

ROGUE VALLEY CULINARY & AGRITOURISM STUDIO – DAY 1

PHOENIX, OR | OCTOBER 23, 2019

Attendees:

- Don Anway, Neuman Hotel Group
- Cate Battles, Travel Grants Pass
- Jon Bowen, Experience Grants Pass
- Katharine Cato, Travel Ashland
- Karen Contreras, Rock Creek Ranch
- Melynda Cordes, The Hungry Hustle
- Irina Cullen, Neuman Hotel Group
- Josias Escobedo, Travel Southern Oregon
- Jon Gailis, Jacksonville Chamber
- Bob Hackett, Travel Southern Oregon
- Gabrielle Hahn, Wooldridge Creek Vinfarm
- Steph Hendrickson, Central Point Chamber
- Elise Higley, Oshala Farm
- Karolina Lavagnino, Neuman Hotel Group
- Momone Maley, ACCESS
- Marguerite Merritt, Rogue Creamery
- Josie Molloy, Grants Pass & Josephine County Chamber
- Amanda Moreira, Jacksonville Chamber
- Kristy Painter, Travel Medford
- Maud Powell, Oregon State University Extension
- Ariel Prescott, Weisinger Family Winery
- Halle Riddlebarger, Medford Food Co-op
- Alison Sexauer, Rogue Valley Food System Network
- Nick Stevenson, Dunbar Farms
- Johanna Talley, Rogue Valley Growers & Crafters Market
- Courtney Toll, Neuman Hotel Group
- Tom Van Voorhees, Rogue Creamery Cheese Shop
- Krista Vegter, Uproot Meats LLC
- Tracy Kaiser, Ashland Food Co-op
- Josh LeBombard, DLCD
- Alex Turner, Pioneer Whisky
- Niki Brown, Discover Siskiyou
- Jenn Chaffee, Fort Vannoy Farms
- Jill Higgins, Pioneer Whisky
- Marshall Doak, SBDC - SOU
- Kristina Alvarez, Hummingbird Winery

Staff:

- Alexa Carey, Travel Oregon
- Bri Matthews, Travel Oregon
- Kayla Dunn, Travel Oregon
- Scott Bricker, Travel Oregon
- Hilary Sager, Travel Oregon
- Erika Polmar, Plate & Pitchfork

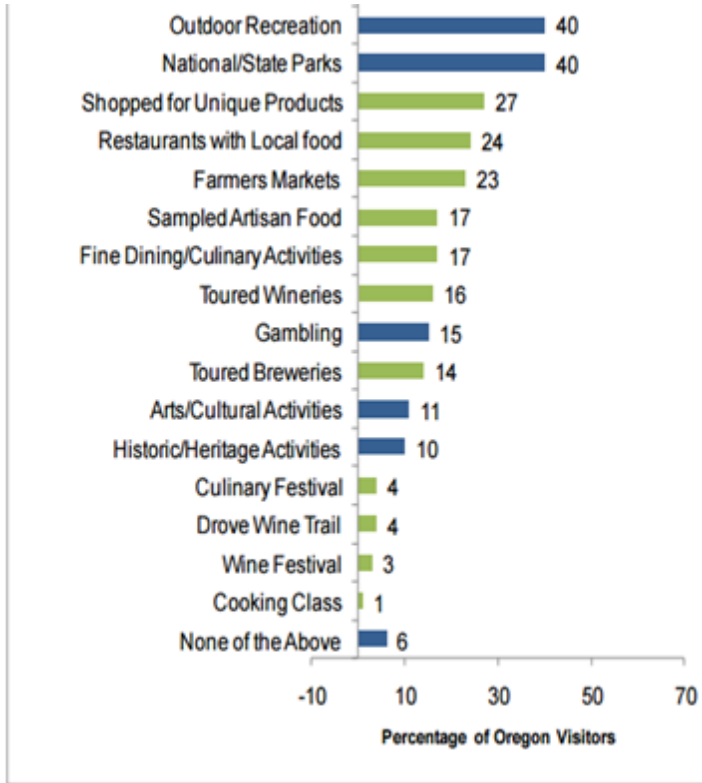
DEFINING CULINARY & AGRITOURISM AND VISITORS

