

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
2017

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THIS WEEKEND: Kick off Summer at Emerald Queen Casino's Taste of Tacoma® presented by BECU!

Date: June 23-25, 2017
Location: Point Defiance Park, Tacoma, WA
Event Website: www.tasteoftacoma.com

Overall Festival Hours: Friday, June 23: 11 a.m. - 9 p.m.
Saturday, June 24: 11 a.m. - 9 p.m.
Sunday, June 25: 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Admission FREE!

Event Highlights: Over 30 restaurant and food booths, all-new *South Sound Bites* in support of Emergency Food Network, 50+ hand craft & commercial goods vendors, 4 music and entertainment stages, *The Taste Cooks!* chef demos & cook-offs in a new location in restaurant row, The Rose Garden with the Wine Bar & the Craft Beer Tasting, Beer gardens serving up local brews & local spirits by Gig Harbor's Heritage Distilling Co., Funtastic Carnival rides & games, sponsor samples & activities, picnic areas and more.

Free Taste Express: With Metro Parks Tacoma *Destination Point Defiance* project underway, Emerald Queen Casino's Taste of Tacoma® presented by BECU has taken steps to ensure an easy and affordable option for guests by providing a **FREE** Taste Express, operated by Pierce Transit, service from Tacoma Community College to the festival, June 23-25 at Point Defiance Park. The **FREE** Taste Express will run throughout the day starting at 10:30 a.m. to take guests to & from the festival. The last bus will depart Point Defiance Park 30 minutes after closing each day. Festival hours are Friday & Saturday from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Pets: A **no-pet policy** will be enforced in the food court at the Taste this year. The public is encouraged to leave dogs and other pets at home for the health and safety of both the animals and the public.

Note to editor: For more information regarding specific events and activities, please refer to the below special features & overview section.

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Special Features & Overview of Taste 2017:

All-NEW South Sound Bites

South Sound Bites is a local restaurant showcase featuring a unique five-course entrée/plate meal offered to patrons for one price. The attraction was driven by community interest to try top-notch restaurants in the Tacoma region. Patrons who visit *South Sound Bites* pay \$16 to receive a plate featuring five different small entrée sized menu items, one item presented from each of the participating restaurants featured daily. *South Sound Bites* will serve as a platform to not only showcase local restaurants, but also support Emergency Food Network by collecting donations, both monetary & non-perishable food items, as well volunteer outreach. *South Sound Bites* will host five of Tacoma's top restaurants each day between 11:00 am-7:00 pm at the Taste of Tacoma®, June 23-25. Warm 106.9 will serve as the media partner for this new venue, providing promo opportunities for the restaurants/chefs and the Emergency Food Network. Participating restaurants include The Table Tacoma, Stanley & Seafort's, Casa Antiguo, Miyabi Sushi Tacoma, and more!

The Wine Bar

The Wine Bar sponsored by The News Tribune, will be located once again in the Rose Garden. It will feature local Washington wines by the glass or a flight including Gruet, Canoe Ridge Vineyard, Ste Chapelle, Browne Family Vineyards, and House Wine. Wine by the glass or flight will be \$7 - \$8, depending on the variety. There will be a Sparkling Wine Flight, Washington Reds Flight and an Washington Whites Flight. The Wine Bar will be located near The Craft Beer Tasting and The Rose Garden Stage featuring singer songwriters and jazz/blues artists.

Craft Beer Tasting

The Craft Beer Tasting sponsored by ALT 102.9 will return to the Rose Garden again this year with a continued emphasis on local brews. Guests can enjoy the scenic area, Rose Garden Stage and have the option to take part in The Wine Bar. Guests may purchase a craft beer tasting package for \$20 that includes a wristband, a commemorative 5 oz. mug and 5 tastes. Participating breweries include: Odd Otter Brewing Co., Fish Brewing Co., Narrows Brewing Co., Wingman Brewers, Northwest Brewing Co., and Gig Harbor Brewing. Beer tasting patrons must have a wristband and mug to sample beer, but all guests 21+ are welcome. Additional tastes are available for \$2 each.

