

STARS OF SAN JOSE'S DOWNTOWN DINING

Innovation is what we do best, and nowhere else does that shine brighter than in our dining scene.

There are a million different reasons why San Jose has grown into the culinary powerhouse that it is today, and you get to enjoy every one of them — one meal after another. Northern California was the birthplace of the modern American culinary movement, focusing on fresh ingredients over complex techniques. Meanwhile, San Jose has long attracted international talent, and those influences have led to some of the world's best restaurants.

Check out one of the newest restaurants in town — Eos & Nyx. Named respectively for the Greek goddesses of dawn and night, this Mediterranean-inspired concept has taken over a two-story space filled with cozy nooks and lush foliage. Dishes prepared on an open, wood-fired grill and assortments of shared plates are just the start of the experience overseen by executive chef Nicko Moulinos.

Vine Hospitality has been opening restaurants in the Bay Area since 1994 and chose downtown San Jose for its latest venture, Rollati Ristorante. Peek through the dining room window to watch chefs

handcrafting fresh pasta, and peruse local and seasonally inspired dishes in what is considered a love letter to Italian and Italian-American cuisine.

Adega offers incredible Portuguese fare and earned San Jose its first Michelin star. Fernanda and Carlos Carreira, alongside their daughter, acclaimed pastry chef Jessica Carreira, and executive chef David Costa, have redefined Portuguese cuisine with a bold and modern vision. On the heels of Adega, the owners opened Petiscos — a more casual restaurant that has been pleasing guests with its upscale small plates since 2020.

While French and Vietnamese flavors have long been intertwined, this concept is elevated at Élyse Restaurant in downtown San Jose. Discover a different perspective in a fusion of flavors where you're equally likely to devour a bowl of spicy pho as a fork-tender, slow-cooked coq au vin.

Which part of the world will you explore in San Jose? Let your appetite lead the way!



THE BEST OF California

2025
OFFICIAL
VISITOR'S
GUIDE

VISITCALIFORNIA.COM

**John
Stamos**

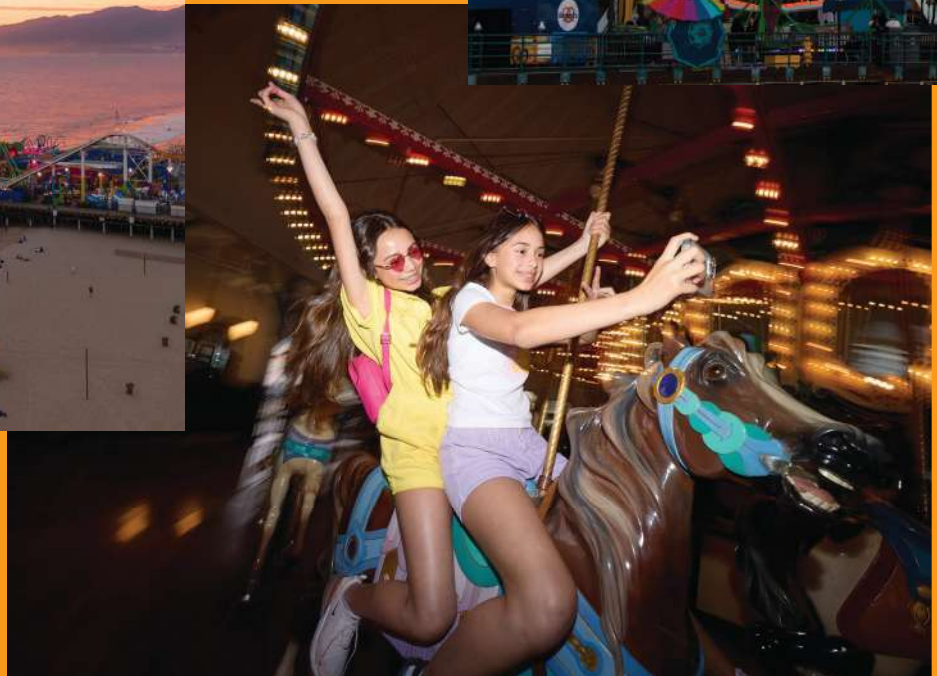
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California

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**SANTA
MONICA**





56 Disneyland Resort



38 Tablas Creek Vineyard

IN THIS ISSUE

8 25 Reasons to Travel to California in 2025

Discover new and exciting experiences that await in the Golden State

10 5 Dreamy Stargazing Spots

Astrophysicist Vanessa Alarcon shares her top sites to see stars

12 7 Hidden National Park Treasures

The National Park Travelers reveal their go-to spots to explore

14 5 Architectural Gems

Architecture historian Laura Massino names her favorite storied structures

18 Cover Story: John Stamos

The Hollywood icon and actor dives deep into his career, SoCal roots, and lifelong love for his home state

28 California Restaurants: An A to Z Guide

Explore an alphabetically arranged guide to California's essential eateries

38 The California Winery Finder

Find the winery and vineyard of your dreams with this helpful decision tree

46 A Beginner's Guide to California Skiing

Hit the slopes with confidence using this handy how-to for skiing newbies

56 Superfan Secrets

Experts divulge their best tips and tricks for maximizing the Golden State theme park experience



RIDE IN A DUFFY BOAT OR GONDOLA GETAWAY.



GONDOLA GETAWAY

INSPIRED

No matter where you turn, there are places to explore — beach bike paths and aquabikes, kayaks and paddleboards, culture-filled neighborhoods with museums and outdoor art, boutique rarities and fun attractions. With so many tastes to savor, sights to see and plenty of fun under bright sunny skies, it's easy to unwind on a perfect Long Beach getaway.

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CALIFORNIA

REGIONS

64 Shasta Cascade

An adventure paradise of towering volcanoes and misty waterfalls

74 North Coast

Sublime seascapes, soaring redwoods, and romantic retreats await

82 San Francisco Bay Area

Home to outstanding eats, top-shelf wine, and a rich cultural landscape

94 Gold Country

California history thrives in picturesque towns and wildflower-dotted foothills

104 High Sierra

Prepare to play at ski-ready mountains and crystalline lakes

120 Central Valley

Discover a bounty of surprises in California's agricultural heartland

130 Central Coast

Culinary creativity and world-class wines blend with ranching heritage

144 Los Angeles County

California's entertainment capital delivers fun for all ages

156 Orange County

Family-friendly theme parks mix with epic surf and luxurious shopping

166 Inland Empire

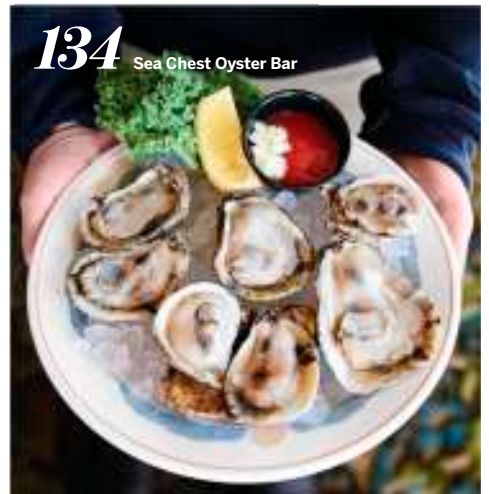
Golden foothills, alpine lakes, and a laid-back wine region meet

174 Deserts

Posh resorts and outdoor eateries in a land where summer never ends

182 San Diego County

Sun-kissed beaches, a wealth of museums, and easy-living vibes



149

Beverly Wilshire, A Four Seasons Hotel

85

Calistoga Motor Lodge & Spa

134

Sea Chest Oyster Bar

78

Moonstone Beach



Come Play with Us!

When John Stamos enters a room, everything changes. You can feel it. He's a celebrity, of course, and people instantly recognize the Orange County native from TV shows like *Full House* and *ER*, as well as his decades-long run as a bonus member of the Beach Boys. But Stamos' uncanny ability to alter the energy around him goes beyond mere fame.

When we photographed Stamos for this year's *California Visitor's Guide*, he brought a playful positivity to the proceedings. He cracked jokes, he shook hands, he hammed it up with everybody he encountered—especially the guy tasked with cleaning up after the horses. Stamos didn't act like a star, but he made sure everybody else felt like one.

We want you to feel the same way on your next trip to California. Our "Superfan Secrets" feature (p. 56) showcases dozens of Easter eggs and hidden gems at California theme parks—the sort of insider tips that will give you serious VIP swagger. We also crafted an interactive and highly personalized wine-tasting story ("The California Winery Finder," p. 38) designed to help you find the perfect spot for that perfect sip. And if you're snow-curious but unsure of how to get started, check out "A Beginner's Guide to California Skiing" (p. 46)—it walks you through the entire process and hopefully will inspire you to play in the powder.

We look forward to seeing you soon!
Sincerely,

CAROLINE BETETA
PRESIDENT AND CEO, VISIT CALIFORNIA



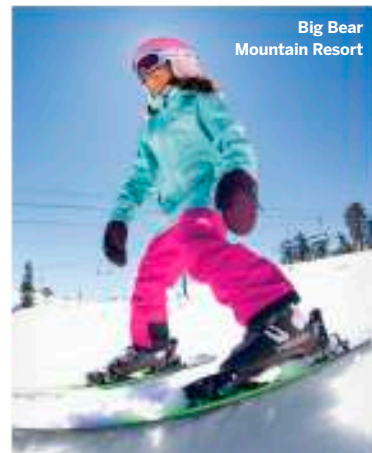
John Stamos



Altissima Winery, Temecula



Disneyland Resort



Big Bear Mountain Resort



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■ GOLD COUNTRY

AUBURN • 1103 High St., Suite 150; 530/887-2111
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MODESTO • 1008 12th St.; 209/526-5588

■ CENTRAL COAST

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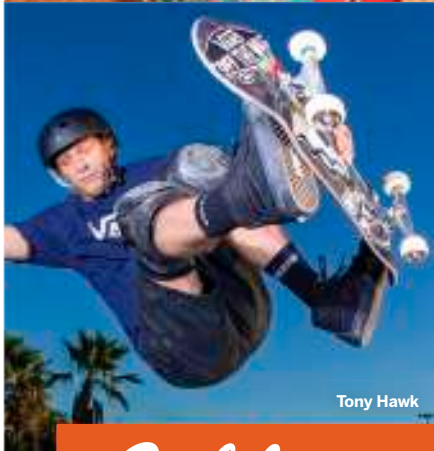
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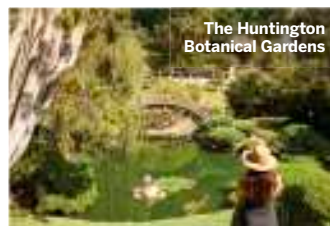


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The Huntington
Botanical Gardens

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Reasons to Visit California in 2025

START PLANNING NOW SO YOU DON'T MISS ANY OF THE EXCITEMENT THIS YEAR

1 Disneyland's 70th Anniversary

Disneyland turns 70 in 2025, which means a fun-packed party at the Anaheim theme park. Also: Don't miss Tiana's Bayou Adventure, a new take on Splash Mountain featuring scenes and characters from *The Princess and the Frog*.

