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Discover Peoria Announces the Hispanic-Owned Peoria Project

The project highlights 24 Hispanic-owned businesses around the Peoria region and its impact on the community

Peoria, IL- Discover Peoria (the Peoria Area Convention and Visitors Bureau) is excited to announce its new campaign, **Hispanic-Owned Peoria**. This campaign features 24 Hispanic-owned businesses located in the Peoria area that focus on tourism and/or the hospitality industry.

“Continuing off the momentum of Black-Owned Peoria, we knew there was a great opportunity to tap into a community that has so much vibrancy embedded in our area,” said **J.D. Dalfonso, President/CEO of Discover Peoria**. “Showcasing these 24 Hispanic-owned businesses is another way we’re continuing to improve and show off the quality of life we have in our community.”

“Honoring the traditions of their culture and hard work are key points for every business owner we are featuring in Hispanic-Owned Peoria,” said **Alicia Calderon, Community Engagement Coordinator of Discover Peoria**. “Growing up rooted in the Hispanic community, I have a first-hand knowledge of how beautiful and important traditions are to us.”

“Our region’s diversity is a strength that should be showcased for visitors to learn about, residents to be reminded of and all to experience,” said **Dalfonso**. “The Hispanic-owned hospitality businesses have already received increased sales because of their partnership with Discover Peoria.”

“I knew going into this project that it was going to be fun but I had no idea how inspiring it would be to see how all these different Hispanic countries come together in the Peoria area to make one beautiful community,” said **Calderon**. “There is so much diversity within the Hispanic community here in central Illinois, we have families from El Salvador, Colombia, Puerto Rico and so many others.”

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According to the 2020 Census, the Hispanic population makes up 6.3% of the City of Peoria's population. While the Hispanic community makes up a small percentage of the City of Peoria's, and our area's population, their impact is large and is felt throughout the region.

The 24 Hispanic-owned and tourism-related businesses consist of:

- **8A's Auto Sales and Full Service:** Sells and provides full services for used vehicles, owned by Pedro Ochoa.
- **Anay's Salon:** Family-owned and operated, Anay's provides haircare and cosmetology that can cater specifically to the Spanish-speaking community, owned by Elena Concileon.
- **Blue Margaritas Bar & Grill - Peoria & Washington:** Features fresh and authentic Mexican food inspired from the coowner's childhoods, co-owned by Esteban Pascual and Ricardo Martinez.
- **Cafe Santa Rosa:** Prides itself on controlling every step of its coffee supply chain, from farm to cup based on the coffee shop they once owned in Colombia, co-owned by Heber and Marta Vidal.
- **Casa de Arte:** Features a delicious menu with great vegetarian and vegan options the restaurant also acts as a rotating gallery for local artists, co-owned by Cesar and Karla Vargas.
- **Catrinas Express:** Provides great quality Mexican food on the go and features original recipes found in Hidalgo, Mexico where the Alarcon family is from, owned by Antonio Alarcon.
- **El Molcajete:** Features fresh and authentic Mexican food inspired by co-owners Esteban Pascual and Ricardo Martinez's childhoods.
- **El Taco Loco:** Features authentic Mexican food while supporting local farmers and using the freshest ingredients possible, owned by Gilberto Fuentes.
- **Good Tequilas Mexican Grill - Peoria, Pekin & Bartonville:** With three restaurants in the Peoria Area, Good Tequilas prides itself on not only the quality of food it produces but making sure its customers enjoy every experience, co-owned by Juan Barragan and Liliana Macias.
- **Hacienda El Mirador:** Features traditional and seasonal dishes with an atmosphere that is friendly and welcoming in Junction City, owned by Julia Salvatierra Roca.

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- **Jalapeños:** Features a newly renovated bar and traditional Mexican food served up fresh daily, co-owned by Jose and Nora Leon.
- **La Hacienda:** Features authentic Mexican food while supporting local farmers and using the freshest ingredients possible, owned by Gilberto Fuentes.
- **Miranda's Bella Boutique:** Opened in August 2021 after realizing the Peoria area was missing a store that supplied necessities for traditional Hispanic celebrations, owned by Maria del Rosario Miranda.
- **Panaderia Ortiz:** Features delicious Mexican pastries and also includes a full lunch menu and special events catering, co-owned by Benardo and Maria Ortiz.
- **Rising Tide Station:** Features gear and apparel for outdoor enthusiasts and merchandise that rotates seasonally, owned by Rogelio Retugin.
- **Rudy's Mexican Cantina & Grill:** With the support of the central Illinois community, Rudy's was able to keep its doors open after opening in January 2020 and now is serving up popular and traditional Mexican dishes, co-owned by Rodolfo and Leonora Guzman.
- **SimplyFit 4U:** Focuses on helping their clients expand their knowledge on how to live a healthy lifestyle while enjoying delicious meals, co-owned by Angel and Maria Caballero.
- **Succulent Natural Skincare:** Focuses on a beauty line that is made with simple formulations with minimal ingredients, owned by Xochitl Stafford.
- **Tequila's Mexican Bar & Grill:** Located in the Levee District, Tequila's features traditional recipes from Guadalajara, Mexico, owned by Hector Munoz.
- **Yeni's Palarte:** Hispanic-owned and Black-owned, Yeni's Palarte features unique flavors of ice cream that combine traditional Mexican and American flavors, co-owned by Yeni Rodriguez and Chris McCall.

As Discover Peoria continues to highlight and celebrate central Illinois' diversity after launching Black-Owned Peoria in October 2020, Discover Peoria has created a featured section on its website dedicated to the Hispanic-Owned Peoria campaign. The website features four in-depth interviews plus photos and business listings for the 20 other businesses and can be viewed at discoverpeoria.com/hispanic-owned-peoria.

The Hispanic-Owned Peoria campaign was headed by Discover Peoria's Community Engagement Coordinator, Alicia Calderon and all photographs and videos featured within the campaign were taken by Discover Peoria's Digital and Social Content Coordinator, Michael Phillips.

The campaign will continue indefinitely, with highlighted elements taking place throughout 2021-2022 to help bring awareness to Hispanic-Owned Peoria throughout the year. If you know of other Hispanic-owned businesses in the Peoria area who might be interested in joining Hispanic-Owned Peoria, please contact info@peoria.org.

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