Beer Gardens: Cool Brews & Local Spirit Cocktails

Wash down all that delicious food with a cool beer or two! Guests 21+ can enjoy great brews and craft spirit cocktails in all of The Taste's two outdoor beer gardens. The beer lineup includes Budweiser, Bud Light, Shock Top, and Elysian Immortal IPA. The Taste of Tacoma® will once again feature local craft spirits by Gig Harbor's Heritage Distilling Co. specifically Batch No. 12 Vodka, Batch No. 12 Bourbon and NEW Brown Sugar Bourbon. The craft cocktails will include classic drinks as well as "signature" event cocktails including **Cucumber Refresher** - Batch No. 12 Vodka, DRY Cucumber and lime wedge and the **BSB Cooler** - Brown Sugar Bourbon, Lemonade and club soda.

Taste it all!

The festival plays host to over 30 local and regional restaurants and food booths. As always, the Taste of Tacoma® showcases old favorites and new flavors throughout the weekend! Notable newcomers include *Wicked Pie Pizza* serving up delicious pizza by the slice, *Langostino Sushi Burritos* with Crunch, Spicy Tuna or Veggie Sushi Burritos and *Big Island Poke* with their Hawaiian Poke Bowls. New Food Trucks include *It's Greek to Me* serving Gyros & Falafels, and *Mac & Cheese Whaaaaaaat* dishing up assorted mac & cheese including Bacon, Tator Tot, and Lobster. For the brave foodies, try return-favorites, Alligator-on-a-Stick from *New Orleans Cookery* or the Krispy Kreme Bacon Burger from *Deano's Grill*.

The Taste Cooks! presented by Albert Lee Appliance Moves to Restaurant Row

The Taste Cooks! presented by Albert Lee Appliance is moving to the center of the festival in Restaurant Row! *The Taste Cooks!* is an interactive and high energy live cooking entertainment showcase located at the north end of the festival. Join emcee Amanda Westbrooke, of *TV Tacoma*, as she hosts a selection of Tacoma's finest chefs and local culinary experts who will spice up the stage with creative programming segments and cooking demonstrations. Local chefs will also compete in a *Taste Cook Off!*, where they will be given three mystery ingredients, a small pantry of basic cooking staples and leave it up to the audience to judge their final entrée. The winner will be crowned *The Taste Cooks Master!* All demonstrations will be done on a fully-equipped stage by Albert Lee Appliance. Participating chefs include The Table's Derek Bray, Rhein Haus' Kelly Wilson, Happy Belly's Abigail Bardley, Ba Bistro's Chris Lewis and more. Special thanks to Charlie's Produce and media sponsors Seattle Refined and KOMO 4.

Family Fun

The Taste of Tacoma® offers the best in family fun and the ultimate summer picnic experience. Located in the Bowl surrounding the Pond at Point Defiance Park, come experience the Family Fun Stage sponsored by 100.7 The Wolf with non-stop entertainment daily and the always-popular Funtastic Carnival and Amusement Rides for parents and kids alike. Picnic tables are also available so grab some lunch and head on down to the picnic! Featured acts include former *American Idol* Top 20 contestant Lovey James, Timeless D4You, Tweenland, Sarah Holman and The Reptile Man.

Happy Hour

Each day of the festival, enjoy Happy Hour specials in all beer gardens, The Craft Beer Tasting and The Wine Bar. Happy Hour is from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. daily. Take \$3 off a Craft Beer Tasting starter package (regularly \$20), take a \$1 off wine glasses & flights in The Wine Bar or \$1 off beers and mixed drinks in the beer gardens. **Exclusive BECU Deal:** Get \$5 off your Craft Beer Tasting Package and/or get \$1 off a glass of wine or flight at The Wine Bar if you're a BECU Card member. BECU members to show proof of membership with a debit/visa card or bank statement at the Wine/Craft beer sales tent. (Only one discount can be applied at a time & deals cannot be combined.)

Great Music!

Entertainment is an essential part of the Taste including 4 music stages and nearly 100 acts in all, there is always something for everyone! Musical entertainment to suit all music Tastes! Visitors can enjoy everything from classic rock to pop to kids' entertainment. Stages include The Bowl stage presented by BECU and Rock 98.9, The Rose Garden Stage sponsored by 95.7 The Jet, The Pond Stage sponsored by MOVIN 92.5, and The Family Fun Stage sponsored by 100.7 The Wolf.

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