Monterey Bay Aquarium Celebrates 30th Anniversary with Special Exhibition, Events and Activities

“Tentacles” is just one of many special activities and events planned in 2014, when the acclaimed aquarium celebrates its 30th anniversary.

“Tentacles” is the largest, most diverse living exhibition ever created to showcase these amazing animals. Over the life of the exhibit, visitors might see any of the two dozen species that will rotate through a dozen exhibits, from the giant Pacific octopus to chambered nautilus, the Hawaiian bobtail squid to wunderpus octopus and more. On occasion lucky visitors may see never-before-exhibited deep sea squid and octopuses collected in collaboration with the aquarium's sister organization, the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute.

The aquarium's other special exhibition, “The Jellies Experience,” put jellies center stage. These graceful, dancing drifters that pulse and glow, flash colorful lights and often pack a powerful sting are alive in all their psychedelic glory in this mind-blowing special exhibition.

“Tentacles” and “The Jellies Experience” are just two of the many exciting things to see and do in 2014 at the award-winning Monterey Bay Aquarium, which opened its doors on Monterey's historic Cannery Row in October 1984. Besides engaging live exhibits, visitors can enjoy special weekend events, extended hours on summer weekends, Aquarium Adventures and other programs, as well as great dining options.

In addition to its changing special exhibitions, the aquarium’s permanent exhibits include a towering three-story kelp forest; touch pools and other hands-on exhibits; the Splash Zone family galleries; and the million-gallon Open Sea exhibit, home to sandbar and hammerhead sharks, sea turtles, ocean sunfish and on occasion, a great white shark.

Guests can get a deeper aquarium experience by booking behind-the-scenes tours and other Aquarium Adventures programs, including sleepovers, kids' SCUBA experiences, and special Romance Tours - perfect for marriage proposals, anniversaries and other moments to share with a special someone.

Culinary fans mark their calendars for the aquarium's annual Cooking for Solutions celebration, three days of sustainable and organic gourmet fare featuring celebrated chefs like Alton Brown, Carla Hall, Richard Blais and MasterChef Junior winner Alexander Weiss. This year’s events take place on May 16-18, including ticketed events and other programs open to all aquarium visitors.

Great food and drink is available all year long at the aquarium's culinary gem, Cindy's Waterfront Restaurant & the Monterey Bay Aquarium Cafe. The restaurant and cafe feature a fantastic menu from the aquarium's James Beard Award-winning culinary partner, Chef Cindy Pawlcyn - the creator of Mustards Grill in Napa Valley and many other celebrated restaurants - and from resident Executive Chef Jeff Rogers.

Special exhibitions and all exhibits and programs except Aquarium Adventures are included with aquarium admission. Rates and hours vary by season. The aquarium is located on historic Cannery Row in Monterey and is open daily except December 25. Visit MontereyBayAquarium.org for more information on exhibits and daily programs, and to purchase tickets online. Advance tickets can also be purchased toll-free by phone from the aquarium at (866) 963-9645.

The website also hosts streaming live web cams.