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Contact: Doug LaPlaca, Bend VCB, 541-382-8048, doug@visitbend.com
Justin Yax, DVA Advertising/PR, 541-389-2411, justin@dvaadv.com

VISIT BEND LAUNCHES CULTURAL TOURISM INITIATIVE

Arts organizations throughout community invited to participate in raising awareness of Bend's arts & cultural assets among travelers

(BEND, Ore.)—In an effort to diversify the visitor type and seasonality of its current tourist profile, Visit Bend has launched a new cultural tourism initiative intended to raise awareness of Bend's arts and cultural assets among travelers.

"As Bend's reputation as an outdoor recreation destination continues to grow, Visit Bend's strategy is to use this reputation as a platform through which to introduce visitors to the arts, entertainment and cultural tourism assets of our community," said Doug LaPlaca, President and CEO of Visit Bend. "We have spent the better part of a year working with partners in the arts community to identify and inventory these assets, and this initiative is a result of the efforts of these groups."

In conjunction with the cultural tourism initiative, Visit Bend has launched a comprehensive arts & culture web portal at www.visitbend.com/arts, and created a logo for the program to help visually identify the area's cultural tourism opportunities. Arts organizations throughout the community have been invited to participate in Visit Bend's cultural tourism efforts and will serve an advisory role on content development on the website and identification of appropriate marketing programs and events.

“Bend has a rich and vibrant arts and cultural community that merits greater exposure to locals and visitors alike,” said Amy Reynolds, Board Chair for Visit Bend, and General Manager for the two Marriott hotels in Bend. “We’re excited to be working with Bend’s arts organizations to bring more attention to our cultural tourism attractions and help bring more visitors to our area.”

Visit Bend has a history of promoting many of Bend’s anchor cultural events such as BendFilm, the Nature of Words, the Cascade Festival of Music and the summer concert series at the Les Schwab Amphitheater.

According to the Travel Industry Association of America, 30 percent of adult travelers say that a specific arts, cultural or heritage event or activity influenced their choice of destination, and many travelers extend their stay because of a specific arts, cultural or heritage event or activity.

As part of its on-going efforts, Visit Bend’s direct sales program, which attracts new groups, conferences and events to the area, will identify and pursue arts oriented groups to bring to the City, and will also incorporate arts and cultural activities into existing groups and conferences. As an example, Visit Bend is working with the local arts community to plan a bike art exhibit and independent film screenings in conjunction with the USA Cycling Cyclocross National Championships in December.

About Visit Bend:

Visit Bend is a non-membership, non-profit economic development organization dedicated to promoting tourism on behalf of the City of Bend. For more information or to order a complimentary Official Visitor’s Guide to Bend, contact Visit Bend at 800-949-6086 or visit www.visitbend.com.

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