2 The Palm Springs Surf Club

This state-of-the-art wave pool is not where you'd expect it—in the middle of the desert. Learn to surf or just come for the lazy river, slides, or private cabanas.

3 Giant Pandas!

Two giant pandas made their official debut at the San Diego Zoo in August 2024. See them munching on bamboo and lumbering around Panda Ridge, a newly built habitat.

4 Mocktail Trail in Healdsburg

Stay Healdsburg's self-guided Mocktail Trail highlights bars and restaurants around the city with incredible booze-free cocktails (see p. 84).

5 2025 NBA All-Star Game in San Francisco

Get tickets for the NBA All-Star game on Sunday, Feb. 16, at the Chase Center. The venue is also where the WNBA debut of the Golden State Valkyries will take place in May 2025.

6 1.3 Miles Celebrating L.A.'s Black Culture

Located along Crenshaw Boulevard, Destination Crenshaw is the largest Black-led art project in the U.S. More than 100 artists with ties to L.A. have been commissioned to create works along the corridor, alongside more than 800 new trees.

7 Lodging Near National Parks

Visitors to some of California's national parks will now have more unique lodging options. Stay in a tiny house near Sequoia, a glamping tent or three-bedroom villa near Yosemite, or an Airsteam by Joshua Tree. (See more, pgs. 106, 124, and 176.)



SeaWorld San Diego

8 Jellyfish!

In the SeaWorld San Diego *Jewels of the Sea* exhibit, you can view jellyfish in a walk-through arch, on a giant viewing wall, and inside one of the largest jelly cylinders in the country.

9 An Emerging Wine Destination

Located 70 miles east of Los Angeles, the Yucaipa Valley is a newly distinguished American Viticultural Area in the Inland Empire. It claims to be the highest elevation AVA in the state of California (up to 4,600 feet). Taste the Syrah and Barbera at Suveg Cellars, the region's first award-winning winery.

10 Picnic at Presidio Tunnel Tops

Set to open this year, The Mess Hall at the Presidio will operate as an all-day café, food hall, market, and bar within San Francisco's Tunnel Tops park.

11 The Intuit Dome

The Los Angeles Clippers now play at this 17,700-seat venue, which houses five basketball courts, a practice facility and training center, and an outdoor plaza with multiple bars and restaurants.

12 Sammy Hagar's New Home Venue

The former Van Halen frontman, aka The Red Rocker, opened Stage Red in his hometown of Fontana. Originally built as a one-screen movie theater in 1937, the historic building was reimagined as an intimate performance venue (see p. 168).

13 Santa Ynez Chumash Museum & Cultural Center

Learn about the rich cultural heritage of the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians at this new museum in the Santa Ynez Valley.



San Diego Zoo



Intuit Dome



Destination Crenshaw





14 30+ New Stores at South Coast Plaza

The Costa Mesa luxury mall debuted more than 30 new boutiques in 2024, including Italian apothecary brand Santa Maria Novella and L.A. eyewear maker Jacques Marie Mage.

15 Jumbo's Win Win

A former San Francisco expert mixologist moved to the rural Anderson Valley, best known for its wines, and opened this roadside burger spot named after his son.



Gilroy Gardens

16 Gilroy Gardens Turns 25

The agricultural-themed park will start celebrating its anniversary in the spring, followed by a new Cherry Jubilee festival in the summer.

17 California's Newest State Park

Located near Modesto, Dos Rios State Park is the first state park to be created in California since 2014. The park's 1,600 acres continue to be developed, but



visitors can participate in guided hikes and stargazing events (see more, p. 124).

18 Aerial Tour of Catalina Island

Maverick Helicopters now offers a 20-minute daily tour over the island's stunning 22-mile landscape, departing from Avalon. Keep your eyes peeled for dolphins or roaming buffalos below.

19 LEGO Driving

The popular LEGOLAND Driving School attraction returns in a new location, giving riders the chance to earn their driver's licenses once again.

20 More Rides on the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk

Two new rides debuted on Santa Cruz's iconic boardwalk, including the Dream Wheel, a family-friendly 65-foot modern Ferris wheel, and the Surge, a 360-degree spinning thrill ride. The boardwalk's famous roller coaster, the Giant Dipper, celebrated its 100th year in 2024.

21 San Pedro West Harbor

This former industrial waterfront property in San Pedro has evolved into a lively hub with an amphitheater, a beer garden, a dog park, a towering Ferris wheel, and unique restaurants and shopping.

22 Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary

Designated by NOAA in 2024, the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary spans 4,543 square miles along the Central Coast from San Luis Obispo County to Santa Barbara County. The sanctuary will conserve the area's diverse range of marine life and celebrate Indigenous peoples' connections to the region, while also allowing for new research, education, recreation, and sustainable tourism opportunities.



Morro Rock

23 Expansions to Two National Monuments

In 2024, nearly 14,000 acres were added to Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument near Napa; the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument in Los Angeles County increased by 105,919 acres. These expansions



Santa Cruz Boardwalk

mean more protection of the state's biodiverse and culturally significant Native American tribal lands. The expansions help California get closer to its goal of conserving 30 percent of its lands and coastal waters by 2030.

24 Mission Rock

This new waterfront neighborhood has emerged on the San Francisco Bay, offering five acres of green space, views of Oracle Park and the Bay Bridge, a sandy shoreline, and a still-expanding roster of restaurants, including local favorites such as Flour + Water and Arsicault Bakery.

25 Caviar with Thomas Keller

What started as a caviar and champagne pop-up lounge has evolved into RO Restaurant and Lounge, the

latest restaurant in the acclaimed chef's Yountville collection. Chef de Cuisine Jeffery Hayashi created an Asian-inspired menu that highlights local California ingredients.

Note: Opening dates are subject to change.



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Flour + Water



FIRST PERSON

5 Dreamy Stargazing Spots

ASTROPHYSICIST VANESSA ALARCON RECOMMENDS
HER TOP SPOTS FOR OBSERVING THE NIGHT SKY

Growing up in Southern California, Griffith Observatory astronomical observer Vanessa Alarcon couldn't appreciate the night sky. City lights overwhelmed the stars, and it wasn't until she took astronomy in college and attended a planetarium show that she discovered what was out there. "When it came time to declare a major, I knew it was going to be astrophysics," she says. "Seeing the stars, even simulated, was just an amazing experience. In a way, the universe opened up for me." Alarcon operates and maintains the astronomical instruments that inspire more than 1.6 million visitors to come to the Griffith Observatory every year.

She describes California as "the birthplace of modern astronomy" and recommends destinations around the state where you too can connect with the cosmos.



1 GRIFFITH OBSERVATORY LOS ANGELES

Alarcon admits to being "a little biased" about this L.A. landmark both for such original exhibits as the entry rotunda's Foucault pendulum and 1930s murals depicting celestial mythology, as well as later additions, including The Big Picture, a 3,040-square foot digital image of a swath of sky encompassing nearly a million distant galaxies. "The Solar Telescope is one of the coolest things because when you're standing in that rotunda, you're basically inside the telescope, which I think is amazing," she says.

2 MOUNT WILSON OBSERVATORY

PASADENA

This observatory above Pasadena offers tours and events, including stargazing parties and the chance to look through the world's largest telescopes open to the public. "You can feel the history," says Alarcon. "Albert Einstein visited Mount Wilson, and all of the astronomy giants that you hear about in textbooks touched this place."

3 LICK OBSERVATORY

MOUNT HAMILTON

Sitting atop Mount Hamilton in Santa Clara County, the Lick Observatory dates to 1888 and conducts free talks underneath the historic Great Lick Refractor's dome, notable for its beautiful marble and oak. There's also a visitor center and self-guided walking tours. "The Lick Observatory was the first on a mountaintop, and they still do research there. And the views are spectacular," says Alarcon.

4 RANCHO MIRAGE LIBRARY & OBSERVATORY

RANCHO MIRAGE

As one of California's newest observatories, Alarcon says it gives visitors a unique opportunity. In addition to tours, she says the observatory "caught my eye because they have a research grade telescope that they allow people to look through. It's big, and visitors can see some pretty amazing things with it."

5 WHITE MOUNTAINS

BIG PINE

This is Alarcon's favorite spot, located in the Inyo National Forest. She says, "It's a little harder to get to, and I camped at around 7,000 feet. But with the elevation and no city lights, the White Mountains have the best night skies I've ever seen."

OTHER DARK SKY DESTINATIONS AROUND THE STATE

In San Diego County, Julian and Borrego Springs



Lick Observatory

earned designations as International Dark Sky Communities, while Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, Joshua Tree National Park, and Death Valley National Park are all International Dark Sky Parks. "The one that's super popular is Joshua Tree," says Alarcon,

"because it's near Los Angeles and easy to get to." Another major sky destination is Mount Pinos in Los Padres National Forest, where amateur astronomers set up gear in the 8,360-foot elevation parking lot at the end of Mount Pinos Road.



