



It's Time for the Swallows Day Parade and Mercado Street Faire

By Thomas Fitzgerald

The 65th Annual Swallows Day Parade – Fiesta de las Golondrinas – and Mercado Street Faire celebrates the return of the swallows to the San Juan Capistrano Mission on St. Joseph's Day, March 19. The Parade and Mercado Street Faire offer a full day of spectacular family fun, celebrating the Old West and the return of the swallows from their winter home in Argentina.

Now one of our nation's largest non-motorized parades drawing interest worldwide, Fiesta de las Golondrinas began as an outgrowth of a school carnival in the 1930s before growing to become a local equestrian parade. Today, the event is organized and presented by the San Juan Capistrano Fiesta Association.

The 2025 Grand Marshal is Kathy Holman. Kathy has always had a soft spot for horses that no one else can work with or horses that still had the heart and will to work but were not able to meet performance horse standards. Her love for horses has been in her heart for as long as she can remember.

"As a young child, I'd go to my aunt's house and groom the 'picture ponies' who lived next door to her," says Kathy, owner and operator of Ortega Equestrian Center since 1980. "I'd spend hours brushing and cleaning the pony's just for the chance to be close to them. Later, I hung around the local stables, offering to clean stalls, brush the horses, or feed; anything to be around them."

The annual Swallows Day Mercado Street Faire is a fun-filled event just off the main Parade route where the whole family can eat, dance, play, and shop. It is **THE** place to be after the parade and goes all day long.

The Faire's entertainment includes a Country/Western band, DJ, as well as beer, wine, and lots of great food choices from tacos, burgers, gyros, sweet treats, and more. There is also a huge kid's play zone in Historic Town Center Park.

To help relieve traffic and congestion due to street closures, a **FREE** Shuttle with convenient parking with multiple Shuttle service locations is available. The Shuttle runs from 8:30am until 5:30pm.

949.615.1920 / SwallowsDayParade.org/swallows-parade

11AM, SATURDAY, MARCH 22

ROAD CLOSURE AT 10AM

ROUTE: ORTEGA HWY TO DEL OBISPO TO CAMINO CAPISTRANO

SWALLOWS DAY PARADE ROUTE

