

visit  
California

# DMO Toolkit

*California*  
RESTAURANT  
MONTH



# Did you know?

- California outpaces the rest of the country in terms of travelers' desire for culinary experience, with 59 percent of travelers interested in taking a culinary trip to California, compared to only 39 percent looking to second-place Oregon for the same experience. *[Source: Mandala Research (California Culinary Evolution), 2019].*
- California produces 81 percent of American wine and is the world's 4th leading wine producer. *(Source: Discover California's Wines, 2018).*
- In 2018, travelers in California spent \$37.4 billion on food and beverages, constituting 26.6 percent of all visitor spending last year. *(Source: Dean Runyan Associates, 2018).*
- Approximately, 42.1 million (16 percent of) domestic visitors to California participated in fine dining in 2018. *(Source: Omnitrak Group, 2018).*



CALIFORNIA RESTAURANT MONTH

# About California Restaurant Month

# California Restaurant Month

California Restaurant Month is a statewide promotional event that celebrates the Golden State's rich culinary experiences.

During the month of January, destinations across the state will offer culinary programming including:

- Restaurant week featuring themed menus
- A series of culinary experiences
- Foodie festivals and ancillary programming

# Why be involved?

- CRM provides destinations with a powerful storytelling platform to raise the profile of your unique culinary experiences through earned media and social media engagement opportunities to out-of-state visitors.
- Culinary-minded travelers will have direct access to your program through the campaign webpage.
- There is no cost to participate.
- Participants have access to past Restaurant Week Best Practices Webinar and CRM consultant.

# Visit California Support

- Dedicated content on [VisitCalifornia.com](http://VisitCalifornia.com)
- National & Regional PR
- Social Media: Visit California owned channels, influencers owned channels
- Resources: CRM consultant, best practices webinars, templates, etc.



# Milestones

- Registration Deadlines
  - Contact Info: Oct. 15
  - Program Info: Nov. 4
- California Restaurant Month
  - Begins: Jan. 1
  - Ends: Jan. 31



A photograph of a man and a woman sitting at a wooden table in an outdoor restaurant. The woman is on the left, wearing a pink top and holding a glass of water. The man is on the right, wearing a light purple shirt and holding a martini glass. They are both smiling and looking at each other. The table is set with plates of food, glasses, and a lit candle. In the background, there are trees and a building with white shutters. A semi-transparent dark grey rectangle is overlaid on the image, containing the text.

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# Developing Your Program

# Getting Started

- How would you characterize the restaurant/food scene in your region?
- What are the signature culinary events or experiences that are unique to your destination (ex: Asparagus Festival, Garlic Festival, Beer Week)?
- Are there any emerging trends you've noticed in the past year? What types of eateries are popping up/thriving? (Ex: Farm to Fork, Food Trucks)
- How do local ingredients and California's endless bounty factor into your dining culture?

# Setting Goals

- Fast forward to January 31, 2020. What will success look like for your restaurant program?
- How will you measure your success?
- How will CRM move the needle for your destination?
  - Drive awareness
  - Drive sales
  - Engage with stakeholders
  - Grow social media audience, email subscribers
  - Earn media coverage/PR

# Identifying Resources

- How much staff time will you dedicate to this program?
- What is your budget to support this program?
- Are there any leaders in your local culinary industry who will champion your event and serve on a committee or be on scene as influencer?
- Are there any brands/corporate partners who could support the event with in-kind/cash sponsorship?

# Program Templates

- **Themed Menus**

- Themed menus focused on seasonality, local fare, special ingredients, signature cocktails or special pricing

- **Culinary Experiences**

- A series of culinary experiences such as winemaker, brewer, forager or slow food dinners; crawls; VIP tours; etc.

- **Events**

- Food festivals and related ancillary programming

# Santa Monica Restaurant Week

## *Themed Menu*

When the holidays wind down, and healthy resolutions emerge, Santa Monica Travel & Tourism pays homage to the city's healthy lifestyle and culinary scene with Santa Monica Restaurant Week.