Griffith Observatory



Anacapa Island

FIRST PERSON

7 Hidden Treasures at National Parks

THE NATIONAL PARK TRAVELERS REVEAL THEIR FAVORITE TRAILS AND SCENIC SPOTS ACROSS THE GOLDEN STATE

Morgan Dufrene and Connor Ursin are natural-born explorers. As the creators of the popular Instagram account @thenationalparktravelers, this husband-and-wife team has a knack for discovering breathtaking locations away from the crowds. The pair have showcased everything from dramatic rock formations in Joshua Tree to the biodiverse bluffs of the Channel Islands. Drawing from their extensive travels, they've curated a list of their favorite under-the-radar national park spots in California.



1 BALCONIES CAVE TRAIL

PINNACLES NATIONAL PARK

"We arrived without a plan, but we were looking for a trail that gave us as much variety as possible," Dufrene says. "With towering peaks, stream crossings, and caves, if you only have time for one trail, make it this one."

2 ANACAPA ISLAND

CHANNEL ISLANDS NATIONAL PARK

"When most people visit the Channel Islands, they head for Santa Cruz Island," Ursin says. "We spent time on our second trip exploring the lesser-visited Anacapa Island. You get to see a beautiful lighthouse, and the island is home to the largest breeding colony of endangered California brown pelicans."

3 JUMBO ROCKS CAMPGROUND

JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK

"We stumbled upon this campground and were pleasantly surprised

by the number of trails and photo opportunities among amazing rock formations. Since it's a campground, it's often overlooked," Ursin says.

4 LITTLE BALDY DOME

SEQUOIA NATIONAL PARK

"This is one of the best trails for escaping the crowds in Sequoia National Park. At about four miles round-trip, the summit offers unreal views of the valley below. Think Moro Rock without the people," says Dufrene.

5 LEMBERT DOME AND DOG LAKE

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

"This four-mile loop trail takes you to the top of Tuolumne Meadows and offers amazing 360-degree views," Ursin says. "You will be blown away by the peace you never knew you could find in one of the busiest national parks."

6 KINGS CREEK FALLS

LASSEN VOLCANIC NATIONAL PARK

"Lassen's striking volcanic landscapes make it a must-visit, but if you're visiting during a busy time, we'd recommend Kings Creek Falls," Dufrene says. "The 30-foot-tall waterfall is the perfect reward after hiking through the gorgeous Kings Creek Meadow."

7 EUREKA DUNES

DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK

"We found one hike that rewarded us with being the only people there all day," says Ursin. "It's Eureka Sand Dunes, and at 689 feet high, it has some of the tallest sand dunes in North America."

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A photograph of three women running along a sandy path that runs along a beach. The woman in the foreground is wearing a pink long-sleeved shirt and pink shorts, and is raising her right arm in the air. The woman behind her is wearing an orange and white athletic top and orange leggings. The third woman, further back, is wearing a green and white athletic top and green leggings. They are all smiling and appear to be enjoying their run. The background shows a wide sandy beach, the ocean with gentle waves, and a clear blue sky. The path they are running on is made of sand and has some sparse green grass growing along its edges.

San Diego® Happiness is calling



Marin County Civic Center

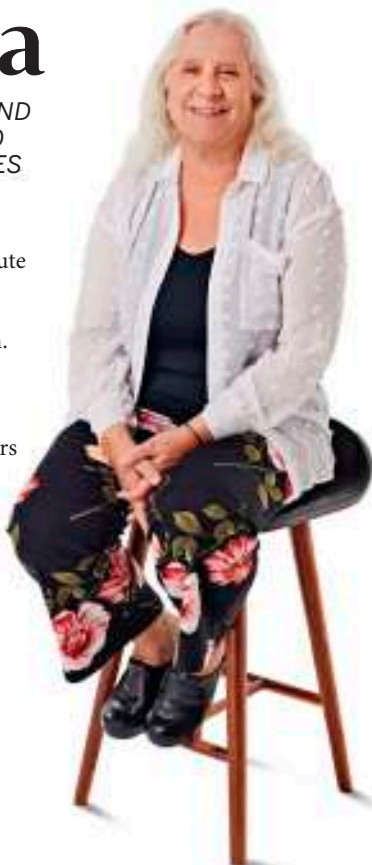
FIRST PERSON

5 Architectural Gems in California

ARCHITECTURE HISTORIAN AND TOUR GUIDE LAURA MASSINO SMITH SHARES HER FAVORITES

Laura Massino Smith was studying design at New York's Fashion Institute of Technology when a course in historic preservation inspired an unexpected pivot in her career path. After moving to Los Angeles and becoming fascinated with the city's storied structures, she founded Architecture Tours L.A., which offers daily guided adventures through multiple neighborhoods.

Walt Disney Concert Hall, Hollyhock House, and the Witch's House are some of the most acclaimed stops on her L.A. tours (and surefire crowd pleasers), but Smith also loves to highlight lesser-known spots. Here are five of her favorites across California.



1 HOTEL DEL CORONADO

CORONADO

"This is one of the most striking examples of Victorian-era architecture on the West Coast," Smith says. "When you visit, it's like taking a step back in time." Opened in 1888 as a seaside resort for the rich and famous—guests included several U.S. presidents and silent film star Charlie Chaplin—"The Del" features a distinctive red roof and a pointed dome, plus spectacular towers, turrets, and stained-glass windows.

2 MARIN COUNTY CIVIC CENTER

SAN RAFAEL

Designed by Frank Lloyd Wright and first opened in 1962, the working Civic Center is famous for its striking turquoise roof, scalloped balconies, and pink stucco walls. Smith especially appreciates the structure's human scale. "It was designed for all people and [to be] accessible to all," she says.

3 SUNSET TOWER HOTEL

LOS ANGELES

"This is one of the best examples of Art Deco architecture in Los Angeles," Smith says. Designed in 1929 as apartments, Sunset Tower once counted John Wayne, Marilyn Monroe, and Frank Sinatra among its tenants. Smith loves its decorative elements, which include chevron patterns and images of airplanes, pagodas, and even a zeppelin.

4 HERALD EXAMINER BUILDING

LOS ANGELES

After the *Herald Examiner* newspaper folded in 1989, its headquarters sat empty until the Los Angeles Conservancy stepped in to save it. Designed for newspaper magnate William Randolph Hearst by Julia Morgan, the state's first licensed female architect, the 1914 Mission Revival building features arched windows and Moorish-style mosaic domes. Now home to a branch of Arizona State University, Smith says, "The building is an excellent example of adaptive reuse."

5 FREY HOUSE II

PALM SPRINGS

Albert Frey designed this midcentury modern marvel—now owned by the Palm Springs Art Museum—as his second home. Built on the side of a mountain, the house showcases breathtaking, panoramic views of the desert floor through large panes of glass. "Its beauty lies in the simplicity of the design," Smith says. "It allows nature to take center stage."

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TRAVEL INFORMATION GUIDE

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SHASTA CASCADE (801)

See ads, pgs. 64-73

- 1 Antlers Inn
- 2 California Welcome Center - Anderson
- 3 Choose Redding Lodging
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- 5 Lake Shasta Caverns National Natural Landmark
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NORTH COAST (802)

See ads, pgs. 74-81

- 14 Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens
- 15 North of Ordinary
- 16 Skunk Train
- 17 Trees of Mystery
- 18 Visit Ukiah

SAN FRANCISCO (803)

See ads, pgs. 82-93

- 19 Charles M. Schulz Museum
- 20 Exploratorium
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- 22 Livermore Valley Wine Country
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- 24 San Francisco North/Petaluma KOA Camping & RV Resort
- 25 Sonoma County Tourism
- 26 The San Francisco Peninsula
- 27 Visit Petaluma
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GOLD COUNTRY (804)

See ads, pgs. 94-103

- 30 Collins Lake Recreation Area
- 31 Evergreen Lodge at Yosemite
- 32 Firefall Ranch at Yosemite
- 33 OARS California Rafting
- 34 Sutter Creek Visitor Center
- 35 The Pines Resort
- 36 River Fox Train
- 37 Rush Creek Lodge & Spa at Yosemite
- 38 Visit Folsom
- 39 Visit Gold Country
- 40 Visit Placer
- 41 Visit Rancho Cordova
- 42 Visit Sacramento
- 43 Yosemite Mariposa County Tourism Bureau

HIGH SIERRA (805)

See ads, pgs. 104-119

- 44 Adventure Mountain Lake Tahoe
- 45 Bass Lake Chamber of Commerce
- 46 Bishop Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau
- 47 Chukchansi Gold Resort & Casino
- 48 Clearly Tahoe Bikes
- 49 Clearly Tahoe Kayaks
- 50 Coachman Hotel
- 51 Desolation Hotel Hope Valley & South Lake Tahoe
- 52 Dodge Ridge Mountain Resort
- 53 Don Pedro Recreation Agency
- 54 Fresno Yosemite International Airport
- 55 Lake Tahoe Adventures
- 56 Lake Tahoe Balloons
- 57 Majestic Mountain Loop
- 58 Mammoth Lakes Tourism
- 59 Mono County Tourism
- 60 North Lake Tahoe
- 61 Tahoe Chamber of Commerce
- 62 Tahoe Helicopters
- 63 Tahoe Lakeshore Lodge & Spa

- 64 Tenaya at Yosemite
- 65 The Landing Lake Tahoe Resort & Spa
- 66 The Redwoods in Yosemite
- 67 Visit Lake Tahoe
- 68 Visit Sonora
- 69 Visit Tuolumne County
- 70 Visit Yosemite | Madera County
- 71 Yosemite Mariposa County Tourism Bureau
- 72 Yosemite Mountain Sugar Pine Railroad
- 73 Yosemite's Scenic Wonders
- 74 Zephyr Cove Resort, Marina, & RV Campground

CENTRAL VALLEY (806)

See ads, pgs. 120-129

- 75 Choice Hotels
- 76 El Capitan Hotel
- 77 Sequoia Tourism Council
- 78 Visit Bakersfield
- 79 Visit Fairfield
- 80 Visit Fresno County
- 81 Visit Lodi
- 82 Visit Modesto
- 83 Visit Stockton
- 84 Visit Visalia
- 85 Visit Yolo

CENTRAL COAST (807)

