



## Taste Mac | News Release

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### McMinnville, Oregon launches the Taste Mac campaign

## 34 spots for food, 17 places to sip, and 7 sites to choose a brew beckon visitors.

Where? In just 14 blocks in the small town (pop. 33,000) of McMinnville, Oregon. Centered in Oregon's wine country and mid-drive between Portland and the Oregon Coast, McMinnville has quietly been building a reputation, and plenty of fans, for its charming and strollable Third Street, eclectic choices of acclaimed restaurants and concentration of Oregon's famed pinot producers. The downtown has now created the "Taste Mac" campaign to promote the exceptional wine and culinary experience.

Already home to the IPNC, the International Pinot Noir Celebration, that draws eager tasters and sippers from around the globe to wine and dine in outdoor splendor in Linfield College's oak grove each July, the town also claims new brewers making a name for themselves. Nick's Italian Café, honored by *Saveur* magazine and boasting a James Beard 'America's Classics' award has anchored the downtown dining scene since 1977.

### A dining destination, epicenter of wine

In just the last decade, what were a few excellent dining choices have now blossomed into what Grant Butler of *the Oregonian* calls "the most interesting cross-section of restaurants in the state." Another writer commented, "Surrounded by rolling hills and known for its fine pinot noir, McMinnville is emerging with a new identity: a dining destination for the farm-to-table set."

When writing about the commitment of local chefs to using local, fresh ingredients, Emily Grosvenor on Zester Daily offered, "What we're discovering as each year passes is a small-town food scene rising to the demands of an international wine public but still keeping the flavors, ingredients and traditions of this place alive."

2015 recognizes the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the planting of the first pinot noir vines in Oregon. Eyrie Vineyards, founded by "Papa Pinot," David Lett, in 1965, offers their acclaimed wines from their



McMinnville tasting room. His son, Jason Lett, now makes the famed Oregon pinot noir. Eyrie anchors what is now known as “the Pinot Quarter,” tucked behind the Granary District just off 5<sup>th</sup> Street.

## McMinnville’s national recognition

McMinnville has also received national recognition as the runner-up in *Parade Magazine’s* “Best Main Street” contest held during the summer of 2014. The town now claims the title “the Best Main Street in the West” and continues to receive accolades from national publications—*Sunset* magazine included Mac as one of “20 ultimate fantasy towns” and *Bon Appetit* added McMinnville to its list of America’s “foodiest” towns. People are sharing the story and arrive daily to stroll, sip, taste and enjoy the tree-lined, historic, flower-basket strewn Third Street.

McMinnville’s city leaders recognized the allure of the town’s burgeoning wine and food scene and, in 2014, granted a portion of the new Transit Lodging Tax to the McMinnville Downtown Association to create a wine and culinary tourism campaign. Although this tax has long funded tourism in many other communities in Oregon, the tax was only instituted in McMinnville in January, 2014.

## The Taste Mac campaign for wine and culinary tourism

The wine and culinary campaign is named “TasteMac” and, led by the downtown wineries group, the McMinnville Downtown Association and a local marketing firm, Creative Company, Inc., it launched quietly in March of 2015 with the introduction of a new website at [tastemac.com](http://tastemac.com). Every downtown food spot, wine or beer place has an individual listing which links from a photo of their sign on the dine, wine or brew page.

Beginning with a regional magazine advertising campaign to cover 2015; incorporating social media on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest and promoting under the hashtags #tastemac, #winemac, #dinemac, #brewmac and #strollmac; and placing online AdWords are all strategies implemented to drive interested visitors back to the mobile-friendly website.

The focus of the campaign is the impressive numbers highlighted in large blocks—34 unique restaurants, 17 wineries and tasting rooms and 7 breweries and tap rooms in 14 blocks. Ads and other printed materials use the color blocks to draw the eye and emphasize the compact collection of places to discover. Mixed in are photos of food, wine, eateries and the charming streetscape.

Locally posters will line the famed Third Street, coasters with the hashtags and website emblazoned on them and static clings in store and restaurant windows will remind locals and visitors of the 58 places they should try. Tasting rooms, restaurants, breweries, coffee shops and retailers along Third Street and in the Granary District and Pinot Quarter will all encourage visitors to use the [tastemac.com](http://tastemac.com) website to discover new spots for dining, wining and enjoying a brew or two.



The website includes a “stroll” page with a picture gallery of the downtown experience, as well as a compilation of the many reviews McMinnville has received. The site is designed to help travelers understand why they will want to stop in McMinnville on their way to the coast, make Mac a weekend destination, or even linger for a week. After all, it will take more than a day to sip, taste and see everything in McMinnville, Oregon’s Favorite Main Street.

As Terry Richard of *The Oregonian* noted, “How can a town of 33,000 have so many good restaurants in such a compact area? Simple. Tourists come from around the world to explore Oregon wine country, and McMinnville is the epicenter.”

The official public launch of the Taste Mac campaign, with the participants and community invited, will be held May 19 at the newly opened KAOS complex on the corner of Third Street and Galloway.