**Restaurants crafted healthy, custom dishes, all centered around a single ingredient: the pomegranate.**

Throughout the week, restaurant-goers enjoyed delicious dishes, all created to highlight the pomegranate. Whether sliced, glazed or baked; as part of fresh salsa or pureed into a soup, all specially-created Santa Monica Restaurant Week creations were prepared to harness the ample health benefits of the radish and emphasize Santa Monica's commitment to fresh, local and organic ingredients.

# Pasadena Cheeseburger Week

## *Culinary Experience*

Legend has it that Lionel Sternberger invented the cheeseburger in 1924, while working at his father's roadside stand in Pasadena, California.

Shortly after the Tournament of Roses each year, restaurants and locals pay homage to Lionel's achievement with a week-long celebration with over 40 participating restaurants and events with **Pasadena Cheeseburger Week**.

In 2017, five themed crawls were offered including a Traditional Cheeseburger Crawl, Old Pasadena Cheeseburger Crawl, South Lake Avenue Cheeseburger Crawl, Beer & Cheeseburger Crawl and Lunchtime Vegetarian-Friendly Cheeseburger Crawl.

# Official Drink of Santa Barbara

## *Culinary Experience/Event*

Visit Santa Barbara joined forces with the Santa Barbara Independent to designate an official signature Santa Barbara mixed drink for 2017 that celebrated the distinctive attributes of The American Riviera®.

The competition called upon local restaurants, bars, lounges, tasting rooms and breweries to craft their libation interpretation of Santa Barbara's one-of-a-kind sense of place. Qualifying entries were posted online for a public vote. The winning drink recipe was determined at a tasting event. The winning drink was made available for public consumption at the winner's place of business throughout 2017.

# Crab, Wine & Beer Fest

## *Event*

Mendocino's Crab, Wine and Beer Fest is rated one of America's Top 10 Seafood & Wine Festivals by Coastal Living Magazine. You'll devour the all-you-can-eat crab feeds, winemaker's dinners, wine competitions, crab cruises, cooking classes, family-style cioppino feeds and crab cake cook off and lots of seafood! Many restaurants and Inns celebrate with specials, and events throughout the county, from the coast to the inland valleys.

The festival is a "well oiled machine" with internal staff dedicated to industry outreach encouraging businesses to create events and get involved; and a guide book outlining all event activities which contributes significantly to their web traffic.



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# Partner Recruitment

# Sales Pitch – Restaurant Week offers:

- Access and exposure to first time diners.
- Opportunity for earned media and social media exposure for your brand.
- Increased traffic during a traditionally soft period.
- Promotes local restaurant community overall.
- Support of local marketing plan.
- Word of mouth – 91% of diners are likely to recommend their last RW restaurant to a friend or family member (OpenTable 2013).
- New fans – 89% of diners are likely to return to their last RW restaurant (OpenTable 2013).

# What to Include

- Event details: dates, structure, price points
- Benefits of participation
- Participation requirements and fees
- Link to online registration form
- Registration deadline
- Marketing plans
- Past event results if applicable
- Sponsors and partners
- Quotes from relevant industry representatives
- Contact info for questions



# What to collect

- Contact person, phone, email
- Organization name, address, phone, URL
- Social media channels
- Meal periods (if applicable)
- Menu Offering
- Type of Business
- Photos

A hand holding a beer glass with a logo, overlaid with a semi-transparent grey box containing text. The background is a blurred image of a bar setting with several beer glasses filled with beer. The central glass is in sharp focus, showing a logo and a measurement line. The text is centered on the grey box.

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# Program KPIs



# Goal-setting Thought-starters

- Drive visitation in January
- Drive sales during slow times
- Acquire new guests
- Raise Awareness
- Earn media coverage
- Grow social media audience, email subscribers
- Industry engagement