See ads, pgs. 130-143

- 86 Cannery Row
- 87 City of Solvang
- 88 Explore Lompoc
- 89 Heritage Valley Tourism Bureau
- 90 Portola Hotel & Spa at Monterey Bay
- 91 Pismo Beach
- 92 See Monterey
- 93 Spirit of San Juan Bautista
- 94 Tickle Pink Inn
- 95 Ventura Harbor Village

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See ads, pgs. 144-155

- 102 Discover Claremont
- 103 Santa Monica Travel & Tourism
- 104 Six Flags Magic Mountain & Hurricane Harbor
- 105 SoFi Stadium Tours
- 106 Visit Long Beach
- 107 Visit Pasadena
- 108 Visit Santa Clarita
- 109 Visit West Hollywood

ORANGE COUNTY (809)

See ads, pgs. 156-165

- 110 Hyatt Regency Huntington Beach Resort & Spa
- 111 OC Fair & Event Center
- 112 Pasea Hotel & Spa

- 113 South Coast Plaza
- 114 The Waterfront Beach Resort, a Hilton Hotel
- 115 Visit Buena Park
- 116 Visit Huntington Beach

INLAND EMPIRE (810)

See ads, pgs. 166-173

- 117 San Bernardino County
- 118 Visit Big Bear

DESERTS (811)

See ads, pgs. 174-181

- 119 Palm Springs Aerial Tramway

SAN DIEGO COUNTY (812)

See ads, pgs. 182-189

- 120 Bahia Resort Hotel
- 121 Catamaran Resort Hotel and Spa
- 122 San Diego Tourism Authority
- 123 San Diego Zoo & San Diego Zoo Safari Park
- 124 The Lodge at Torrey Pines
- 125 Visit Carlsbad

Catalina Island

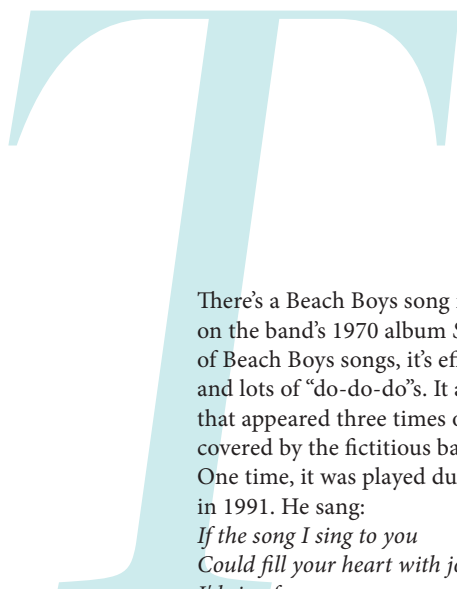




A person is relaxing on a tan lounge chair, holding a newspaper. The background shows a swimming pool, palm trees, and a clear blue sky. A blue rectangular box is overlaid on the upper part of the image, containing the title and a bio. A teal rectangular box is overlaid below the blue one, containing a bio paragraph.

GOOD VIBRATIONS

From soap operas to sitcoms to ER to the Beach Boys, John Stamos has been a Hollywood icon for more than four decades. Yet, the Orange County native believes his best days are still ahead.



There's a Beach Boys song named "Forever." It was on the band's 1970 album *Sunflower* and, like a lot of Beach Boys songs, it's effervescent—fizzy, fun, and lots of "do-do-do"s. It also happens to be a song that appeared three times on the sitcom *Full House*, covered by the fictitious band Jesse and the Rippers. One time, it was played during Uncle Jesse's wedding in 1991. He sang:

*If the song I sing to you
Could fill your heart with joy
I'd sing forever*

Uncle Jesse, of course, was played by John Stamos. And, right this moment, Stamos is wearing a very luxe version of a Hawaiian shirt on an equally luxe tour bus, vrooming across California with the Beach Boys. Later tonight, he'll sing "Forever," this time as a member of the band.

Stamos first heard the legendary band when he was 14. "I'm still the biggest fan," he says with a smile as he runs his fingers through his hair—hair that's still thick as a lion's mane. He can't believe he's on tour with the band. "It still doesn't make sense that I watched the band for the longest time and now I get to play with them."

The Beach Boys' music has provided a soundtrack for Stamos' life, not unlike a lot of other Californians. "Their music bypasses your brain and goes straight into your heart," he says. "Wouldn't

It Be Nice,' 'Fun, Fun, Fun,' 'Good Vibrations.' All positivity, all optimistic." He likes to watch audiences after the band stops playing. "They just keep clapping. They need it so bad."

Both he and the songs of the Beach Boys have aged well, Stamos argues, with a laugh. He's not wrong. The man still looks like Uncle Jesse, the wildly popular character he played on *Full House* from 1987 to 1995. That role defined him to a certain extent, and also held him back. "I think I'm finally getting to that place where I'm a decent actor," Stamos says. "My brand's getting better now." Is this the best John Stamos ever? The married dad who, at 61, is comfortable in his own skin answers unequivocally: "Yes."

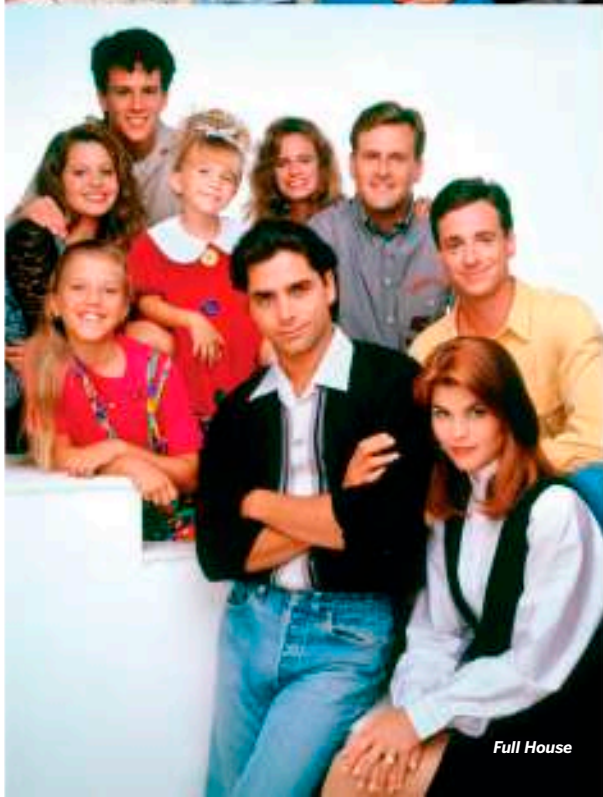
The California native grew up in Orange County, the son of a restaurateur and model. Of his late parents, he says, "My dad treated everyone—best customers and busboys—the same. My mom was kind of like Lucy: fearless, and she was just who she was, all the time."

Stamos would eventually bounce from soaps (*General Hospital*) to sitcoms (*Full House*) to nighttime dramas (*ER*) to Broadway (*Cabaret*), and along the way, to pop culture iconhood—the hair, the smile, the very fact that his name is noun, verb, adjective, and hashtag. Stamos is #stamosing these days. "Life is good," he declares. Believably.





Demi Moore, Stamos, and Janine Turner
at a 1982 *General Hospital* event



Full House

Stamos was 14 when he attended his first rock concert—yes, the Beach Boys—at the Universal Amphitheatre in Los Angeles. He had a fantasy: Someone would come out before the concert and announce that the drummer hurt his finger and he would save the day.

A natural entertainer from the beginning, it was only a matter of time before Stamos was famous. He had three formative moments on his way to stardom. Here's the first: "My father was friends with a PE teacher at the high school where they were shooting *Grease*," he remembers, flashing back to 1978. "I got to visit the set. It was the gymnasium scene." Stamos hears the director say, "Places!"

"All these people came out that looked about my father's age, but they were playing high school students. The music started. And I remember noticing the band, Sha Na Na, weren't playing their instruments for real. They weren't hitting 'em. They were just faking it." And then, "Action."

"The doors blast open," he remembers. "John Travolta walks out. He's got the black suit, pink shirt, high collar. I didn't even know what charisma meant back then, but I knew—I knew I wanted to be that guy."

The second moment? "My early years were spent at Knott's Berry Farm," he recalls. "We lived about a mile away." His mom would take Stamos and his two sisters, Janeen and Alaina, "just to kill time. It was free. My dad would bring home buns from work and we'd go to Knott's Berry Farm and feed the ducks and watch the shows at the Bird Cage Theatre.

"Steve Martin worked down there. But my earliest memory there is of the puppeteer." It was there that Stamos would stand by the door and watch how he operated it all as he literally pulled the strings. "I could see both at the same time—what he was doing and how the audience reacted: interested, clapping, or booing. I never forgot that." He learned how to give people what they wanted. "Sometimes my best friend, Mike, would pretend that I was somebody famous and come up and ask for my autograph. People would see it, and they would all come around and ask for one too. It was a game changer."

The third moment occurred at the griddle in his hometown of Cypress. "My dad had three restaurants.



Calico Saloon, Knott's Berry Farm



A NATURAL
ENTERTAINER
FROM THE
BEGINNING, IT
WAS ONLY A
MATTER OF TIME
BEFORE STAMOS
WAS FAMOUS

I worked at the Yellow Basket. They had the 99-cent breakfast, which was two eggs, any style, bacon or sausage, toast, wheat or rye or regular, hashbrowns." There was a line around the block. "I had about 12 burners going at one time. I was flipping eggs." And, eventually, putting on a show. "Being a drummer, I would flip my [utensils] around, play the pots and pans." After all, he wasn't, as he puts it, academical. "That's not really a word," he says with a laugh.

"So I started doing a little bit of the early Benihana thing. Pots and pans. Get on a roll, boom, boom, boom. And then one a-hole would come in and say, 'Can I have egg whites, please?'" He was still drumming pots and dealing with egg whites in 1982 when he got the part of Blackie Parrish on *General Hospital*. It was supposed to be a five-week arc, but Stamos' popularity (and near-immediate sex symbol status) made him a series regular. "I remember when they said, 'You got it.' And I said, 'I gotta call my family.' They were all gathered around the phone. I said, 'I got bad news. I got the job.' My dad said, 'Tell 'em you can't work on Sundays.'"