- Market Trends & Visitor Demographics on Culinary & Agritourism
 - 60% of American leisure travelers are interested in taking a trip to engage in culinary activities within the next 12 months (According to TIA of America)
 - Nationally, nearly a third of travelers specifically pick vacation destinations based on food and drink-related activities
 - Oregon - More than half (55%) of visitors during 2008-2010 (55%) participated in at least one culinary activity. Much higher than national average of 17% only 2 years earlier
 - Colorado - Nearly 75% of Colorado visitors include an agricultural, food, or heritage activity on trip; Of those, a third are specifically coming for agritourism

- Travel Oregon defines a visitor as anyone who travels more than 50 miles or stays overnight in a destination.

- Visitor Characteristics:
 - Agritourism:
 - Families
 - Few with teenagers
 - Moderate income
 - Highly educated
 - More day trippers
 - Culinary tourism:
 - Similar profile to outdoor recreation market
 - DINKs (dual-income, no kids) and SINKs (single-income, no kids)
 - Age 35-64
 - Higher than average income and education
 - Similar to cultural heritage travelers; more likely to try many activities

FOOD & DRINK EXPERIENCES ARE AN ESSENTIAL PART OF THE "OREGON" ITINERARY



Source: Susan Cook Consulting, LLC, 2011

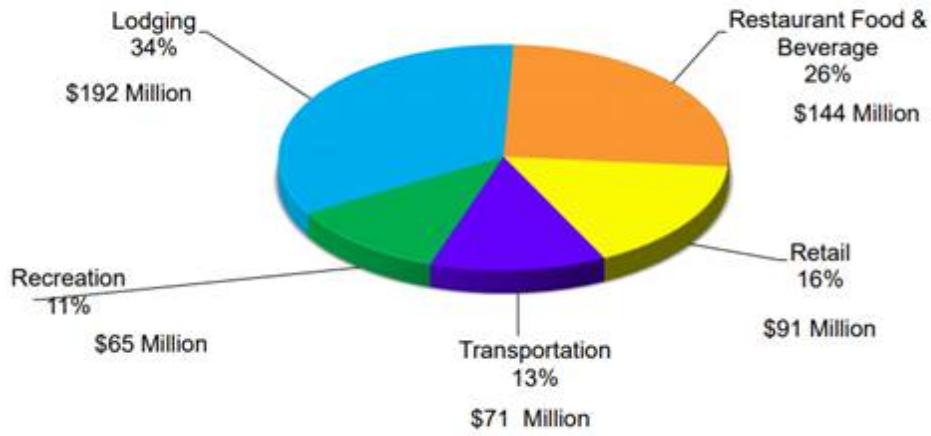
OREGON TRAVELERS BECOME ADVOCATES

- 60% bring Oregon products home
- 30% purchase Oregon products several times after returning home
- 43% report they are more likely to purchase Oregon products after returning home
 - Source: Suzanne Cook Consulting. 2011: Oregon's Bounty, Visitor Behavior and Attitudes Related to Oregon Products

