

Sharing their music

BY SUSAN DOOLAN

Imbayakunas is Promenade Day's biggest secret. Not any more. "Everybody loves them but nobody knows who they are," said LeeAnne Tideman, administrator for the Downtown BIA.

"It's a big secret." This group of folkloric musicians hail from the province of Imbabura, Ecuador. Patricio Chiza is the only member of the band who lives in Toronto.

The seven member group leaves its native land to perform Canada's summer festivals each year.

Chiza, who also acts as the Imbayakunas director says the band is named for its culture and language.

"We live in the city of Imbayas," said Chiza. "It's the name of our culture."

While Chiza plays drums, other members of the group interchange instruments traditional to South America with the violin, base guitar and classical guitar, among others.

"The times change," said Chiza explaining that the addition of western instrumentation makes for a better sound.

In addition to Barrie's Promenade Days, the group has garnered a popular following in Europe.

It was formed in 1985.

"Sometimes I can't believe it," said Chiza of Imbayakunas growing popularity. "It's a good feeling for us as a group."

But what they feel best about is the opportunity to share their culture.

Imbayakunas has also recorded music for two CDs, *Sharing Dreams* in 1991 and *Feelings of Love*, last year.

For Barrie fans, these may be purchased at Promenade Days.

The music the bands performs live depends on the enjoyment of its audience.

Most of the time, Chiza says, Imbayakunas plays 65 per cent native music with the balance Latino.

The band, all men, range in age from 26 to 39. The concerts they perform tend to be in the streets, as buskers.

"My idea is to share my music," said Chiza. "We know our music is a little different."

And that comes from the Spanish influence, he says.

Somewhere along Dunlop Street this group of Ecuadorian musicians will be making people feel good again at this year's Promenade Days.

"Sometimes I can't believe it. It's a good feeling for us as a group."

— *Patricio Chiza*
on his band's popularity