So he worked on the soap—with an audience of more than 30 million, it was the No. 1 daytime show at the time—during the week. And, for a while, took shifts at the Yellow Basket on Sundays.



Stamos is a fantastic storyteller. In his 2023 *New York Times* bestselling memoir, *If You Would Have Told Me*, he details his struggles with alcohol (including the time he performed drunk on stage during the Broadway show *Nine* in 2003), his two nose jobs, and how he learned about the tragic death of his close friend, mentor, and *Full House* costar, Bob Saget. Stamos had good source material to pull from for his deeply personal book thanks to his mom. “She saved every picture, every contract, every article, every magazine, every letter. I remember saying to her, ‘Why are you keeping all this junk?’ Then I go to write this book. Thank God she did.”

“You know,” Stamos says, leaning forward. He runs his fingers through his hair again and his beaded bracelet twinkles. It’s from his family’s charitable jewelry collection named for Saint Amos, the prophet and saint for oppressed people. (If you spell it “St. Amos,” by the way, the saint and the actor share a name.) “I’ve had a big second chance.” He’s talking as much about his sobriety as love. “I’ve got gratitude, gratitude, gratitude.” Stamos cherishes the unconditional love he receives from his wife, Caitlin McHugh Stamos (the two married in 2018) and his son, Billy, 6. “I know who I’m going home with. I know who I’m waking up with. And I’m waking up with a clear conscience.”

“My whole life, I wanted a kid,” he says. “And if I hadn’t sobered up, I wouldn’t have my wife or my kid.”

He laughs and says, “I used to whine, ‘I can’t find a wife!’ I think it was just a fuzziness around me, you know? And anybody worth anything could see through it.”

He remembers his dating days. “When you’re single, it takes so much energy to date. Now, all that energy is saved, to be real and in the moment and honest. I can’t hide for very long around my wife and my kid. I am so... present.” He laughs. “And the truth is, they call me out—all the time. They say, ‘Dad, did you just toot?’”

Today Stamos’ favorite amusement park is his backyard on the west side of Los Angeles. “My wife has started growing so many things that we’re now calling it the Stamos Family Farm.”

“The thing that I’m most striving for right now isn’t more work; it’s honesty in my work,” he says. “And it’s hard, because I think for the longest time, I was sort of...” He fades off, seemingly scrolling down his IMDb. “Look, you don’t wanna be in the place where you’re a people pleaser, where you’re just doing whatever you can to make this person happy or this group happy, or this age group, you know?” He laughs. “So to be authentic has been the challenge of my whole career. I had it early on because I didn’t know what I had to lose, right? It feels like I’ve been trying to get back to that place.”



Ghost Town, Knott's Berry Farm

Stamos and wife, Caitlin McHugh Stamos, at Disneyland Resort in February 2019



Living the Disney Dream

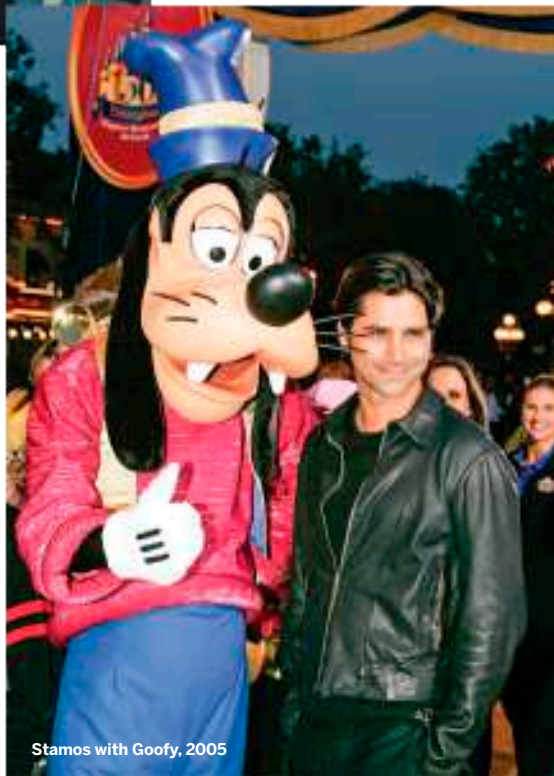
Although Stamos is widely known for his roles on television, off-screen, he's just as famous for his deep-rooted obsession with all things Disney. Growing up eight minutes from Knott's Berry Farm and 20 minutes from Disneyland, the actor says, "I wouldn't be a dreamer if it weren't for where I grew up. I spent my childhood going to those parks, especially Disneyland."

A lifelong fan, the actor has amassed an impressive collection of memorabilia, including rare items like Walt Disney's office phone, the original Welcome to Disneyland sign, an elephant from the Dumbo ride, and an animatronic head from the Pirates of the Caribbean attraction. His love for Disney transcends just fandom; he's been spotted attending events, participating in Disney projects, and even proposing to his now-wife Caitlin McHugh at Disneyland in 2017.

Dumbo the Flying Elephant ride



Dumbo the Flying Elephant ride



Stamos with Goofy, 2005



Wild West stunt show stage,
Knott's Berry Farm

He recently took his wife and son to San Francisco and drove past the Painted Ladies homes on Alamo Square, the homes featured on the famous opening shot of *Full House*. The trio ended up on a hill above San Francisco. "Billy was just running around, rolling down the hill. He had this beautiful suit on and he's getting grass stains, but I'm like, 'Who cares?'" As it goes in San Francisco, *Full House* fans are nearby. "I was sort of disguising myself, listening to people as they looked out. Someone asked, 'Where's the *Full House* house?'"



STAMOS' LATEST PROJECT, *UNPRISONED*, HAS HIM ENERGIZED BECAUSE IT LEVERAGES HIS NEWFOUND SENSE OF FREEDOM

"It's down there," Stamos said. They had no idea he was an expert.

Stamos is in a reflective mood today, thinking about his long career. Sure, he's Uncle Jesse Emeritus. But he's always looked like John Stamos wherever he was. What if he's really at the beginning of his career?

"I think some actors like Leonardo DiCaprio or Jennifer Lawrence, they came out of the gate and they were f-ing great. But others, it takes 20 years, and that's where I am. And I think I'm

finally understanding how to entertain, how to act, and not trying so hard anymore."

Stamos' latest project, the Netflix series *Unprisoned* featuring Kerry Washington and Delroy Lindo, has him energized because it leverages his newfound sense of freedom. "People are taking chances on me in different roles," he says. "Now, I'm fearless because I don't have anything to lose in my career."

He pauses and thinks about his words. "Just my home life. And I'm keeping that." 🌟



SCAN THIS QR CODE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT STAMOS' CHARITY, SAINT AMOS

THE CALIFORNIA QUESTIONNAIRE

John Stamos

Where do you live? Los Angeles.

Why there? I'm a California boy. And I play with a California band. I've lived other places, and I learned that I can't live anywhere else.

Who or what is your greatest California love? Honestly, Disneyland. I have Dumbo in my living room.

What is the biggest misperception about Californians? That we're all Spicolis—you know, from *Fast Times at Ridgemont High*. Sure, we're laid back. But we're actually pretty sharp.

What is the stereotype that most holds true? Sunshine, girls, palm trees, optimism.

What is your favorite Golden State splurge? Gardening. Our backyard—the Stamos Family Farm, I call it—is starting to look like a wonderland.

Time for a road trip—where are you going? The first time I have ever taken a real road trip was over spring break. My wife Caitlin was like, "We need to go do something. We need to travel, just the three of us." We started here in L.A. and we drove up the coast and we stayed in different hotels each night. We went to the Madonna Inn in San Luis Obispo and just kept going up the coast. We would find

kids' museums. We went to the Monterey Bay Aquarium. And then we ended up in San Francisco. We took Billy [John and Caitlin's son] by the *Full House* house—really quickly—and then drove back.

If you could decree an official state culinary experience, what would it be? The pizza from our pizza oven in our backyard.

What is your favorite way to play in California? I think for us it's hiking. It's a way, anywhere in the state, to get out and participate in the natural beauty. Or, for me, playing with the Beach Boys.

Where would you go for the ultimate shopping spree? I do like buying clothes, so Beverly Hills works for me. But I do it fast. I'll go to, like, Tom Ford and say, "I've got four minutes—let's do this."



Site of the *Full House* house exterior, San Francisco

Best California song? "Good Vibrations." Especially when we play it and put the words up for the audience.

Can you share your favorite hidden gem in the state? This restaurant called Inn of the Seventh Ray in Topanga. It's super romantic, you eat under the trees, and it's very healthy. A little secret-y kind of place.

How would your California dream day unfold? When Caitlin's doing something and she's gone, we have a very specific Dad and Billy Day. We go to the mall and get a boba tea. Then we go to the arcade, then this restaurant in The Commons. Then the bookstore. Then ice cream. We cannot deviate from anything. Now he just drags me. "Come on, Dad. We're going here now. I'll show you where it is."



Stamos performing with the Beach Boys at Stagecoach, April 2024



The Golden State culinary scene thrives on diversity (every cuisine imaginable is here) and abundance (100,000-plus restaurants and counting). Here's an alphabetically arranged anthology to help you plan your next dining adventure.

California Restaurants

An A to Z guide

BY ANN MARIE BROWN







IS FOR ALTA ADAMS

In L.A.'s historic West Adams neighborhood, chef Keith Corbin serves reimagined soul food: fritters made with black-eyed peas, vegan gumbo, and creamy almond-milk yam pie. While you sip a bourbon cocktail on the string-lighted patio, you might bump into Jay-Z, Issa Rae, John Legend, or Tracee Ellis Ross.

B IS FOR BAR LE CÔTE

Los Olivos' Grand Avenue brims with top-notch restaurants, but this blue-brick tavern is the hot ticket for seafood with Spanish flair: A five-course tasting menu yields intriguing dishes like beef tartare topped with fried oysters, or you can order à la carte to try plates of caviar-topped potato chips, scallop crudo, dry-aged branzino, and saffron buns dabbed with Santa Barbara sea-urchin butter.

