to all of the small surprises that pop up, and if not attended can quickly derail the smooth operation of a Feast.

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Crowns

There are usually around a dozen crowns displayed on the East Falmouth Irmandade do Divino Espírito Santo altar.

The Irmandade owns 6 of these crowns. At the end of the Feast, five of the crowns are distributed to each of the Feast committee members to take home for the year with final crown, the *Dominga* crown, given to the first *Dominga* of next year's Feast. The other crowns are lent to the Irmandade from the personal collections of Irmandade do Divino Espírito Santo members to be used for the weekend.

Origins of the crowns

The First crown was brought by one of the Feasts founders from Terceira, in 1983, the year prior to the first Feast weekend. The other crowns were bought around 2004, in New Bedford, so that members personal crowns would not have to be used in the ceremony. In this way also, committee members each have a crown for the year. The first crown goes to the First Dominga during the year and accompanies all of the other Domingas until the final weekend.

Queens

The Feast has had a *Rainha* and “innocent” attendants since its founding in 1984. There is also a kind of co-*Rainha* that acts as an assistant to the *Rainha*. In some Holy Ghost Society *marchas* there is a similar kind of co-*Rainha* with a young woman usually a similar age as the *Rainha*, who will be dressed like Santa Isabel. In the Irmandade do Divino Espírito Santo of Falmouth however, she is dressed more like a lady in waiting on the *Rainha*.

The *Rainha* is crowned at the end of the Mass and is present on the altar during the entire service. The *capa* belongs to the Irmandade, made for them by seamstress in New Bedford, Connie from Abra Cadabra.

Crowning

The priest will crown the *Rainha*, and the *Rainha* (with the priest) will crown the innocents usually assisted by one of the female members of the Society and other adult relatives of those being

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crowned. Further, additional children will assist with crownings by securing the crown over the head of the child being crowned.

Each member of the Feast committee will choose someone to get crowned, and the person who drew the 7th Domingo also gets crowned that day as well.

THE FESTA: RITUAL COMPOSITION

Domingas

On the last Sunday the Feast any member can put down their name down for a chance of hosting a *Dominga*. The drawing is held around 6 pm. A person's name will be drawn, and then they will pick from another drawing to secure their specific *Dominga*. The First *Dominga* will keep the First Crown for the year, however the Seventh *Dominga* is not a *Mordomo*.

The *Domingas* themselves are quite low key. Each *Dominga* receives the crown for one week and is responsible for deciding what will take place. Sometimes one will invite members to pray all week with *sopas* offered on the last day, some have a gathering. Others like to have the crown at their house just for their families. It is ultimately entirely up to the individual. What happens on a particular *Dominga* is up to the person. They can pray the *terço* if they desire but this is rare.

Pensões

130. The cow for the Feast is usually donated by someone. Each *pensão* (\$40) is composed of pieces of beef and liver, a large loaf of Portuguese bread, a boule of *massa sovada*, a sprig of *hortelã* and a bottle of red

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wine to each persons car. In previous years home made wine was made specifically to offer in the *pensão*, but now this wine is only sold at the concessions.

Currently the meat is laid out and blessed on Saturday morning by the priest from Saint Anthony's church, who, although he is not Portuguese, has participated in the ritual with understanding and enthusiasm.

Throughout the day the members will come by to pick up and pay for their *pensões* if they have yet already been paid for.

Workers will hand deliver a tray with pieces of beef and liver, a large loaf of Portuguese bread, a boule of *massa sovada*, a sprig of *hortelã* and a bottle of red wine to each persons car. In previous years, the *pensões* were hand delivered. Workers would load the same items into several trucks and distribute the meat around town to member's homes, usually going from house to house without a map by memory. Some of the *pensões* were delivered as far away as Hyannis and New Bedford, and some of this farther flung *pensões* continue to be hand delivered. Citing the high expenses due to rising gas costs, the Irmandade do Divino Espírito Santo no longer hand delivers and now the *pensões* are picked up by each member him or herself at the hall.

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Musical accompaniment during the Festa

Music is a big part of the East Falmouth Feast. The East Falmouth Feast is always accompanied by a filarmonica band on the Sunday of the Feast and two different dance bands on the Feast's Saturday and Sunday. The Filarmonica Band Senhora da Conceição Mosteirense of Fall River performed at the 2011 Feast.

At some Feasts, a small number of band members will break off and perform inside the hall where the *sopas* is being served. There is always a filarmonica band which is chosen at the discretion of the *Mordomo* and sometimes upon consultation with family. A filarmonica band with which I conducted extensive interviews, the filarmonica from Saint Francis Xavier Church of East Providence, will be playing the 2013 Feast.

Parades and Processions

The "*parada*" has been practiced since the Feasts founding and is a prominent part of the ritual. Starting out along the side streets of East Falmouth—which sometimes coincides with the *Mordomo*'s house when it is close enough—the parade will then wind through the village until it comes out on Route 28A, one of Falmouth's three or four main traffic roads, and the street where Saint Anthony's church is situated.

A police escort both stops and redirects traffic as the *cortejo* passes along the mile plus route.

All of the families of organizers and workers will march, including children and older members.

Flags from Portugal, the United States, the Azores, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Holy Ghost are carried along with the official Society *Bandeira* and the Society's many crowns. In a uncommon twist on dress style, the predominant color in the *cortejo* tends toward the dark with women and younger

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girls dressed in all black, toddlers in white and some of the older boys with official roles in red.

The filarmonica band follows up the rear playing the *Hino do Espirito Santo*.

There is no march to the Hall after the mass, but there is a recessional march back outside amid a spectacle of photographs and conversations at the front of the Church, as the *Rainha* drops herself into the back of a convertible beside her attendant, *capa* spread out over the trunk of the car, as she is driven away to the Feast.

The overlap among participants in the Fresh Pond Society Feast is expansive, however the *cortejo* of the Irmandade do Divino Espírito Santo is for the members only.

When the *pensões* were delivered by hand they were once decorated with palms that had been hand delivered from Terceira, in the style of the São Mateus, Terceira Feast on which this one is based (given the experience of the founders). But there are no *carros*, no *massa sovada* etc in the *cortejo*.

Number of people who participate in the open distribution of sopas	350-500
Other	Portuguese baked bread and <i>massa sovada</i> are served at the meal and intermittently offered to everyone throughout the Feast. Lunch is made and served to the workers at the Feast on the Saturday before the evening party.
Number of people who attend the Festa	600-1000 depending on the weather.
Additional information	1999 Saint Anthony's Church. Parochial publication. 1995 Miguel Moniz. "Portuguese Feast Celebrates Centuries Old Tradition." <i>The Enterprise</i> . Falmouth, Massachusetts. 1991 Miguel Moniz. <i>Cultural Economics: a</i>

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Study of migrant socio-religious festas.
Honors thesis, Wesleyan University
(Middletown, CT).

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