



# The Sierra Madre Chamber of Commerce Wistaria Festival 2009

## Sierra Madre Celebrates Annual Wistaria Festival

### ***Thousands come to visit the annual festival celebrating this breathtaking vine!***

The Guinness Book of World Records has named the Vine as the World's largest flowering plant. It is estimated that at the height of bloom it has 1.5 million blossoms with 40 blossoms per square foot, a weight of 250 tons and has branches that extend 500 feet. In 1918, 12,000 people attended the first public Wistaria Festival. In the 1930s, a 6-week Wistaria event took place, with more than 100,000 people making the trip to see the vine. Extra "Red Cars" were put on the Pacific Electric route to Sierra Madre to handle the crowds. In recent years, the crowd has been estimated at 10,000 people, and in 2007, one young resident chose it as the very special location at which he and his girlfriend became engaged to be married.

### ***Extraordinary Art, Fine Crafts and Vendors***

Each year, crowds estimated at up to 10,000 people visit Sierra Madre to enjoy the work of nearly 150 juried artisans and craftsmen, dynamite music, fabulous food and drink, and a variety of fun for the whole family. Sierra Madre's Wistaria Festival has a well-earned reputation as a world-class event. Stroll through Kersting Court, up Baldwin Ave. and across Sierra Madre Blvd, as the charming village downtown area becomes an Art Faire where festival-goers will find hundreds of hand crafted items by the very best artists and craft makers while browsing among 150 booths featuring original work in clothing, jewelry, paintings, wood objects, fiber arts, garden art and other gift items.

### ***Dynamite Live Music***

Two dozen musical acts at six outdoor venues will play jazz, blues, bluegrass, classical, Celtic and rock - a wide ranging musical mix on stage and street. Mario Lalli of Café 322 has pulled together an entertainment lineup for the downtown area that ranges from solo acoustic guitar and vocals, to a four piece classic rock band augmented by a full horn section. At the vine, the more tranquil musical selections will include classical guitar, cello and guitar, and the harp.

### ***Fabulous Food and Drink***

Sierra Madre is blessed with a wonderful selection of restaurants featuring outdoor dining, including a variety of international flavors, Mexican, Italian, Thai, and California Continental cuisines, complemented by several types of American cuisine and even a Sushi spot. During the festival, you'll find several food vendors in the park, including delicious BBQ, corn on the cob, empanadas, kettle corn and more. There's a local pub, restaurants with full cocktail service, beer and wine establishments, and delicious margaritas to satisfy your mood.

### ***Local Non-Profits***

The Rotary Club will be serving tri-tip, the Garden Club will sell plants, the four years in a row award-winning Rose Float Assn. will be on hand, the world famous Sierra Madre Search and Rescue Team will have a display, and other local organizations will be on hand, to showcase all that the volunteers of these organizations do. A special fundraiser will take place for the world famous Sierra Madre Search and Rescue Team, as the DoubleTree Hotel, Monrovia, the official host hotel of the Wistaria Festival, will have a booth selling their iconic "chocolate chip cookies" with proceeds being donated to the Search and Rescue Team.