C IS FOR COULDN'T PICK JUST ONE

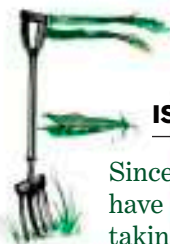
The letter C presents an impossible dilemma for list-makers. There's Chez Panisse, Alice Waters' Berkeley trendsetter that all but invented California cuisine. And Cotogna in San Francisco, a homey Italian restaurant that turns every meal into a special occasion. In Carlsbad, Campfire's wood-fired kitchen produces stylish cocktails and grilled meats. Cheeky's in Palm Springs—a popular brunch spot—has mastered both the bacon flight and avocado toast. And we didn't even mention Callie in San Diego and Cold Spring Tavern in Santa Barbara and Copper Top BBQ in Big Pine and Connie & Ted's in West Hollywood.

D IS FOR DUARTE'S TAVERN

Backroads rambling leads to big rewards in Pescadero. Tucked into a few blocks of antique shops and artisans' studios, Duarte's 1894 stagecoach stop has been owned by the same family for 130 years. Artichoke soup is the hands-down favorite, but it's worth a second visit for crab cioppino and olallieberry pie.

E IS FOR EL MOLINO CENTRAL

At this roadside stop in Boyes Hot Springs, the standout ingredient is organic masa that's ground in-house. That extra step results in the best corn tortillas you've ever had. But don't stop there: Load up on halibut ceviche, birria tacos, chicken sopes, pork tamales, fish tacos—whatever you can fit on your picnic table out back.



IS FOR FARM-TO-FORK ▼

Since the 1990s, Sacramento-area chefs have rallied around “farm-to-fork” cooking, taking advantage of surrounding San

Joaquin Valley farms to procure the freshest ingredients for their culinary creations. Taste the locally grown difference at restaurants like Mulvaney's B&L in Sacramento, Preserve in



Winters, Savory Café in Woodland, Taste in Plymouth, Restaurant Josephine in Auburn, Rosemary's Farm-to-Fork in Dixon, or The Argonaut Farm to Fork Café in Coloma. When just-picked produce doesn't have to travel far, it just tastes better.

G IS FOR THE GOAT & VINE

At this Old Town Temecula eatery, modern-rustic chandeliers hang from an embossed white ceiling, goat murals decorate the walls, and servers deliver hearth-baked pizzas to patrons schmoozing in cozy booths. Your pie might be topped with jalapeño-lime carnitas or cremini mushrooms, but its bubbly-thin crust (made from Italian Caputo flour) will capture your attention.





Bar Le Côte



Cotogna



El Molino Central



Preserve



Jocko's Steakhouse

H IS FOR HEIRLOOM

Heirloom's rotating seasonal menu hinges on the Central Valley's agricultural bounty, with farm-fresh produce tossed into salads, piled onto burgers and pastas, and muddled into cocktails. Try the tequila-based Spicy Farmer with locally grown watermelon and cherry tomatoes—it's a Fresno favorite.



IS FOR IN-N-OUT

Legendary? Revered? Cult favorite? Yes, all that. Even diners who usually shun fast food will confess to an In-N-Out obsession.

Family-owned since 1948, the burger chain with 276 California locations has built a solid-gold reputation on fresh cooking—no microwaves, heat lamps, or freezers. The menu lists burgers, fries, shakes, and sodas, but devotees swear by the not-so-secret "secret menu" of upgrades, like an animal-style burger with added pickles, grilled onions, and extra sauce.



J IS FOR JOCKO'S STEAKHOUSE

The Central Coast is well-supplied with steakhouses serving Santa Maria-style barbecue, and each joint does its own riff on the grilling method popularized by 19th-century rancheros. Nipomo stalwart Jocko's stands out for longevity (a family business since 1925), authenticity (meat sizzling over red oak logs), and no-frills decor (cattle brands emblazoned on wood-paneled walls). Like all Jocko's entrées, the signature dry-aged Spencer ribeye comes with an army of side dishes including juicy pinquito beans, a local tradition. Taste more Santa Maria-style 'cue at The Hitching Post II in Buellton, Far Western Tavern in Orcutt, Shaw's Steakhouse in Santa Maria, and Firestone Grill in San Luis Obispo.



IS FOR KOREATOWN

The home of America's largest Korean community, this L.A. neighborhood is packed with eateries serving flame-licked barbecue, fiery cabbage kimchi, and soju-laced cocktails. Start your tasting tour at Dan Sung Sa, a 27-year mainstay known for spicy pork stew and skewers. Continue with pork ribs at Ham Ji Park, oxtail soup at Sun Nong Dan, pork belly at Woo Hyang Woo, spicy acorn noodles at Kobawoo House, and beef bulgogi almost everywhere.



Dan Sung Sa

L IS FOR LA SUPER-RICA TAQUERIA

Santa Barbara locals like to debate whether this was really Julia Child's favorite restaurant, but the fact that she was a regular here plants this no-frills taqueria firmly in the "culinary institution" category. Wait for your turn at the register, then ask for the Super-Rica Especial: al pastor layered with roasted pasilla chiles and smothered in melted cotija cheese, gently resting on house-made tortillas.

Somlaw Machu Ktis Manaws

PINEAPPLE CURRY

Recipe by Chef Channy Laux





COMFORT IN A BOWL

Naturally sweet, a hint of sour, rich with creamy coconut milk – **Chef Channy Laux's somlaw machu ktis manaws** (pineapple curry) offers the perfect balance of intense flavor without a lot of heat. Cambodian cuisine is a unique fusion of influences and techniques from around the globe, and this comforting curry dish features ingredients that are easy to source and even easier to prep. Discover the best of authentic Cambodian cuisine from San Jose's Angkor Chef and learn how to recreate this special dish at home.

INGREDIENTS

3 ounces cooking oil	1.5 ounces Lacinato kale (remove stems, chop bite-sized)
5 tbsp Angkor California Chili Powder	
6 ounces Angkor Lemongrass Paste	1 ounce <i>chi neang vorng</i> (Thai basil)
1.5 pounds chicken thighs (1-inch cubes)	Salt to taste
1.5 pounds fresh pineapple (½-inch cubes)	1 lime (optional)
5 cups chicken broth	
21 ounces coconut cream	

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Prepare the base – Heat oil and chili powder over low heat; stir continuously until oil turns red. Add 6 tablespoons of the top part of coconut cream; stir constantly until paste is bubbling and uniform in texture. Add lemongrass paste, continue cooking until liquid is gone and paste begins to stick together.
2. Cook the meat – Turn heat to medium, add chicken and sauté until meat is evenly seared. Add ½ cup of water. Bring to boil, reduce heat and simmer for 10 to 15 minutes until chicken is fully cooked (at least 165 F), stirring halfway through.
3. Add remaining ingredients – Add pineapple, mix well. Turn heat to high, add chicken broth and bring to a rolling boil. Add the remaining coconut cream, stir. Turn off heat, add basil and kale; add salt to taste.
4. Optional – Some pineapple is too sweet and not sour enough, so it is an option to add fresh-squeezed lime juice to taste.

NOTES

Serve with steamed rice, slices of baguette (toasted), soba noodles or angel-hair pasta.

Despite its beautiful deep red color, this popular soup is not spicy.

TASTE THE WORLD IN SAN JOSE'S MARKETS

Chicken-flavored chips. Guava candies. Pistachio-stuffed chocolates. If there's ever a TikTok trend to follow, it's grocery store tourism. You don't even have to leave the country to do it! In San Jose's diverse neighborhoods, you can go from authentic restaurants to local markets and ethnic grocery stores for culinary exploration.

Views of Asia

Love piping hot bowls of flavorful pho and crusty bánh mì sandwiches? San Jose is home to the nation's largest Vietnamese population, so authentic restaurants are everywhere. At the heart of it is Little Saigon between Euclid and Highland avenues, where fun grocery store finds include cherimoya and fresh mango, sweet *kẹo dừa* (coconut candy), and crispy *cơm cháy chà bông* (rice cracker snacks).

There are plenty of choices for Thai and Cambodian food as well. In Downtown San Jose, Chef Channy Laux doesn't just whip up flavorful Khmer cuisine in her restaurant, Angkor Chef, but she also has a line of imported ingredients like lemongrass paste and kempot pepper so you can recreate your own dishes at home.

A Taste of Portugal

Between 33rd Street and Highway 101, Little Portugal is known for its beautiful architecture and everything from high-end cuisine to *pasteis de nata* (custard tart) in beloved bakeries. Check out small spots like Goulart's, a butcher and market offering items like housemade *linguiça* (smoked sausage), oil-packed sardines and peri-peri hot sauce.



India's Diverse Flavors

Indian expats and their families flock to grocery stores and supermarkets that carry the best imported brands from North and South India. In stores like Super India, you can taste your way through the varieties of samosas. Stock your kitchen with turmeric and cardamom pods. Sample fried gulab jamun in sweet rose syrup and get the ingredients to make your own.

Journey to Japantown

Mitsuwa Marketplace will make you feel as if you've traveled abroad as you browse shelves full of Japanese brands. The bustling food court will transport you with freshly prepared sushi, steaming noodle bowls and *katsudon* (fried pork cutlet and egg over rice). Make your way to Nihonmachi, one of the last three authentic Japantowns in the U.S., for a bento box or sweet mochi treat.

This is only a sprinkling of all the international flavors in San Jose. From Italian ingredients to popular Hispanic brands to Middle Eastern food bazaars and shops, where will you begin your grocery store world tour?



Awarded for consistently exceptional cooking, a Michelin star is the kiss of success for the most ambitious chefs. California boasts more Michelin stars than any other state—85 at last tally, including six three-star honorees praised for “exceptional cuisine” that is “worth a special journey.” San Francisco and Los Angeles spots dominate the list, but plenty of awardees are farther afield, like San Diego’s Addison, Oakland’s Commis, San Jose’s Adega, Yountville’s The French Laundry, Carmel-by-the-Sea’s Aubergine, Sacramento’s Localis, and Elk’s Harbor House. If you hope to score a table at any of these spots, reserve far in advance.