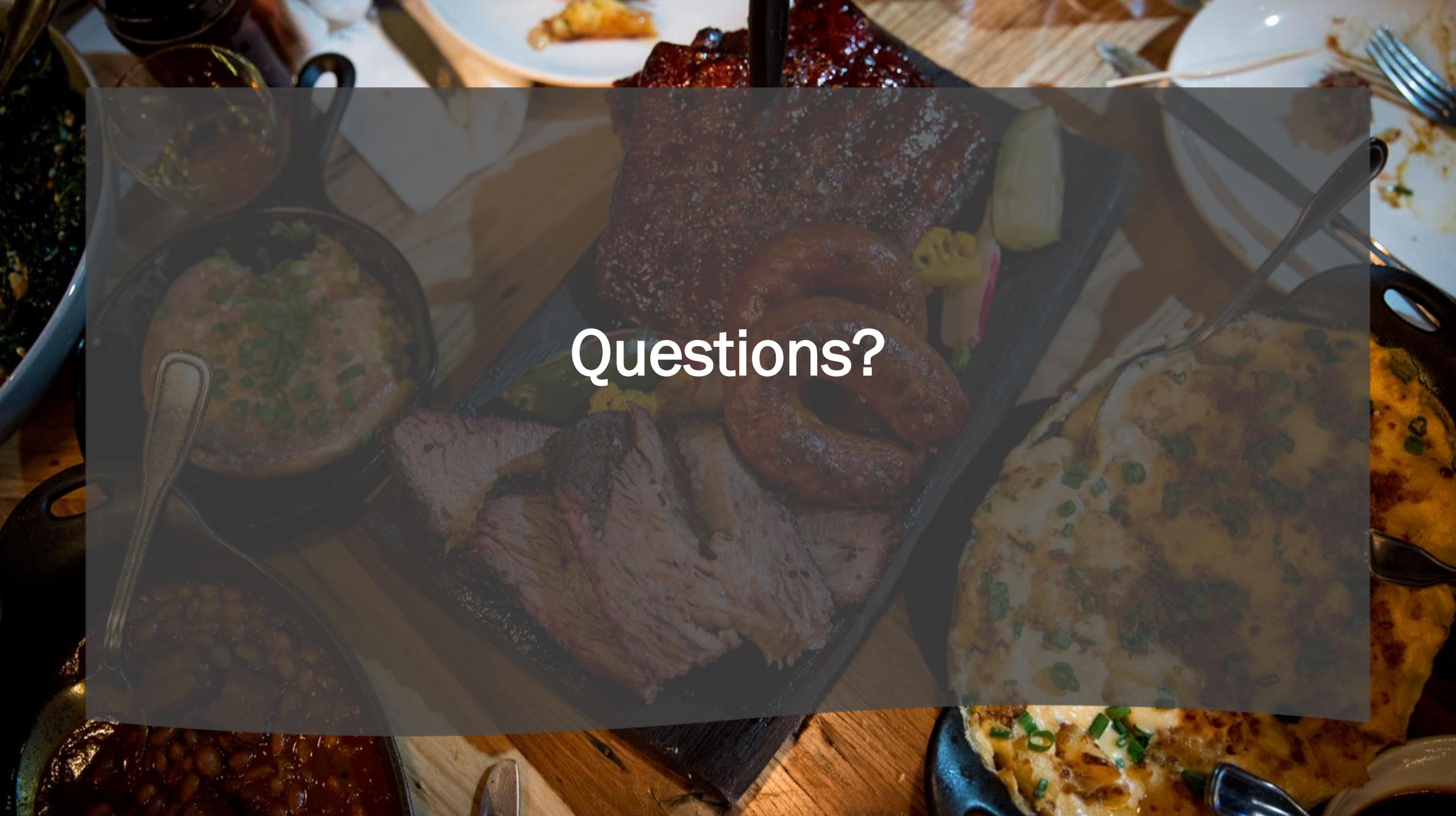
# Key Performance Indicators

- Restaurant Covers
- Industry participation
- Web traffic
- Media hits
- Social media audience growth (% or target #)
- Email subscribers
- Partner satisfaction
- Consumer satisfaction
- Impressions



# Measuring Success

- Restaurant/Participant Survey
- Consumer Survey
- Media/Partner Exposure
- Web Reporting
- Post-event Press Release

A collage of various food dishes including ribs, sausages, meat, and soups. The central focus is a dark wooden platter with ribs, sausages, and sliced meat. Surrounding it are bowls of soup, a large flatbread, and other plates of food. The text "Questions?" is overlaid in the center.

Questions?

# Contacts

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