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## GAY FRIENDLY SAN JOSE

SAN JOSE, CA (Jan. 18, 2010) -- In San Jose, the heart of Silicon Valley, the scene is more about the brains than the brawn.

Well ...most of the time, anyway!

Forget about the geeks of yesteryear. With 300 days of sunshine (Got fog? Nope!), plethora of parks and the famous California attitude towards balancing work and play, San Joseans are fit physically as well as mentally – an intriguing combination if you’re looking to mix with locals with substance.

Perhaps one of the reasons Dionne Warwick was looking for the way to San Jose was to help her gay friends find an alternative to circuit parties and the “been there, did them” gay destinations. Located smack in the middle of the Monterey and San Francisco Bay areas, San Jose is a great jumping point to fabulous day trips. And there’s plenty to keep you busy right here.

Laid out like a cultural campus, San Jose has wonderful performing arts and museums – as well as many hip restaurants, galleries and clubs -- within walking distance of gay friendly hotels. Our airport is just five minutes from downtown, and a comprehensive public transportation system. If you need a car to explore nearby golfing, beaches, wineries or theme parks, it won’t cost you a second mortgage like in other cities.

### WHERE TO STAY

The gay community in San Jose is integrated, so there is no need for exclusive gay neighborhoods or hotels. As with other cities in the Bay area, San Jose is welcoming and appealing to visitors of all sexual orientations, so gay couples feel comfortable walking on the street or hanging by their hotel pool. San Jose offers accommodations for all styles and budgets, from major hotel brands to chic boutiques, several of which are known as gay hotspots. Travel Alternatives Group (TAG) approved hotels include the trendy Moorpark Hotel, by Joie de Vivre, which has hosted several kick-off parties for San Jose Gay Pride, and the newly revamped and stylish San Jose Hilton, which is connected to the convention center and is featured in the Silicon Valley Rainbow pages. Other hotel hotspots include the historic Hotel De Anza, which is a member of the Rainbow Chamber and offers a midnight Raid-The-Pantry program and a great jazz club. The contemporary San Jose Marriott, featuring hot Michael Mina restaurant Arcadia, was the sponsor hotel for the 2009 San Jose Gay Pride, and its fashionable new TANQ bar is an in vogue LGBT hangout. Sleek Hotel Valencia on San Jose’s fabulously cool Santana Row, with its über chic Vbar nightclub and award-winning Citrus restaurant, has been home to various LGBT events, commitment ceremonies and conferences.

### WHAT TO SEE / WHAT TO DO

As the third largest city in California and the 10<sup>th</sup> largest in the U.S., **San Jose's Gay Pride parade and festival**, this year on August 21-22, is vibrant and well attended every summer. Year-round, however, there are many activities to delight the gay traveler. Culture vultures will love San Jose's walkable layout, with several performing and visual arts venues within a five-minute walk of each other. The San Jose Center for the Performing Arts offers exhilarating shows from Broadway San Jose and Ballet San Jose, while the newly renovated San Jose Civic offers marquee concerts. The deliciously magical and historic California Theater, one of the best preserved examples of a 1920s motion picture house in the United States, is home to Opera San Jose and Symphony Silicon Valley. The soaring HP Pavilion packs the house with sporting events and concerts. The San Jose Repertory Theater lets cultural users plug into variety of classic and contemporary plays. Every summer, visitors can get their groove on with the free Music in the Park, while each winter film buffs can kick back at the Cinequest Film Festival, which celebrates Maverick cinema, television and innovation. One of the most unique festivals in San Jose is the biennial ZERO1, a multi-disciplinary, multi-venue event of visual and performing arts, the moving image, public art, and interactive digital media. Last but not least, First Fridays in the hip SoFA (South of First Area) district downtown, lets visitors see the latest and greatest in various Silicon Valley galleries.

Okay, we know culture is important, but we all know that on vacay, shopping is an even higher priority. And visitors to San Jose are often surprised to find that the shopping is so diverse and abundant it's become a competitive sport. From farmers markets and megamalls to antique shops and the nation's largest outdoor flea market, San Jose offers places to do as much or as little damage on the plastic as possible. The hottest shopping district, for those who want to "see and be scene," and gawk at Silicon Valley money, is Santana Row, a Mediterranean style shopping, dining and entertainment district filled with trendy eateries, wine bars, lounges and boutiques.