SOUTHERN OREGON VISITORS

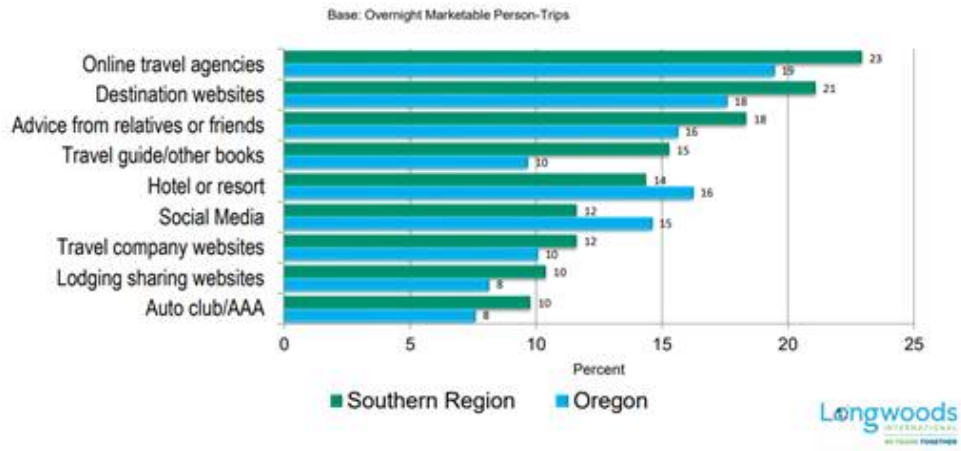
- Of the 4 million total overnight trips to the Southern Oregon region:
 - 48% are for business-leisure
 - 43% are for visiting friends/relatives
 - 9% are for business
- The average number of nights spent in Southern Oregon is 2.8

2017 Southern Region Spending = \$563 Million



- Of the overnight marketable person trips to the region:
 - 35% of visitors are originating from Oregon
 - 32% from California
 - 6% from Washington
 - Remainder come from other states; many from New York, Texas and Virginia
- Visitors to Southern Oregon who explore other regions of Oregon are also likely to visit Oregon Coast and Central Oregon
- Trip planning information sources commonly used by visitors coming to Southern Oregon include:
 - Online travel agencies (23%)
 - Destination based websites (21%)
 - Advice from relatives/friends (18%)
 - Travel/guidebooks (15%)
 - Hotel or resorts (12%)

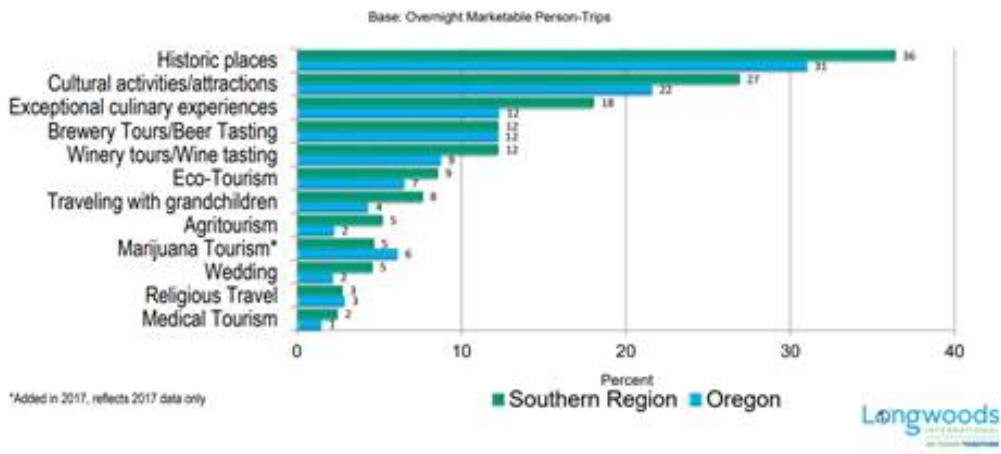
Trip Planning Information Sources



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- Activities of Special Interest
 - Southern Oregon has a higher percentage of visitors engaging in historic places, cultural activities/attractions, and exceptional culinary experiences, winery tours/wine tasting and agritourism compared to the state average

Activities of Special Interest



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For additional information, please see: [Southern Oregon Overnight Travel Study: 2017](#) from Longwoods International

ACTIVITY:

- Who are the visitors you see coming to the Rogue Valley?
- What does your target market look like to you? How might they learn about the food trail?