N IS FOR NEPENTHE

Perched on a precipice 800 feet above the Pacific, this Big Sur hideaway lives up to the Greek meaning of its name, “isle of no sorrow.” The redwood edifice built by a student of Frank Lloyd Wright has hosted Jack Kerouac, Henry Miller, Clint Eastwood, and millions of travelers since its 1949 opening. Kick back on the sprawling open-air patio and nosh on an Ambrosiaburger—ground steak and gooey cheddar smothered in secret sauce—while you soak in Big Sur’s ethereal beauty. Check Highway 1 road conditions before traveling.



O IS FOR OYSTERS

Fifty miles north of San Francisco, Tomales Bay is one of the country’s best oyster-growing regions, and Hog Island Oyster Company has been farming them here since 1983. The delectable bivalves grow in the shallow waters right next to the picnic tables where you eat them, either raw with mignonette or grilled with chipotle-bourbon butter. If you can’t get a reservation or the line is too long, there’s more half-shell-slurping nearby at The Marshall Store, Tony’s Seafood, and Nick’s Cove. In San Francisco, sample oysters from far and wide at Swan Oyster Depot, a legendary Polk Street haunt since 1912. The cash-only, counter-service raw bar—Anthony Bourdain’s favorite—is decked out in old photos, NFL jerseys, and signed dollar bills.



IS FOR PHO 79

Since 1982, Garden Grove’s famous pho shop has stood out as a shining beacon of Orange County’s Little Saigon, having earned a coveted James Beard America’s Classic award. Chefs

turn out steaming bowls of aromatic, noodle-rich broth made with oxtail, tripe, beef, or chicken. Star anise and cinnamon are key players, but only the chef knows the other secret spices.

Q IS FOR Q SUSHI

Californians are obsessed with sushi, whether it’s served at high-end kaiseki restaurants or strip-mall sushi bars. L.A. is the state’s epicenter with eight Michelin-lauded raw-fish luminaries, including Q Sushi. Score a seat for the 17-course omakase ritual so you can experience chef Hiroyuki Naruke’s minimalist nigiri perfection.

R IS FOR RÉPUBLIQUE

This powerhouse of California-French cuisine is housed in a 1929 brick building with a chateau-style atrium arching over a tiled courtyard. The remarkable Los Angeles compound contains a bakery, café, and bar in front—perfect for lingering with friends over a brioche and croque madame—and a more formal dining room in back, ideal for sharing black truffle risotto and braised short rib on date night. Eater calls République “the ultimate all-day neighborhood canteen,” a truly apt description.

IS FOR SLANTED DOOR

In 1995, Charles Phan launched a hole-in-the-wall restaurant on San Francisco’s Valencia Street. Diners flooded in to



try Vietnamese foods like shrimp-stuffed spring rolls and shaking beef. Business was so brisk that Phan moved to a larger location, garnered dozens of awards, and opened satellite restaurants. The Ferry Building location closed, but now Napa has its own Slanted Door, a modern space with a curved bar and a tree-dotted patio. The menu includes old favorites, new dishes, and an outstanding wine list. In 2025, a new Slanted Door will open in its original location.



T IS FOR TROKAY

At this Truckee hideaway, chef-owners John and Nyna Weathersen dream up an ever-changing tasting menu of impeccably plated local delicacies. The evening’s offerings might be Mount Lassen trout, morel mushrooms, or meadow sorrel, all accompanied by a full-throttle wine list. Add in a mountain-chic dining room with stone walls and rough-hewn timbers, and you have a Tahoe dinner that hits all the right notes.

U IS FOR UNION

Named for the bike-friendly, one-way street that fronts it, Union is Old Town Pasadena's neighborhood spot for northern Italian cuisine with a California accent. Owner Marie Petulla and her crew turn out handmade pastas with undeniably Californian flourishes, like bucatini with Santa Barbara pistachios, spaghetti with Fresno chili, or polenta with local wild mushrooms.



IS FOR VEGAN

California's 500-plus vegan restaurants are making serious carnivores reconsider their eating habits. San Diego's Kindred, beloved for its skate-punk vibes, serves plant-based chimichurri skewers, cauliflower steak, and jackfruit barbecue. Further north in Oceanside,

The Plot offers a fine-dining experience with chayote squash ceviche, lentil caviar, and lion's mane mushroom cakes. Monterey's El Cantaro cooks up plant-based tamales and chilaquiles in authentic Mexican style, Sacramento's Buddha Belly Burger creates a tasty banh mi burger topped with pickled carrots and jalapeños, and San Francisco's Shizen prepares sushi with vegetables, grains, and seeds.

W IS FOR WAHPEPAH'S KITCHEN

Crystal Wahpepah was the first Native American chef to appear on the Food Network's *Chopped*, and her Oakland restaurant honors Indigenous ingredients and cooking techniques. The East Bay native and member of the Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma creates contemporary dishes that connect to the cuisines of multiple tribes. Try the blueberry-infused bison meatballs, Cheyenne River bison short loin, sweet potato taquitos, or Northern Ute yellow corn bread.

X IS FOR XIAN BIANG BIANG NOODLE

In the San Gabriel Valley, nearly 20 percent of the population is of Chinese or Taiwanese descent, so that's where L.A. diners go for outstanding Sichuan, Hunan, Shandong, or Cantonese fare. Towns like Monterey Park, Alhambra, Rosemead, Temple City, and San Gabriel teem with outstanding restaurants like XiAn Biang Biang Noodle. Here, chefs prepare the cuisine of Xi'an, the city of the famous terracotta warriors. The namesake dish is a bowl of ultra-wide wheat noodles, hand-pulled until they're stretchy, then doused in spices and hot oil. Stir-fried lamb and Chinese hamburgers are also Xi'an staples.



Yaks on the 5

Y IS FOR YAKS ON THE 5

This burger joint has put tiny Dunsmuir on the map, especially for hungry I-5 drivers. Yaks cooks up a dizzying array of burgers—specifically Prather Ranch's grass-fed beef patties piled with onion strings, chipotle sauce, lime aioli, pickled jalapeños, and almost anything else you can imagine. Top picks are the crispy-melty Bacon Overload and umami-seasoned Cilantro Bomb, but any burger you get will be a game changer.



IS FOR ZUNI CAFÉ

If there's a quintessential San Francisco gathering spot, it's light-filled Zuni Café, the anchor of Market and Gough streets since 1979. Take a seat in the two-story dining room or at the long, copper bar, and you'll instantly feel like you're a part of something warm and welcoming. You can make a two-person meal out of a Caesar salad and six-inch-high "haystack" of crispy shoestring potatoes, but many diners insist on Zuni's classic dish: wood-fired roast chicken and warm bread salad.



Zuni Café

TAKE THE WIDE-OPEN WONDER PATH.

📍 BIG SUR

Monterey County is made up of endless paths and each one takes you to something incredible. These paths tie all of Monterey together, creating one big, epic journey. They connect you to your next destination and your next adventure – but also to the people around you. The question is: which way will you go? No matter what path you take, it's sure to lead to inspiration.

Travel Responsibly.

MONTEREY

FIND YOUR WAY HERE™
[SEEMONTEREY.COM/YOURWAY](https://seemonterey.com/yourway)



There are almost 5,000 wineries in the Golden State, and finding the perfect fit for you and your tasting crew can be a bit daunting. So we crafted a decision tree designed to point you in the right direction. It all begins with a simple question:





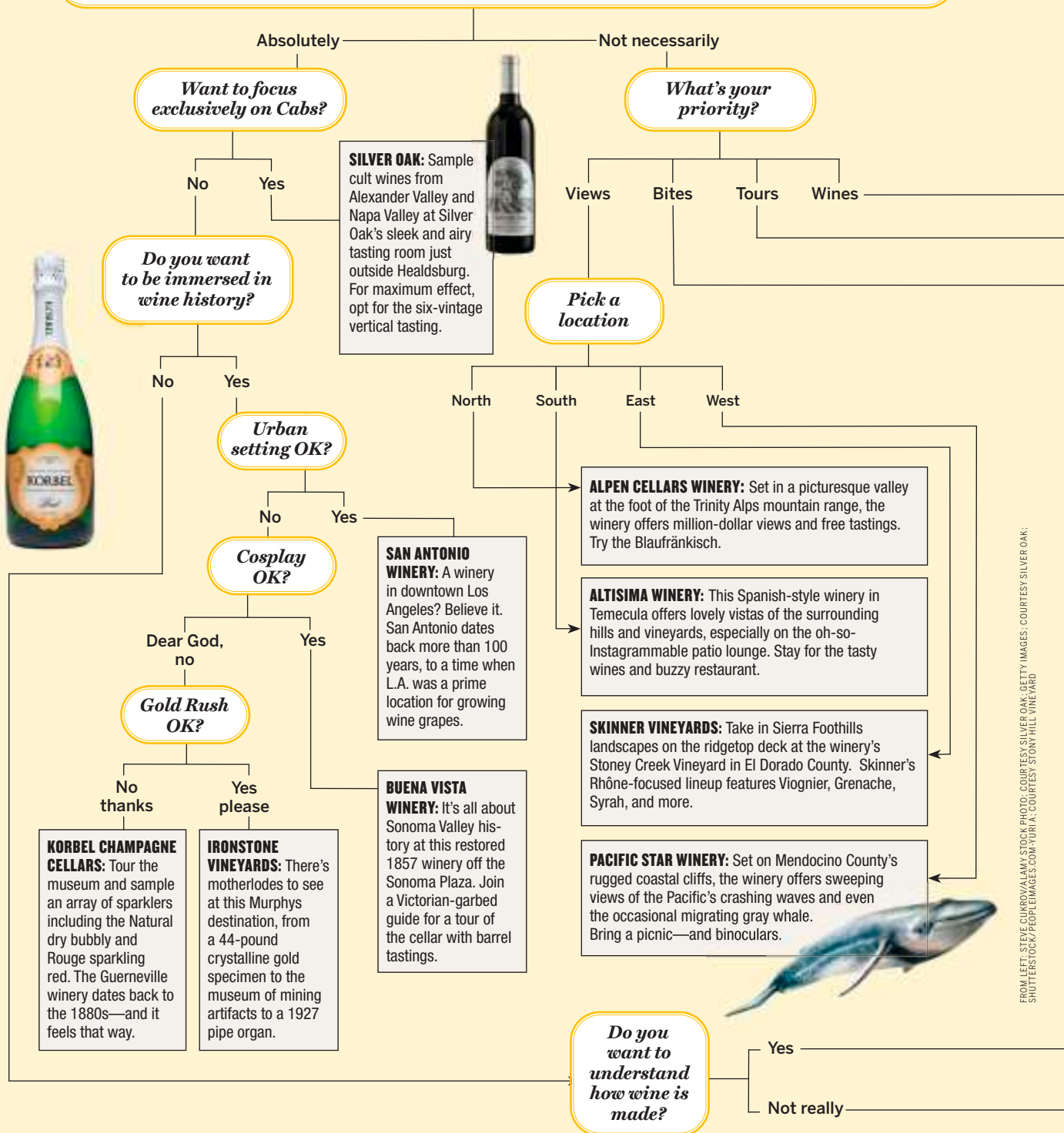
The California Winery Finder

BY TINA CAPUTO

**What Kind of Winery Experience
Are You Looking For?**

Beginner

Are you looking to boost your wine knowledge?



