

San Jose's Main Events: a Year of Fun under the Sun

SAN JOSE, CA — Back when orchards blanketed the valley floor, the song of the wind through the plum and cherry trees was the main entertainment. Now, Silicon Valley rings with live music and a multifaceted array of other events, from edgy and sophisticated to down-home fun. There's so much to choose from, and 300 days of sunshine, travelers to San Jose find plenty of reasons to visit and to stay no matter what time of year.

Arts Alive

Cinequest Film Festival: February 27-March 9. 'Empowering the Maverick' is the motto of downtown San Jose's premier film festival, and it does just that; you'll see plenty of indie films, or choose from a host of technology forums. Events range across venues like the Camera 12 (aka, C12), California Theatre (the Cal), and San Jose Repertory Theatre (the REP). Contact: 408/995-5033 or www.cinequest.org.

Zero One San Jose (01SJ): June 4-8. At sites across downtown, the Second Biennial Global Festival of Art on the Edge provides a platform for some of the world's most innovative contemporary artists. Their goal is to create artworks that use technology as a key tool. It's multi-dimensional (performances to exhibits and films), with sometimes startling and brilliant aspects—like the new outdoor Culture Screen and City Hall Rotunda projection. Contact: 408/916-1010 or www.01sj.org.

Tapestry Arts Festival: August 30-September 1. Try this recipe for excitement: take six square blocks of downtown San Jose, fill it with five live music stages, several hundred artists, a home and garden show, and free hands-on kids art space. Serve it up over a warm Labor Day Weekend, and you get San Jose's oldest and largest outdoor celebration. Enjoy the food, art, or the cutting-edge new ideas in the Design for Living Home and Garden Show. Or just mellow out by any of the five live music stages. Contact: 408/494-3590 or www.tapestryarts.org.

Music in the Air

Music is in the air. Summer 2008 marks the 20th season for one of the best deals in town, the free **Metro Music in the Park**, nine consecutive weeks of shows, each Thursday (5:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.) from July 10-Sept. 4 at Plaza de Cesar Chavez (at Market and San Carlos streets). Food and beverages are available on site; at the Lounge in the Park, open to the public, you can enjoy sangria, beer and wine. Back for its 10th year is **Metro Music in the Other Park** (in St. James Park) every Thursday night (5:30 to 9) in June and also free. The San Jose Downtown Association produces both series. Contact: 408/279-1775 or www.sjdowntown.com/eve_eve_mus.html.

Comcast San Jose Jazz Festival presented by Southwest Airlines: August 8-10. One weekend, 120 performances, 10 stages throughout downtown. Sample a buffet of jazz tastes— Blues, Latin, Salsa, Big Band, and more. There's music all day and lots of activities after dark. Contact: 408/288-7557 or www.sanjosejazz.org.

San Jose International Mariachi Festival: September 24-28. This event is a fiesta for your eyes and ears, showcasing both mariachi's energetic music and its vivacious culture. Latin contemporary and traditional music takes over the Mexican Heritage Plaza and stages in downtown San Jose, with performances by Grammy winners and top bands. Contact: 408/928-5501 or www.mhcviva.org.

Rock 'n' Roll Half Marathon: October 5. The Bay Area's largest half marathon, this one-day race really rocks, with live music from bands staged along the racecourse and a final headliner concert in HP Pavilion. But if you're not in the running, there are also health and fitness exhibits to enjoy. Ticket prices vary; watch for early entry discounted registration at www.rnrjs.com. Contact: 800/311-1255 or www.rnrjs.com.

Racing around Town

Amgen Tour of California: February 20. Cyclists participating in the Amgen Tour of California will ride through the sprawling hills of Silicon Valley while making their way from Modesto to San Jose. This new course serves as the third stage of the scenic race and challenges contestants to a vigorous workout. The 26-mile stretch includes continual climbing and a 4,360 ft journey up Mt. Hamilton, which provides one of the highest elevations ever reached in the Amgen. After crossing over the mountain's crest, bikers will continue on to Sierra Road and then embark upon an 18-mile run to the heart of San Jose. For more information, visit www.amgentourofcalifornia.com

Celebrating People and Traditions

Vietnamese Spring Festival and Parade: February 10. A celebration of all things Vietnamese—arts and crafts, food, music and dance. Past festivals have included live performances by Vietnamese entertainers or martial arts experts and a parade that showcases colorful Vietnamese dance and cultural groups, plus marching bands from throughout the Bay Area. This free, family event is held at Market Street and Park Avenue. Contact: 408/292-8283 or www.vsf-sanjose.com/.