- **OUTSIDE VISITORS:**
 - Values align with the business they visit
 - Technology influenced, local disconnect
 - Middle class, educated, affluent, frequent use of social media
 - Discoverers of an experience or place; a thrill of finding a diamond in the rough
 - Likes multiple varied experience types
 - Curiosity, sense of adventure, willingness to create their own itinerary
 - Willing to pay a premium for experience or high quality
 - Already interested and connected to the outdoor recreation

- **LOCAL VISITORS**
 - Families or retired folks who are not time restricted
 - Specific about where and how they shop; they want to develop a relationship and be a repeat customer
 - They do not want a cookie cutter, chain experience – local pride focus, connectivity to the land and the area, existing personal relationships
 - "Moms will save farms" (Josias comment)
 - Could be the same type of visitors; local and outside visitors; they have similar levels of money, education, and interest
 - Looking for a hands-on, interactive experience – become intimately familiar with a process/business/
 - Programs to increase access to farms for ALL members of the community
 - Sense of adventure, willing to forge their own path to find experiences
 - Define the "hook" of what brings people into certain communities or experiences (OSF, Crater Lake) – how can we leverage that to bring them to other experiences
 - 2. How does this visitor engage with experiences in the area?
 - Tech is an important factor to getting the word out about opportunities (Yelp, TripAdvisor, etc.) – media
 - I-5 travelers
 - Wayfinding: how do we communicate the geography and accessibility of places – bring people into businesses by letting them know how and where to find a business or community. It can be signage, it can be a map, it can be
 - Word of mouth – local businesses and community members talking amongst each other about recommendations or availability of resources,

- businesses – bartenders, grocery store, hairdresser, Facebook groups, car clubs/conventions
- o Spirit of collaboration versus competition (the Oregonian way!)
- o Tour operators
- o Car clubs
- o PR efforts of local businesses

BEYOND THE TOURISM FUNNEL – CONNECTING TO YOUR REGIONAL DESTINATION MARKETING ORGANIZATION (RDMO) AND TRAVEL OREGON

Scott Bricker –Travel Oregon, Destination Development

Bob Hackett – Travel Southern Oregon

- TSO is the Regional Destination Marketing organization contracted under TO for Southern Oregon
 - o TSO serves as regional entity to enact TO's strategic plan here at the local level
 - o TSO develops a two-year strategic plan in collaboration with TO
- Travel Oregon provides guidance and consulting to regional partners to meet goals of strategic plan and development needs in each region
- Bob connects to local industries to provide support and direction on how to leverage and harness the economic and cultural value of tourism
 - o Arts and culture, wine & culinary, outdoor rec – these are primary drivers of tourism in Southern Oregon
 - o The differentiating factor between here and Bend area/Central Oregon is our wine & culinary opportunities – farms, producers, working landscapes
- Funded directly through the Transient Lodging Tax (TLT)
 - o Also known as the "heads in beds" tax
 - o Each room night generates a 1.8% tax revenue

AUDIENCE QUESTIONS

- Q: What is a path to engage with existing PR efforts around the state?
 - o A: TSO lucky to have very strong connections with our local DMOs in this region; we funnel info from those connections up to Travel Oregon, which elevates into the national & international PR machine through TO. We can't afford to buy the amount of PR that is generated toward Southern Oregon by way of TO.
 - Kudos to the many local operators and businesses that respond when Travel Oregon/TSO sends travel trade/media into the region. The best way to support the PR efforts is to help host these folks

when they visit- let TSO know of any prohibitive cost factors in these circumstances; perhaps we can help alleviate that.

- Q: What's being done at the state level to help promote our region? Social media, programming, etc.?
 - A: Scott: 70% of TO budget goes toward statewide programming, incl large scale marketing campaigns. We leverage these campaigns into targeted marketing to markets outside of Oregon to help elevate our message and communities to hear about all 7 regions of Oregon.
 - The other 30% of our budget goes directly to local communities – 10% to grant funding, 20% to regional programs, split based on TLT generation.

- Q: Since you're entirely funded by TLT, have you been negatively impacted by AirBnB operations?
 - A: TLT is also gathered by Airbnb operators, campgrounds, and a variety of lodging properties, so we gain funding from those overnights as well
 - Important to note that Travel Oregon's goal is not always to increase TLT revenue
 - Some regions market other destinations in an effort to distribute the impact of high-use visitation
 - For example: coast in summer, Multnomah falls, etc.

