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6th ANNUAL MOLE & MARIACHI FESTIVAL ON SEPTEMBER 8 BENEFITS SANTA CRUZ MISSION STATE HISTORIC PARK

Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks' Free Community Celebration Features Mole Tasting Competition, Mariachi Bands, Folkloric Dancers, Kids Activities & More

AUGUST 15, 2018—SANTA CRUZ, CA—Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks (Friends), a non-profit organization dedicated to sustaining the legacy of our state parks and beaches, today announced its sixth annual Mole & Mariachi Festival will be held on Saturday, September 8 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park (144 School St.) in downtown Santa Cruz.

The festival features a mole tasting competition with a wide variety of *moles* — a traditional Mexican sauce, sometimes made using chocolate — available to sample. Competitors include last year's Judges' Choice winner [Margaritaville Capitola](#), and last year's People's Choice winner Chef Emma Pinto/Mama Marquita, as well as fan favorite My Mom's Mole.

Performances will include music by Mariachi Gilroy and Mariachi Infantil Alma de Mexico, and folkloric dance by Estrellas de Esperanza and Senderos.

Admission to the solar-powered, zero-waste community event is free and attendees are encouraged to bring refillable water bottles for free water. Transportation options include free bike valet and free shuttle from downtown Santa Cruz (stops to include Locust Street Garage and Del Mar Theater).

Mole tasting kits will be available for purchase. Attendees will have the option to purchase six tasting tickets for \$10. Attendees wishing to sample additional mole may purchase single tasting tickets for \$2 each. Mole sauces will be judged by event attendees who will cast their vote for a People's Choice Award, and by a panel of local celebrity judges who will select a Judge's Choice Award. People's Choice Voting will take place at a ballot box stationed at each Mole chef's table.

Festival attendees can also purchase a wide variety of mole-inspired food items from local vendors who will be selling tamales, tacos and more. Beer from Discretion Brewing, wine by Santa Cruz Mountain Vineyard, chavelas (a drink made with beer, tomato juice and spices) and aguas frescas will be available for purchase. Attendees are encouraged to stop by the raffle table, which will feature numerous prize packages. Free children's activities include piñatas every hour, paper crafts and free face painting. All proceeds benefit the interior restoration Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park.

Event sponsors include:

Platinum Level: Good Times, Discretion Brewing, Santa Cruz Mountain Vineyard, Arts Council Santa Cruz County and Santa Cruz City Arts Commission.

Gold Level: KPIG, KAZU, Mission Printers, Taco Works, DeFib This, Lighthouse Bank, Bonny Hawley, TheZenith, Leonard Building and Miller Maxfield, Inc.

For more information about how to get involved in the Mole & Mariachi Festival, as a sponsor or volunteer, visit www.thatsmypark.org/events/mole-and-mariachi. For more about mole, visit [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mole_\(sauce\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mole_(sauce)).

About Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park

Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park, "Your State Park Downtown," is home to the oldest building in Santa Cruz County. Built between 1822 and 1824 by local Ohlonean and Yokuts Indians, the park's signature adobe is the only remaining structure from Mission Santa Cruz, founded in 1791. One of just four adobe buildings left in Santa Cruz County — and sometimes confused with the nearby replica mission chapel — it is the only building of its kind preserved as a museum in the State of California. The adobe served as housing for Neophyte families who lived and worked at the Mission, which operated until 1834 when it was secularized. After decades of private ownership, the adobe was sold to the State of California, extensively restored and finally opened in 1991 to the public as the Santa Cruz Mission SHP. The park celebrated its 25th year in 2016.

Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks saved Santa Cruz Mission SHP from closure in 2012. Friends funds interpretation services and a portion of park operations, and also runs the Mission ParkStore. In addition, Friends has implemented key improvements at the park, including a remodel of the patio, the opening of new interpretive exhibits, renovated outdoor cooking facilities and new hours of operation to serve local school children. Friends also established several special events at the park, including the annual Mole & Mariachi Festival each September, live music and food events. The park is supported by the Mission Committee, members of which include representatives of Friends, State Parks and dedicated community volunteers. For more information about Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park, visit www.thatsmypark.org/projects/santa-cruz-mission or www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=548.

About Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks

Established in 1976, Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks is an entrepreneurial nonprofit sustaining the legacy of our state parks and beaches. Through an innovative partnership with California State Parks, and by leveraging local community support, Friends provides funding for educational programs, visitor services and capital projects. Friends is passionately dedicated to the preservation of our spectacular natural environment and rich cultural history. Friends also operates six ParkStores, offering nature- and history-themed merchandise for sale to benefit local parks and beaches. ParkStore locations include Natural Bridges, New Brighton, Santa Cruz Mission, Seacliff, Wilder Ranch and Online. Learn more at ThatsMyPark.org or via Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and Pinterest.

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