Cinco de Mayo: May 5. Marking its 26th year, the fiesta kicks off with a parade down Market Street, then fills Discovery Meadow with arts and crafts vendors, food booths, and live music and dances by vividly-garbed folklórico groups. Sometimes the cutest show is on the Youth Stage, where tiny dancers do their best at traditional bailes. Contact: 408/288-9470 or www.sjgif.org.

San Jose Pride: June 14-15. Rainbows of events—a parade (route not yet set), plus food booths, live music, and entertainment in Discovery Meadow. Saturday is free Family Day, tickets for Sunday events cost \$15, \$10 in advance. Contact: 831/338-2578 or www.sjgaypride.com.

Festival for Independence: July 4-6. Enjoy two stages of first-rate musical and cultural entertainment with arts and crafts from around the world, booths offering savory ethnic foods, and tons of activities for kids. Contact: 408/298-6861 and www.americafestival.com.

Santa Clara County Fair: July 30-August 3. Set to return to the fairgrounds on Tully Road, it's a blast from the past, from the "fair food" and carnival ride thrills to the pride and joy of the 4-H and FFA clubs in the kid-friendly livestock area. Admission is still modest (\$8, kids and seniors \$5; half price for seniors on July 31 and for kids August 1). Contact: 408-494-3100 or www.thefair.org.

Fiesta Patrias/ Mexican Independence Day: September 14. A celebration of Latin music, food, and dance, with a Market Street parade and Discovery Meadow events. Lots of affordable (\$2 entry) family fun. Contact: 408/288-9470 or www.sjgif@sjgif.org.

Downtown for the Holidays

Downtown Ice: November 21-January 19, 2009. Skate under the stars—and the palm trees—in the heart of downtown. The South Bay's largest seasonal outdoor skating rink, produced by the San Jose Downtown Association, is set in the amazing Circle of Palms between the Fairmont Hotel and San Jose Museum of Art. Contact: 408/279-1775 or www.sjdowntown.com/eve_eve_ice.html.

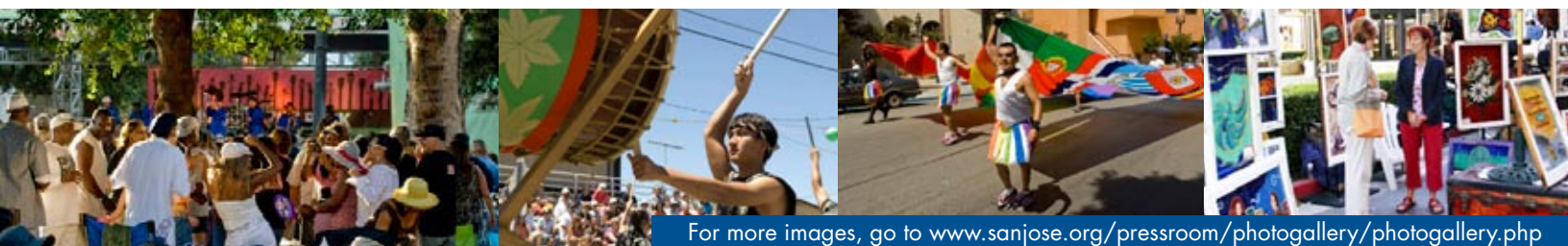
Winter Wonderland: November 26th -January 4, 2009. Here's a holiday event that you can enjoy in two locations: Park Avenue between Market Street and Almaden Blvd, or on Paseo de San Antonio between Market Street and Third Street. Revel in an arts and craft market place that includes a ride arcade and attractions like the international dessert row, part of an International Market that sits on the Paseo between Market and First streets. Buy gifts, sample exquisite chocolates, and check out the glass artisans working with molten glass (at night it looks pretty cool). Then take your loved one on the Ferris wheel to gaze at the nighttime view and steal a kiss. Contact: 408/286-1313 or www.giantcreative.com.

Christmas in the Park: November 27-January 1, 2009. Anchored by a festive tree lighting and the San Jose Holiday Parade (on December 7), and displays like the Santa Claus Railroad and the reindeer bar, Christmas in the Park is a fond family tradition in Silicon Valley. Contact: 408/995-NOEL (recorded); 408/793-4170 (live) or www.christmasinthepark.com.

For a complete list of events, check out the www.sanjose.org website on a regular basis.

About The San Jose Convention & Visitors Bureau (SJCVB)

The San Jose Convention & Visitors Bureau (SJCVB) mission is to enhance the image and economic well being of San Jose by marketing San Jose as a globally recognized destination. The SJCVB offers visitors, meeting planners, and tour operators, a range of services to ensure a successful event and fun visit to San Jose. For a copy of the Official Visitors Guide, please contact the SJCVB at 1.800.SAN.JOSE (1.800.726.5673) or visit <http://www.sanjose.org>.



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