- Q: Who provides the final say on which businesses are included on the food trail in our region?
 - A: Travel Oregon will offer guidance and recommendations on how to design a highly effective food trail; businesses will be selected by an action team that works on the trail in the months after this studio
 - Generally advise around 50 businesses with 3 themes
 - This will be covered in depth tomorrow

MEET YOUR LOCAL DESTINATION MARKETING ORGANIZATIONS (DMOs)

- Katherine Cato – Ashland Chamber of Commerce
 - Outdoors, culinary and heritage key elements of marketing
 - Ashland culinary festival – an example of what they do
 - Tourism is the front door to their economy
 - Think: Oregon Shakespeare Festival
 - Membership-based, but open to working with the industry as a whole
 - Tell the story and want to help YOU/Businesses tell their story

- John Gallis – Jacksonville Chamber
 - Visitor information center – how you can plug-in
 - Put on events (holiday-themed, tie in with Brit Festival)

- Reach them through their website
- Cate Battles -- Travel Grants Pass
 - Events (Art along the Road, Back to the 50s...)
 - Focus on outdoor recreation and wine (Applegate Wine Trail)
 - Welcome Center
- Kristy Painter –Travel Medford
 - Less event-based; we support others' events and efforts
 - Best way to connect for resources is through our website
- Steph Hendrickson – Central Point Chamber of Commerce
 - Very involved with local small businesses
 - Hosts many events in the city
 - Looking forward to collaborating on regional efforts instead of community-specific

BUSINESS RESOURCE PANEL

- Maud Powell – OSU Extension, Small Farms Program
 - OSU Workshops on how to market yourself and develop a business plan, gain visitors
 - A lot of programming emphasizes how important the visitor economy and distribution is to the success of farms – a lot of our work is heavy on business planning
 - Production planning (how much resource does it take to produce xx pounds of cucumbers) – how to plan for success and forecast resource needs
 - Soil types, soil mapping across the county; what grows well in these conditions
 - Researching water rights
 - Online business class available; growing farms
- Marshall Doak –Small Business Development Center, Southern Oregon University
 - SBDC is nested within the college system
 - Three primary things that we do:
 - 1. Connect you to resources; bring awareness to who and what is available to local, regional, and statewide
 - We connect you to government resources, such as government contracting i.e. Oregon prison system
 - 2. Education series
 - orientation with new businesses
 - how to operate and engage in the business world of Oregon

- Structural development and strategic planning; quarterly workshops with technical instructors
 - 3. Small business management program
 - nuts and bolts of running a business; regulation, management, finance,
 - SBDC nationwide network exists to help provide resiliency to small businesses to ensure elements are in place for success
 - Funding comes from federal government and state of Oregon
 - Additional funding from local universities
 - Do not charge for our consultant services
 - We work with businesses directly, one on one consulting
 - Market Research Institute
- Alex Campbell - Regional Solutions
 - Works for Governor's office but based in Medford
 - Works in conjunction with many statewide agencies
 - Oregon Solutions
 - Business Oregon (great source of capital for small businesses)
 - SBDC
 - Lots of work on tricky regulatory issues -often long-term projects
 - Interested in supporting the product development aspect of tourism
 - Help work through regulatory issues
 - When you are unable to get a direct answer or solution from offices, I encourage you to ask someone from the Governor's office to visit your site and learn about issue first-hand
 - In the same way that OSU works specially with farms + SBDC works specially with small business; RS is a resource for things outside those categories

AUDIENCE QUESTIONS

- Q: As a farm, where is the best place for me to start to grow my business?
 - A: Its difficult to access traditional bank finance systems for agriculture operations, which is why there are alternative funding options out there
 - Private lenders can help work around some of the constraints that come with traditional commercial lenders; f you are looking for equity, folks at the SBDC can
 - Typically looking for a business with some sort of intellectual property; looking to invest in opportunities that have the potential to go somewhere big and be successful

