

Maaaaanteca!

I, too, dream Manteca  
Mean Manteca.  
Sing Manteca

I had to think  
What is Manteca to me?

Once a place I felt had no space for me  
I now see as a  
Land of opportunity

1990 in Manteca  
There were no Starbucks  
no Mega Mall  
no murals

1990 there was...  
hot pavement  
and neighborhoods  
Teeming with kids  
Teeming with imagination

We dug up bugs  
in the dirt  
Of our neighbor's yards

jumped in each other's pools  
and met our friends at the local park

Small town  
Left and right

We saw each other's families at back -to-school  
night  
We cheered for the Chargers and  
We did brownies,  
Danced at the Dance Shoppe  
And trendy stamp parties,

## Maaaaanteca!

1996 in Manteca  
We knew which trees to climb in Park West

Weekends spent  
Zooming home on our bikes through the  
Familiar streets

Or running barefoot around the corner  
To our best friends houses  
Stubbing our toes at least 3 times thinking nothing  
could hurt us  
Before we learned to wear shoes  
On purpose

Cooked dark brown in the Central Valley sun  
Not one friend  
Left uninvited to pool party  
Neighbors, strangers, everyone would come

Our back yard  
Was no orchard but  
It had an orange tree  
A Lemon tree  
And 2 types of cherry trees  
We felt lucky to be

Dad never let us be in any FESHTA's but  
We still wish he would have let us!

White birch trees  
dotted most of our streets  
Maywood  
Kingwood  
Curtwood  
Parkwood  
Olivewood  
Crestwood  
Trailwood

Maaaaanteca!

But best of all  
Oakwood

Manteca: 1999

Waterslides.

Far and wide through California's countryside,  
There wasn't one who didn't know and love  
Manteca waterslides

Wave pools, Wavy hair, and that

Maaaaanteca heat

Couldn't help ourselves to all that

FUN FUN FUN  
Splashing in the Sun

In 2001  
I remember the parks flooding  
The fun neighbors still get their boats  
and try to float

The fall that followed  
9/11  
I remember  
Sitting on a skateboard next to my crush  
Unsure about the war  
Before us  
Just some 16 year old Manteca kids  
Not quite ready to explore the world outside

Manteca

2005 after 2 years away  
I returned to a town of

# Maaaaanteca!

Manteca Boys  
Trying to become  
Decent young men

In 2009 I worked at Fuzion Salon Downtown  
And Manteca went Big  
With Big League Dreams  
Manteca's own Candini  
A former MLB  
Our little city  
Now bursting at the seams

Now in 2025  
Still so much has changed and grown

We have Besitos  
Tesoro  
Del Toro  
An Art Guild  
And Community Garden seeds have been sown  
A house of Mokha  
And Boba spots on trend  
Chadwick Square where the pretty girls live  
And the Downtown Transit

Far from the beginning but not close to the end

I can still rewind and replay  
Those Good Ol Days  
The opening of Walmart  
Mervyns  
Thrilling us long before  
The opening of our first Starbucks and Target  
What a win

I remember Holy Cow Ice Cream  
The Pumpkin Patch  
The Grape Stomp  
The Giving Tree

Maaaaanteca!

Tio Pepe's  
Johnny's  
Orchard Supply  
Scrapbooking Supply!

Isadore's  
DaVinci's on Main

And grateful I can still head to Hob Nob Bobs  
Or La Costa  
Or  
Bean and Leaf  
With Friends

I remember Manteca when

I, too, dream Manteca  
Mean Manteca.  
Sing Manteca

Once a place I felt had no space for me  
I now see that's impossible to be

Bold, Brilliant, Changing, and Innovative City

Of course there is room for all of us

Because we are Manteca, and

Manteca is me

Written by Tara Rico 2025