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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

## **San José Mariachi and Mexican Heritage Festival Announces Slow Food Workshops - *Food for the Heart and Soul***

*San José, CA – August 5, 2009*

The San José Mariachi and Mexican Heritage Festival, the City of San José, and festival artistic director Linda Ronstadt are adding local, sustainable, healthy food to the 18th Annual San José Mariachi and Mexican Heritage Festival.

“Food matters---what we eat, how we eat it, and with whom,” said Linda Ronstadt, artistic director of the San José Mariachi & Mexican Heritage Festival. “Healthy eating is paramount to healthy families.”

New this year, “Food for the Heart and Soul,” conducted by Jenny Huston and Toni Moore, is an aspect of the festival that will address the health disparities affecting the Latino community in and around San José and the South Bay. Healthy lifestyle outcomes can be addressed through bringing local resources, such as food, health, education, and economic development, directly to the people of the community.

“We are excited to partner with the San José Mariachi and Mexican Heritage Festival”, said Chef Jenny Huston. “Then next year there will be several other aspects to this project, that we will begin planning in late October this year.”

The workshops set the stage for the future. This year’s workshop focuses on healthy, local and sustainable cooking entitled "Comida para el Alma" --- Food for the Heart and Soul. There will be five of these workshops for youth (14 to 18 age range, 8/19, 8/20, 8/21) and four workshops for the general public (9/25 & 9/26).

“In today’s world is not easy to stay healthy, with all the sugar and fat in processed foods,” added Ronstadt. “With challenges such as childhood obesity and diabetes at the forefront, going back to the way our grandmothers cooked is the best way to eat in a healthy way.”

Added Huston, “We hope to give a tour to all the workshop participants of the community gardens at the Mayfair Community Center. Next year it looks like we will have the resources to bring all four aspects of this project to fruition, including growing food.”

Chef Jenny Huston has a heartfelt dedication to issues of food equity and social justice. After 30 years of experience in food services, teaching aspiring chefs, catering and consulting, Chef Huston has been involved in ideation, research and development, planning, implementing and administering Farm to Table food programs to initiating, commercial product development contracts and special events. Today she is the primary for Farm to Table and Food Service Consulting.

Toni Moore has enjoyed cooking since she was a young girl, and has loved Mexico since she went to summer school in Torreon. Today she combines these two passions into her curriculum of traditional Mexican food for a healthy lifestyle. She is a protégé of Diana Kennedy, has spent time at the Hayes Street Grill in San Francisco, and has worked with Patricia Unterman, patronizing local farmers' markets and supporting the concept of sustainable food in her menus. She has studied regional Mexican cuisine and works as a private chef and caterer.

“Food for the Heart and Soul” workshops are sponsored in part by The Health Trust and the City of San José and El Observador.

**September 25 – 26 Comida para el Corazon y el Alma (Food for the Heart & Soul)  
*Traditional Mexican food for a healthy lifestyle***

Mayfair Community Center 2039 Kammerer Ave., San José, CA 95116

10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Learn how to cook and eat healthy, delicious Mexican food, using locally grown, organic ingredients. Registration fee is \$75. Register online at [sanjosemariachifestival.com](http://sanjosemariachifestival.com)

For further information please contact Monica Ramos, Mariachi Festival Workshop Coordinator at 408/928-5551 or [mramos@mhc viva.org](mailto:mramos@mhc viva.org)

For more information on the health disparities impacting the Latino community in California visit the Latino Coalition for a Healthy California at <http://www.lchc.org>, and the Pew Hispanic Center website at <http://www.pewhispanic.org>.

For information on the San Jose Mariachi and Mexican Heritage Festival visit [www.sanjosemariachifestival.com](http://www.sanjosemariachifestival.com)

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**About the San José Mariachi and Mexican Heritage Festival:**

The San José Mariachi and Mexican Heritage Festival, now in its 18th year, has experienced measured growth in terms of attendance and revenue in the past three years and is now the largest festival of its kind in the nation, headquartered in San José (the nation's tenth largest city) and centrally located in Northern California, which is the fourth largest US Latino consumer market. The Festival annually presents an array of educational workshops, indoor concert events and outdoor music and cultural family activities in downtown San José. Festival revenue supports the Heritage Corporation's

music and dance education programs, which are taught in San Jose public schools, the Mexican Heritage Plaza, Children's Discovery Museum and local community centers.  
[www.sanjosemariachifestival.com](http://www.sanjosemariachifestival.com)