

Exploring Sacramento One Bite at a Time

Heather Fortes believes food tours are a great way to get to know a city—whether you're native, new or just passing through.

Fortes was at a crossroads in her career in commercial photography when she decided to start her food tour business, **SACTOWN BITES**, in 2019. "I love learning about food and recipes. The food tours seemed like an obvious choice, and it seemed like the perfect fit for the Sacramento area," she says of SacTown Bites, which won a 2022 Travel & Hospitality award.

What started out as strictly walking tours now includes excursions involving farm visits, wine tasting, distillery tours and more. Tours such as her popular A Taste of the Delta and Midtown Walking Food Tour take place during the week and on weekends and require a minimum of six participants. Costs start at \$95 for adults (extra for those who want to indulge in adult beverages) and last approximately two and a half hours for walking tours and four hours for excursions. Get on the SacTown Bites mailing list or follow @sactownbites on Instagram to learn about special offerings such as the hyper-seasonal Sunflower, Bees & Brunch tour, which takes tourgoers to a local

sunflower field and a honey tasting and ends with a sit-down brunch. SacTown Bites' website, sactownbites.com, breaks down everything from how much walking (or driving) you can expect to do to what you may see and eat. "The toughest thing you will do all day is parking, and I even send information on where to park," says Fortes.

All public tours can be made private, and customization, whether that means adding a stop to an already existing tour or starting from scratch to create an experience that meets your needs (birthday party, corporate retreat, girls' getaway, etc.) is Fortes' specialty. Don't know what you want but know what you want to spend? She'll come up with a proposal. While public tours are capped at about 10 to 15 people to retain an intimate feel ("I don't want it to feel like a touristy bus ride," says Fortes), private tours can have as many as 60 people.

Fortes is not surprised by the popularity of her all-ages tours. "I think that people are really interested in experiences. I think they create memories, and it's more of a learning experience," she says. "And who doesn't love to eat?"—*ELENA M. MACALUSO*

