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**Saturday, October 14 (1pm – 4pm) “Bloom to Harvest” in Union Square Highlights the District’s New “Bites and Bar” Boom**

 **Bill Ortiz of Santana Fame Headlines Free Music Concert**

 **Food Trucks, Gallery Exhibits, Wine, Spirits, & Art Walk,
Pumpkin Give-Away and Inaugural “Bloomie Awards”
Round Out Family Friendly Celebration**

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2 October 2023 – San Francisco, CA: Welcome Autumn: the real San Francisco summer. This is the month when the weather heats up and arts, culture and culinary experiences take center stage, literally. On **Saturday, October 14 (1pm – 4pm),** Union Square ([www.visitunionsquaresf.com](http://www.visitunionsquaresf.com)) celebrates fall with **“Bloom to Harvest”**, an afternoon of free music by the legendary **Bill Ortiz**, in-the-square dancing, food trucks, bar hopping, wine-sipping and even a pumpkin giveaway. Additional music will be provided by the band **Rennea y Sus Amigos.**It’s a fitting grand finale to this year’s popular Union Square in Bloom campaign which brought over-the-top floral creations to area stores, restaurants and bars. Recognizing the “best” of those floral creations will be the inaugural **“Bloomie Awards”,** a public award ceremony, dedicated to honoring the exceptional businesses that participated in Bloom.

"Union Square represents the region’s cultural identity. Where the past and future of San Francisco come to celebrate life’s most wonderful moments,” explains **Marisa Rodriguez, CEO of Union Square Alliance**. “The ‘Union Square in Bloom’ initiative has not just beautified our beloved square but enriched it, turning every block into a blend of cultural, artistic, and culinary narratives.”

A blend of traditional and contemporary, the event is a showcase of the district's rich culinary scene, featuring iconic establishments like **John’s Grill** celebrating its 115th anniversary and welcoming new entrants, such as **Chotto Matte** and **Adriano Paganini’s Corzetti**. Add to that the news **Chef Tyler Florence’s** restaurant group, has been selected to revitalize two spaces within Union Square Plaza, and it’s clear that Union Square is in the midst of a “Bites and Bar Boom.” Chotto Matte, soon to be the largest restaurant in San Francisco with its rooftop overlooking the square , brings its acclaimed Nikkei Cuisine to the city, merging Japanese techniques with Peruvian flavors. Adriano Paganini’s Corzetti, inspired by the celebrated chef’s summers spent near Italy’s Ligurian Sea, brings yet another global flavor to the area’s already international culinary palette.

“Union Square continues to be a convergence point for culinary innovation and tradition,” says **Laurie Thomas, Executive Director of the Golden Gate Restaurant Association**. "The addition of these new culinary gems is a clear indication that Union Square is a living, breathing culinary canvas.”

In contrast, **John’s Grill**, with its 115-year legacy, stands as a testament to the enduring charm and culinary excellence that has defined San Francisco. This historic establishment, known for its impeccable steaks and seafood, is not just a restaurant but a narrative of the city’s evolving yet enduring allure. And, for history buffs, it’s where Dashiell Hammett’s legendary detective “Sam Spade” raised a glass or three.

“Tourism in San Francisco is a sensory experience and one inextricably tied to the City’s rich history, like the legacy of John’s Grill,” says **Alex Bastian, President and CEO of the Hotel Council of San Francisco**. “Many of our cities most famous and iconic hotels are in Union Square, so what goes on here is a living postcard that our visitors take home with them; a delicious menu that they savor here and remember forever.”

Just as important, however, as offerings for visitors, is what the new restaurants, and renewed optimism in Union Square mean to locals, and to local businesses. **Rodney Fong, President & CEO of the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce**, sees the combination of food, culture and street life as a pathway for economic revival.

“Every new restaurant, every event, it’s not just a celebration but a stride towards bolstering local businesses and ensuring that the entrepreneurial spirit of San Francisco continues to thrive,” says **Fong**. “It takes more than the worst pandemic in 102 years to keep San Francisco down. Union Square’s new vitality is a harbinger of this City’s economic recovery and renaissance.”