Speaking of Santana Row, one of the campiest and most famous attractions in San Jose is right across the street. Winchester Mystery House, the former home of rifle heiress Sarah Winchester, features architectural oddities, such as stairways to nowhere and windows opening onto walls – designed to confuse the spirits of rifle victims supposedly haunting her. When you take the tour, you find that Sarah, though eccentric, was a woman ahead of her time, installing technological advances well before they were commonplace. Ms. Sarah was also a diva, holding séances and making bold moves such as not letting anyone-- including President Teddy Roosevelt – use the front door and buying up bolts of fabric so no other woman in town would dress like her. Another fun attraction, for LGBT who are closeted geeks, is the Tech Museum of Innovation, which includes an IMAX theater and which encourages visitors to explore the technologies affecting their lives, and aims to inspire the innovator in everyone. For those more enamored with the past there's the Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum & Planetarium, featuring the largest collections of Ancient Egyptian antiquities in the Western U.S. And for those who've never grown up, Great America theme park often offers a gay day on May 28, 2010.

## **GAY FRIENDLY DINING AND WINE COUNTRY**

San Jose, like most big cities, offers a great variety of dining journeys. San Joseans work hard, but they enjoy the California lifestyle, which includes great food and wine, much of it locally sourced. From great ethnic joints to celebrity chefs, San Jose offers many surprises for the palate. Notable LGBT faves include Michael Mina's Arcadia and Santana Row's Thea Mediterranean restaurant, Left Bank French eatery, stylish joint Pizza Antica and modern steak-and-seafood house, Citrus. La Foret, one of the best restaurants in the city, offers a romantic creekside setting and wonderful local wild game specials. Since San Jose is home to the largest population of Vietnamese of any city outside of Vietnam, no visit here would be complete without a stop at an ethnic eatery such as 19 Market, which blends the old with the new in Vietnamese fare. Manresa in nearby Los Gatos offers the ultimate farm-to-fork experience, while in nearby Saratoga, the Plumed Horse has been noted by *Wine Spectator* as one of the best places in town.

Speaking of *Wine Spectator*, did you know that the Santa Cruz Mountain Wineries, just minutes from San Jose, were touted by this oeno-bible as "the most underappreciated appellation in the world?" If you adore heavy

traffic, pretentious vibes and overpriced tastings, by all means go to Napa just two hours away. If you like the road less traveled and hunting for hidden gems, this coastal region is for you! Local favorites include Savannah Channel, Testarossa and Burrell School, which features eye-popping views. And those of us old enough to remember Peggy Fleming's gay-icon boy haircut will be pleased to know they can catch a glimpse of her well-preserved locks at Fleming Jenkins Winery.

## **NIGHTLIFE**

As one of the safest big cities in the nation, San Jose is well-suited for seeking adventures after dark. The shorts, jeans and tee-shirt crowds will love the casual and funky comedy clubs and pubs downtown, while the "it" crowd loves to prowl trendy clubs, galleries and ultra-lounges on Santana Row or around SoFA (downtown's South of First Area). Whether you're the intellectual sort, or a party animal, we've got everything you need to get nightlife. Some LGBT hotspots include: Mac's Bar, the oldest gay bar in town and filled with neighborhood regulars; Renegades, featuring a leather/Levis crowd appealing to the Bear market; TANQ, featuring designer décor with an underwater theme; Miami Beach Club, featuring a gay/straight mix with tropical, hip hop and Latin rooms; and on Friday's Tinker's Dam in nearby Santa Clara is buzzing with fun. Badlands of Castro fame will soon open in San Jose near Max's bar.

If you're looking for a gay-friendly destination that's off the beaten path and easy to manage but offers all the major options of a traditional LGBT destination, get on track with Dionne and find your way to San Jose!

## **About Team San Jose (TSJ)**

Team San Jose, Inc. is a management company for the San Jose Convention Center and multiple theaters in Downtown San Jose including the San Jose Civic, Parkside Hall, Center for the Performing Arts, California Theatre and Montgomery Theater. Team San Jose is a unique customer service model where the company acts as the San Jose Convention and Visitors Bureau and works in partnership with local hoteliers, organized labor, local arts leadership and business community to provide a one team approach to all event planning needs. For more information on things to see and do, call 1-800-SANJOSE or visit [www.sanjose.org](http://www.sanjose.org).