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FAVORITE CHEFS, BANDS RETURN FOR ANNUAL MOLE & MARIACHI FESTIVAL ON SEPTEMBER 7th

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

July 16, 2019—SANTA CRUZ, CA—Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks (Friends) today announced it will host the 7th annual Mole & Mariachi Festival on Saturday, Sept. 7, 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 mariachi bands, folkloric dancers, kids' activities and the main event: the Mole Tasting Competition. Mole — a traditional savory, sweet Mexican sauce, sometimes made using chocolate — will be available to sample.

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.

Competitors for 2019 include last year's Judges' Choice winner Margaritaville Capitola, and last year's People's Choice winner and Judges' Choice Runner Up Ana Mendoza, as well as a returning Judges' Choice winner from 2014, El Jardin Restaurant.

Also returning for the first time since 2017, Mariachi Feminil Orgullo Mexicano, an all-female mariachi band, will headline the mariachi and folklorico dance performances.

Festival attendees can also purchase a wide variety of mole-inspired food items from local vendors who will be selling tamales, tacos and more at this admission-free, solar-powered, zero-waste community event. Learn more at www.thatsmypark.org/events/mole-and-mariachi.

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 worked with State Parks to implement key improvements at the park, including plaster repair and whitewash on the exterior and interior of the Mission, reconstruction of an adobe brick floor, French drain repair, and installation of new water-saving toilets and a bike rack. Friends also established several special events at the park, including the annual Mole & Mariachi Festival each September, live music and the popular PopUp Picnics in the Park. For more information about Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park, visit www.thatsmypark.org/projects/santa-cruz-mission.

About Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks

Established in 1976, Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks (Friends) is a vital partner with California State Parks, creatively working to ensure our cherished local parks and beaches are thriving and available to all. Friends' innovative and collaborative community partnership provides support and investment for education, equity and inclusion, conservation, facilities improvements, historic preservation and cultural events. 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 www.ThatsMyPark.org or via Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and Pinterest.

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