

# First-ever Tequila-Taco Festival a booming success

Events

By TARMO HANNULA  
OF THE REGISTER-PAJARONIAN

SANTA CRUZ — Thousands of people poured into the inaugural Tequila and Taco Music Festival in San Lorenzo Park Saturday. Put on by the producers of the California Beer Festival in Aptos, the one-day, six-and-a-half-hour sold-out event unfolded under partly cloudy skies alongside the tranquil San Lorenzo River.

The \$10 admission included entry into the festival and access to food vendors, craft beer booths, art vendors and three live bands.

The ticket included six half-ounce samples of tequila. Santa Cruz area taco vendors along with other styles of food were kept busy throughout the event. Proceeds benefit the Giammanco Foundation.

"We love the tacos and we've sampled some great tequila," said Ernie Vargas of San Jose. "We heard about the show through Groupon. My only complaint is that the lines are too long to get drinks and food."

Dave Aragon of Los Gatos said he "loved the fish tacos."

"This show is so worth it," he said. "There're great people here, good food and so many wonderful tequilas. I came with seven people including my wife, Karen. These people are doing this right. There are fresh tortillas, fresh limes and everything is spiced just right. One tequila I tried was aged just perfectly. I would come to this event again and again."

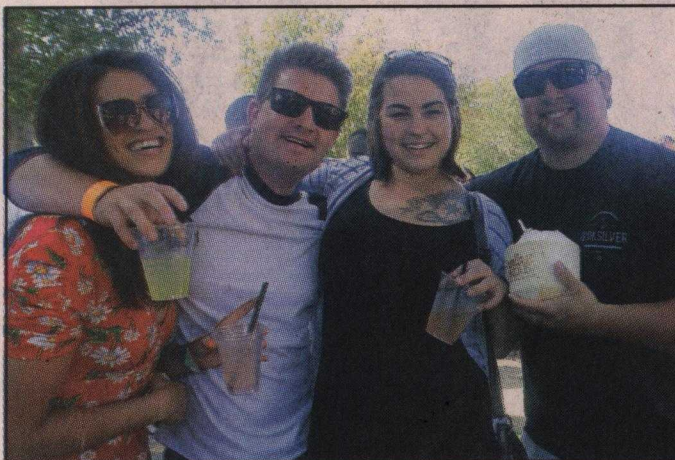
Other than being too crowded, Joe McGregor of Ireland said he was glad he came to the event.

"I came with three of my friends," McGregor said. "We're



Tarmo Hannula/Register-Pajaronian

**Veronica Ybarra and Ernie Vargas of San Jose prepare to enjoy their tacos and tequila beverages Saturday at the first Tequila and Taco Music Festival in Santa Cruz.**



Tarmo Hannula/Register-Pajaronian

**Morgan Anguiano (from left), Joe McGregor, Kiera Zion and Mark Napier enjoy their tequila-based drinks at the festival.**

having a good time. Good tequila, good company."

Vincenzo Giammanco is the producer of the event.

"Just like craft beer, tequila is on the rise, and there's all these micro-craft tequila companies popping up," Giammanco said. "So we wanted to create a festival in which to showcase tequila. And who doesn't like tacos? Tequila, margaritas, and tacos — a great combination."