SAN JUAN CAPITANO'S HERITAGE TOURISM ASSOCIATION IS HISTORY IN THE MAKING

Mission San Juan Capistrano has formed a Heritage Tourism Association. The diverse shops and eateries in the San Juan Capistrano downtown share in the goal of serving the local, regional and international Mission visitor or traveler while simultaneously promoting the rich history of San Juan.

The downtown is comprised of unique buildings and entities that offer a one-of-a-kind experience not found on the internet. The outstanding setting of a walkable downtown with a unique history is collectively worth exploring. At the Mission we know that visitors come primarily to see the landmark, but along the way they often discover the San Juan Downtown.

With nearly 300,000 annual visitors there is an unmet need to give visitors more information about what to do “together visit the Mission” and thereby keep visitors in town to stay a little longer.

A change coming as a result, Mission San Juan Capistrano invited businesses and non-profits located in the Los Rios Historic District and Mission Business District to join in its inaugural San Juan Capistrano Heritage Tourism Association/Marketing Co-op. To date, the response has been overwhelming and it has already raised $35,000 in new marketing funds.

The following is a glimpse of a partial list of HTA Members, as of October 25th:

**Founding Members:**
- Cedar Creek Inn
- El Adobe de Capistrano
- Salsillo Building
- Mission Premade
- Mission San Juan Capistrano
- Rancho Capistrano Winery
- Sandi Tomato Cafe
- Swallens’ Inn

**Members:**
- 1/16 Bakery
- Best Western Capistrano Inn
- Camino Real Playhouse
- Florida Association
- Five Vines Wine Bar
- Eco/Gardens/Expo
- Hidden House Coffee
- Loa Roso Plaza
- Nest
- Rancho Mission Viejo Rodeo
- Residence Inn Danah Point
- San Juan Capistrano

**Generous supporters:**
- Mission Vine Art Gallery
- Serra Plaza

“The reason we excelled our staff and attendances to support our heritage-based businesses and non-profits promoting unique experiences” said Michelle Lawrence Adams, Executive Director of Mission San Juan Capistrano. “It’s not only our pleasure, but also our obligation to ensure the community’s past is not only preserved and celebrated in a way it truly deserves. Businesses bringing in the culture heritage tourist need to be collectively marketed in order to bring them back time and time again.”

“In the downtown the most successful businesses are those located in historic buildings, and yet this fact often goes overlooked in favor of a focus on new businesses. It is key that we celebrate our heritage-based economy and that we leverage it to produce greater awareness. Our marketing co-op ultimately will celebrate the historic businesses first and then those entities that serve history as a reason for visiting the area.”

Adams further stated: “With each entity focused on its own sustainability since the recession, it ends up that we are marketing the area like a disconnected quilt. That quilt merely needs to be stitched together to retain visitors in the area a lot longer.”

As a result, Mission San Juan Capistrano has invested $18,000 in direct marketing funding to develop maps, emails and more to be given to its annual visitors or store shoppers to show them what to do after they visit the Mission. Another example of cooperative efforts is the Mission Store promoting HTA members and specifically this month will feature an exclusive holiday blend from Hidden House Coffee.

The concept, initiated by the Mission Preservation Foundation, has also been endorsed by Ann Ronan, president of the San Juan Capistrano Chamber of Commerce and owner of San Juan Capistrano Travel. The HTA’s inaugural membership enrollment deadline was October 31, and membership marketing benefits will launch officially with collateral and online outreach by January, 2015. The next member enrollment will be November 2015.

For more information, contact the Mission at (949) 234-1312.