- Grant funding may be available – USDA (i.e. value-added producer grant), Travel Oregon, NW Farm Credit Services (often can provide small discount if you've gone through professional development training)
- There is a large support structure to help businesses to access funding, but you have to know where to look and put in the work
- Farming is especially tough in respect to equity; sometimes it's a matter of finding the right partnerships to help gain equity and make yourself more attractive to the banker to give you money
- Look for assets to add to your enterprise; be willing to prove that your operation will be able to generate revenue
- USDA has money to help empower young farmers; some niche grant funding exists
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- Q: Are you liable for injuries or occurrences that happen when you are promoting an event?
 - A: Under the Oregon Food Trail program, it is required that you check a box that confirms you have appropriate insurance to host visitors for your agritourism activity
 - Under Oregon law, required that you have specific liability/warning signage visible onsite
 - Text needs to be a specific size in order to be legal

LAND USE PLANNING OVERVIEW

Erika Polmar – Plate & Pitchfork & Travel Oregon Agritourism Policy Expert

- Exclusive Farm Use (EFU) law regulates activities allowed on land through land use zoning designation
 - In the seventies, this was established in higher numbers to protect Oregon landscapes from development
- There is no one size fits all solution
 - What works for EFU zoned land on a specific sized property will not be the same as the same use on another property
- Consulting with your local planners! They are a resource and an ally
- EFU land if you want to add another dwelling, you need to be generating a certain level of income. Under rural-residential designated zoning, you have more leeway to add more dwelling on your property. Its all very
- Your voices MATTER
 - Planning commissions listen to community needs
- Conditional use permitting – consider for events
- Never go to your planner on short notice

- o If you need a conditional use permit, this is a longer-term process that involves public engagement by the planning department and your neighbors.
- EFU generally applies to rural farm areas; does not cover rural-residential zoning
- By not complying with requirements of the law, we are therefore not advocating for the industry
 - o Through industry advocacy, we communicate to the policy powers that be that we need their support to create pathways for successful operation on EFU land
- Travel Oregon created the Oregon Agritourism Handbook to help guide your agritourism operation and meet regulations
 - o Found here: industry.traveloregon.com/aghandbook
- Technical Assistance for Agritourism Operators form
 - o Found here: <https://industry.traveloregon.com/opportunities/programs-initiatives/culinary-agritourism-development/agritourism-technical-assistance/>
 - o Submit this to Travel Oregon for technical support
 - Erika Polmar is contracted through Travel Oregon to provide one-on-one support for agritourism businesses

AUDIENCE QUESTION

- Q: I was contacted by a service called Tenter to build canvas tents on my property and I am unsure about the legalities
 - o A: Often these types of activities are only permissible under specific circumstances and require land use permits
 - o You could say yes to this opportunity; I suggest asking the organization if they provide permitting or insurance

WRAP UP - WHAT DID YOU LEARN TODAY?

- Potential barriers to collaboration:
 - o Competition
 - o City Limits
 - o Organizational capacity: this is a group of busy, busy folks
 - A lot of small businesses don't have the capacity to operate at a higher collaborative level
 - o Egos
 - Some organizations don't feel they should have to rely on others or want to that stand out as independent
 - o Siloed DMOs
 - Not collaborating whatsoever and operating in silos
- Lightbulb moments from today:

- Opportunities to collaborate across communities & DMOs
- Hosting FAM tours for locals
- Different avenues to distribute marketing materials and PR messaging; so many places like Airbnb, etc
- Rule following: you have to ask for what you need as an industry in order to move the needle and garner awareness of industry needs
- Lots of new connections in the room today; there can be a lot of turnover in this industry
- Hidden gems in the region:
 - Urban Cork & CABA Argentine Empanadas
 - Willow Witt
 - OSU Extension
 - Applegate Lavender Farm
 - Wooldridge – vineyard, winery, charcuterie, creamery
 - Farmhouse Treasures
 - Rogue Creamery grilled cheese
- Anchor experiences in the region:
 - Rogue Creamery
 - Harry & David
 - Oregon Wine Experience
 - Ma Mosa’s restaurant
 - Standing Stone
 - Britt Festival
 - Oregon Shakespeare Festival
 - Lillie Belle Farms
 - Red Lily Vineyards
 - Twisted Cork
 - Roberts