

NEWS  
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**Affordable Family Festival Delivers at 2009 Emerald Queen Casino Taste of  
Tacoma®**

The Emerald Queen Casino Taste of Tacoma® held this past weekend in Point Defiance Park attracted over 250,000 people and delivered affordable family fun during difficult economic times.

Attendees were on the look-out for ways to save money this year and the Taste provided plenty of opportunities. Each restaurant featured a \$3 Taste item, making it easy for crowds to taste more for less. The Taste It! Discount Meal Tickets also were a popular choice, and sold out on Saturday, a new record. There were five free music stages, as well as the Bacardi Comedy Club which drew large crowds and loud laughs. More families also took advantage of the Family Pak Funtastic Carnival Discount Coupon, and the carnival was busy all weekend. The Taste continues to be free to the community because of sponsors such as Emerald Queen Casino, which has been a sponsor of the event for 11 years.

The large crowds devoured delicious food from 31 different restaurants and a variety of specialty foods and treats. The event showcased diverse cuisines such as Greek, American, Indian and much more. Tacoma's favorite restaurants were in attendance along with some new eateries that made their Taste debut. New participant Half Moon Bay Bar and Grille received the First Place Entrée award for their crab cake.

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Second place went to Fajita Express for a Taco Salad and Curry House's Shawarma Steak Sandwich took third. Judges awarded Best Barbecue to Famous Dave's Legendary Pit Bar-B-Que yet again after sampling their Pulled Pork Sandwich. Southern Kitchen was also a repeat winner in the Best Dessert Category for a Peach Cobbler. The award for Best Booth went to a new contender, Samurai's Japanese Steakhouse, who attracted large crowds with their booth as well as elaborate costumes and cooking demonstrations.

Visitors took advantage of the Pierce Transit Taste Express, which brought an estimated 16,200 guests to and from the park and TCC for only \$3.50 round trip.

The always-popular *Wine & Roses* event in the Rose Garden successfully showcased eleven wineries in support of the Greater Metro Parks Foundation. The Foundation raised approximately \$25,000 to go towards scholarship and recreation enhancement. Guests enjoyed a total of 115 cases of wine over the course of the weekend.

Hundreds of attendees utilized the surcharge free BECU ATM's to load up their pockets for a day of indulgence. Thousands of hands of Black Jack were dealt over the weekend to Taste goers trying their luck at the Emerald Queen Casino booth, and everyone left with a prize! 50,000 samples of Sabra Hummus were consumed and 20,000 people went through the Burt's Bees booth to sample many of the products in the line. The warm weather kept the beer gardens full and thirsty guests went through over 100 kegs of beer from Coors Brewing. Guests also quenched their thirst with delicious flavors from Jones Soda, a local favorite and the newest addition to the Taste of Tacoma®. The Curtis High School Naval Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps consumed 120 cases of

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water during the weekend while vigorously running the event parking lot and picking up trash. Fun was had by all at the Taste, the Geico Gecko was even seen eating corn on the cob near the Meadow entertainment stage Sunday.

The Emerald Queen Casino Taste of Tacoma® proved to have something for everyone, including opportunities for savings for the 24<sup>th</sup> year.

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