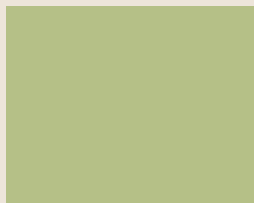
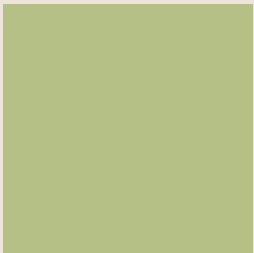


MAKING MARKET MEMORIES

A fun way to get your fresh foods and a taste of Palo Alto culture



Wood stands line the street, teeming with colorful vegetables, mouth watering fruits, delicate flowers, homemade breads and buttery cheeses. Arriving at the farmers' market feels like a step back in time. Bored of the average Trader Joe's fare? Take a trip to a local farmers' market.

Cate Dyer, a senior at Paly, frequented the California Avenue farmers' market as a kid and now works at the Far West Fungi stand. "I enjoy going to the market because of the fun, inclusive community [but also for the] variety of fresh foods," Dyer said.

One of her favorite parts of working at the farmers' market is the unique people she meets on the job. "A deaf couple came to the stand and they were signing," Dyer said. "I've been taking

ASL for four years and I was able to sign with them and communicate what they wanted to buy and how much it would be."

Dyer is not alone in creating connections with her community through the market. Charlotte O'Dell, staff

"I consider all of these vendors and my customers to be like my family. We all trade together and check in on each other."

Charlotte O'Dell

member at the Santa Cruz Pasta Factory, has developed strong relationships by working at the stand.

The vendors arrive several hours before the market opens, often before sunrise. They spend time chatting, making friends and trading amongst themselves. "I consider all of these vendors and my customers to be like my family," O'Dell said. "We all trade together and check in on each other."

For Susie Makino, parent of a Paly

junior and staff member at the Sun Smiling Valley Farm, the farmers' market is a place to take a break from busy day-to-day life. "The farmers' market is not just a place where you can get groceries, but a community where you can converse with different people and breathe in fresh air as you find colorful vegetables and take in positive energy," Makino said.

The market is worth a visit just for its exciting and vibrant atmosphere. From the live music playing in the center of the market to the streets buzzing with happy chatter, there is no doubt the market is appreciated by the community.

Besides helping the planet, small businesses and your body, shopping at farmers' markets allows for exploration and experimentation. "When I go to the farmer's market, there are various fruits and vegetables that I don't usually see at the supermarket," Makino said. "It's nice because I can find new ones and try them out."

The farmers' market also has real people who nurtured the bounty and are its proud purveyors. The variety of food is mesmerizing. After all, where else can you find 18 different types of mushrooms?

"What makes the farmers' market special is the diversity in shops and

how much our customers love us," Dyer said. "Every week, we have people bring us fresh baked goods that they made for us, along with produce from their stands. We know lots of our customers very well, as they come every week to get mushrooms."

Dyer always makes sure to greet customers with the farmers' market warmth. "There's a little old lady that comes every week and gets super excited to see us," Dyer said. "We talk with her about school and life and she asks about all of the special mushrooms we have that week."

Bustling with shoppers, the farmers' market is always bound to provide something unexpected. "A kid dressed in a full grim reaper costume, including a weapon, fake blood, a cloak and a mask," Dyer said. "[The kid] came up to our stand and asked for a bag of portobello mushrooms. After he bought them, he took off his mask, reached into the bag, and started eating the whole mushroom raw. His dad took pictures. He looked very happy."

Market moments are what keep customers coming back each Sunday. It doesn't get much better than picking up your morning coffee along with a fresh baguette and bumping into the grim reaper eating a portobello mushroom.

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Susie Makino



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