The program for “Bloom to Harvest” will feature an eclectic array of activities, including a Bar Garden, Food Truck, live performances, dancing, interactive games, family-friendly harvest festivities, an Art/Wine Walk and the first-ever Bloomies Awards. Renowned for his sweet, full-tone and clear, assertive attack, Ortiz has solidified his position as one of the most sought-after trumpet players in the vibrant Bay Area music scene for over four decades.

Complimentary pumpkins will be given away while supplies last. Participants will have a five-minute time limit to explore the pumpkin patch select a pumpkin, and record Instagramable moments during the event.  Note: advance registration is required for specific time slots online at [www.visitunionsquaresf.com](http://www.visitunionsquaresf.com)

The Bloomie Awards will recognize this year's Bloom participants including the 33 Bloom locations and the 14 Union Square bars that added floral cocktails to their menu, totaling 30 beverages.

At 4pm, following the concert, the public is invited to embark on a Bloom to Harvest walk and experience art and seasonal drink specials from Union Square art galleries, bars, and restaurants. At each stop, attendees will collect stamps for a chance to win tickets to the Ice Rink, set to open November 1. At the end of the night, participants are encouraged to send a photo of their stamp card to @unionsquaresf on Instagram, or email it to info@unionsquarealliance.com with the subject line “Bloom to Harvest 2023” for a chance to win tickets to the ice rink. Additionally, there will be a social media contest, with amateur-and-professional influencers making sure to tag @UnionSquareSF throughout the walk at each venue, as winners will be hand-picked throughout the day to receive additional prizes.

Of course, no event in Union Square would be complete without our “ABCs”: Art, Bars and Cocktails. Participating gallery and bar venues, and their featured offerings, for the Bloom to Harvest celebration include:

* CK Contemporary: José Basso presents "Lucs del Sur del Mundo," 5pm-8pm with the artist present. His serene yet intense landscapes strip nature to its essentials—light, air, space—incorporating human elements. Bold colors and fine brushwork enhance universal appeal. Layers of oil paint create shifting gradients. Bold horizon lines separate the human and metaphysical worlds. Basso's work captures solitude, serenity, longing, and memory through haunting equilibrium, leaving representational naturalism behind.
* Sin Titulo:  Join Sin Título Gallery in welcoming the harvest season and enjoy the current art exhibit by Uruguayan artist Alejandro Rubio. We'll be serving and featuring two Pinot Noir wines from California: *Tributus* from Carneros in Napa Valley and *Ten to Life* from the Sonoma Coast. *Tributus* is a sophisticated red wine with ripe cherry aromas balanced by flavors of strawberries, blackberries, and a hint of spice. *Ten to Life* is a red wine displaying aromas of sun-dried tart cherry, cinnamon, rose petals and red rock candy, backed by notes of graphite and black tea.
* Chateau Montelena - Tasting Room at The Westin St. Francis: $25 wine tasting served in a souvenir Montelena logo Riedel glass. One of the featured wines is the Estate Zinfandel; accompanied with a recipe card for the perfect fall pairing entrée.
* Macy’s Wine Bar: Pumpkin Ale
* The Westin St. Francis Clock Bar: Pumpkin Spice Espresso Martini
* Cafe Rito: Toasty Marshmallow Mocha Latte
* John's Grill: Pear Martini

"Union Square truly is the heart of the City,” sums up **Rodriguez**  “After an obviously rough start to the decade, truly, now, I believe we’re ready to make it a new ‘roaring ‘20s.”

The Union Square in Bloom Summer Music Series is a collaboration between the Union Square Alliance, San Francisco Recreation and Park Department, and the Office of Economic Workforce Development (OEWD) funded by their SF Live grant.

The Union Square Alliance serves members and creates a high-quality visitor experience by managing and activating public spaces, attracting new investment, and advocating for the District’s future success. Union Square is the vibrant heart of San Francisco and an international destination where visitors come to enjoy exceptional retail experiences, luxury hotels, world-class cultural institutions, and great public spaces found only in the City by the Bay. A lively 27-block community surrounding Union Square Park in the heart of San Francisco makes up the Union Square Alliance. It is generally bordered on the north by Bush Street, on the east by Kearny Street, on the south by Market Street and on the west by Taylor Street. For more information on the Alliance, go to [www.visitunionsquaresf.com](http://www.visitunionsquaresf.com/)