FROM LEFT: STEVE CUKROVALANY STOCK PHOTO; COURTESY SILVER OAK; GETTY IMAGES; COURTESY SILVER OAK; SHUTTERSTOCK/PEOPLEIMAGES.COM-YURIA; COURTESY STONEY HILL VINEYARD



Silver Oak

Playful

Serious



What do you like to drink?

What kind of hungry are you?

Snacky

Starving

Sophisticated

ACQUIESCE WINERY & VINEYARDS:

Mosey up to the century-old barn at this Acampo winery for the Elevated Tasting Experience (\$20), a pairing of Rhône varietal wines and savory small bites from the winery chef.

IDLE HOUR WINERY & KITCHEN:

Make a stop in Oakhurst, just south of Yosemite National Park, to sip single-vineyard wines expertly matched with a full menu of small plates, pizzas, and charcuterie.

ASHES & DIAMONDS:

Soak in a hip, midcentury vibe in Napa with a family-style lunch featuring a seasonal prix fixe menu paired with wines that highlight O.G. Napa flavors and terroir-driven winemaking. (\$175)

What do you want to explore?

Red

White

Pink

1850 WINE CELLARS:

This Apple Hill winery excels at Sierra Foothills reds like the high-scoring Reserve Cabernet and Meritage. Make a bonus stop at sister winery Myka Estates next door.

GREAT BEAR VINEYARDS:

Find out why this family-run Yolo County winery earns top awards for its Chardonnay-Roussanne blend, Sauvignon Blanc, and Albariño.

HUNGRY HAWK VINEYARDS:

View the San Pasqual Valley through rosé-colored glasses on this Escondido estate. The winery makes a bubbly Mourvèdre and a rosy Tempranillo, Grenache, and Merlot blend.

Which part of the process most interests you?

Farming

Winemaking

Blending

TABLAS CREEK VINEYARD:

Take a guided walk among the vineyards and get the lowdown on this progressive Paso Robles winery's certified-regenerative farming practices—and how they impact the family's Rhône-style wines.

LANGETWINS FAMILY WINERY:

The Acampo winery's Progressive Wine Tasting & Winery Tour is a taste- and learn-as-you-go experience that takes you through the cellar and even onto catwalks above the fermentation tanks.

BOTTAIA WINERY:

Play winemaker in the blending lab at this chic Temecula winery. Everyone makes their own red blend from barrel samples, then bottles, corks, and labels it to take home.

Vineyards

Caves

Gardens

BARTHOLOMEW ESTATE:

Saddle up for a guided trail trot among the vines in this Sonoma winery's forested 375-acre park. Along the way, learn about the estate's history and taste sustainable wines.

PINE RIDGE VINEYARDS:

Explore the vast, European-style cave system, dug into a Napa hillside, then settle in to sample small-lot Cabernets in the stylish Cellar 47 cave lounge.

HILL FAMILY ESTATE:

The Secret Garden Tour on this idyllic Yountville estate gets up close and personal with hundreds of fruit trees, plus vegetables, herbs, and culinary flowers—including produce sourced by The French Laundry.

So you mostly want to become a savvy wine taster?

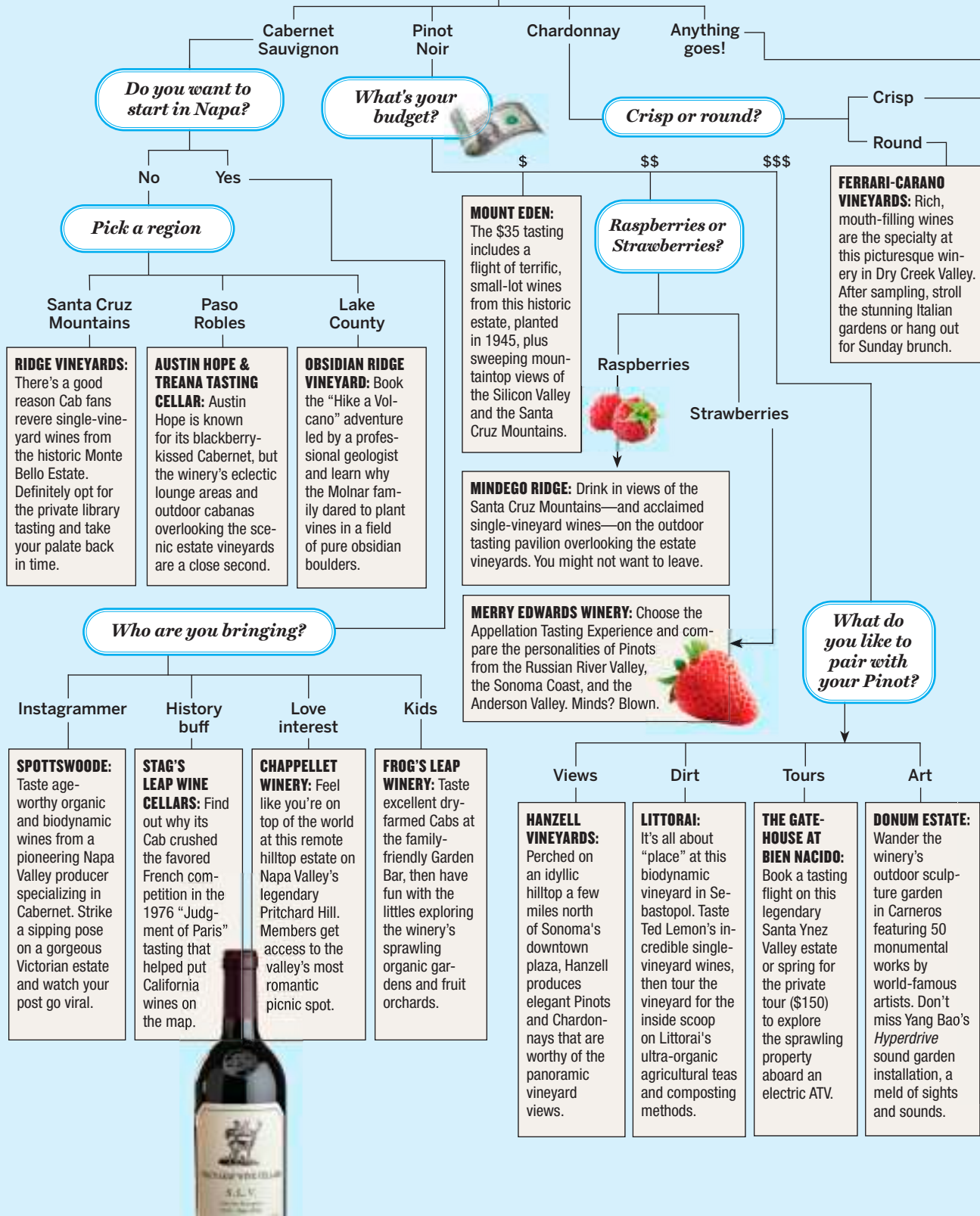
Yes

FOURSIGHT WINES: Get all your burning wine questions answered at this relaxed Anderson Valley winery while sipping Sauvignon Blanc, orange wine, and Pinot Noir with Foursight's winemaker or owners.



Serious

Do you have a varietal in mind?





Spottswode

Playful

How do you feel about bubbles?

They make my nose tickle

Love!

Do you like Merlot?

What else you got?

Yes

SULLIVAN ESTATE: Prove that annoying *Sideways* guy wrong with a blind tasting of some of the world's top Merlots—including Sullivan's Napa Valley version. Sorry, Miles, they're all winners.

LANG & REED: These Napa guys were making Cab Franc before it was cool—since 1996—so it's no wonder theirs is among California's best. Taste on the front porch or in the cozy living room.

A. RAFANELLI WINERY: Learn why this Dry Creek Valley Zin specialist has a cult following. Intimate tastings happen on the scenic patio overlooking the vineyard or in the wine cave among the barrels.

BOKISCH VINEYARDS: From Monastrell to Garnacha to Albariño, this Lodi gem excels in Spanish-style wines. Add a charcuterie box and settle on the shaded patio lounge for lovely vineyard views.

MELVILLE WINERY: This down-to-earth Santa Barbara County spot has cool-climate Syrah's number. Beeline for the estate tasting room in Sta. Rita Hills for nuanced Syrahs with brilliant balance.

CALCAREOUS VINEYARD: This Paso Robles vineyard has won acclaim for its pitch-perfect take on the time-honored harmonization of Grenache, Syrah, and Mourvèdre varieties.

What's your mood?

Relaxed

Remote

Refined

IRON HORSE VINEYARDS: The vibe is chill and the bubbles are lively at this rustic, outdoor-only tasting room in Russian River, where wine barrels serve as tables.

ROEDERER ESTATE: Sip some of California's finest French-inspired sparklers from the makers of Cristal Champagne in Mendocino's Anderson Valley, where the vineyards meet the redwoods. Order the caviar pairing and feel extra fancy.

CARACCIOLI CELLARS: Is "contemporary cellar chic" a thing? It is at this Carmel-by-the-Sea outpost, home to sophisticated sparkling wines, estate grown in the Santa Lucia Highlands.

Cabernet Franc

Zinfandel

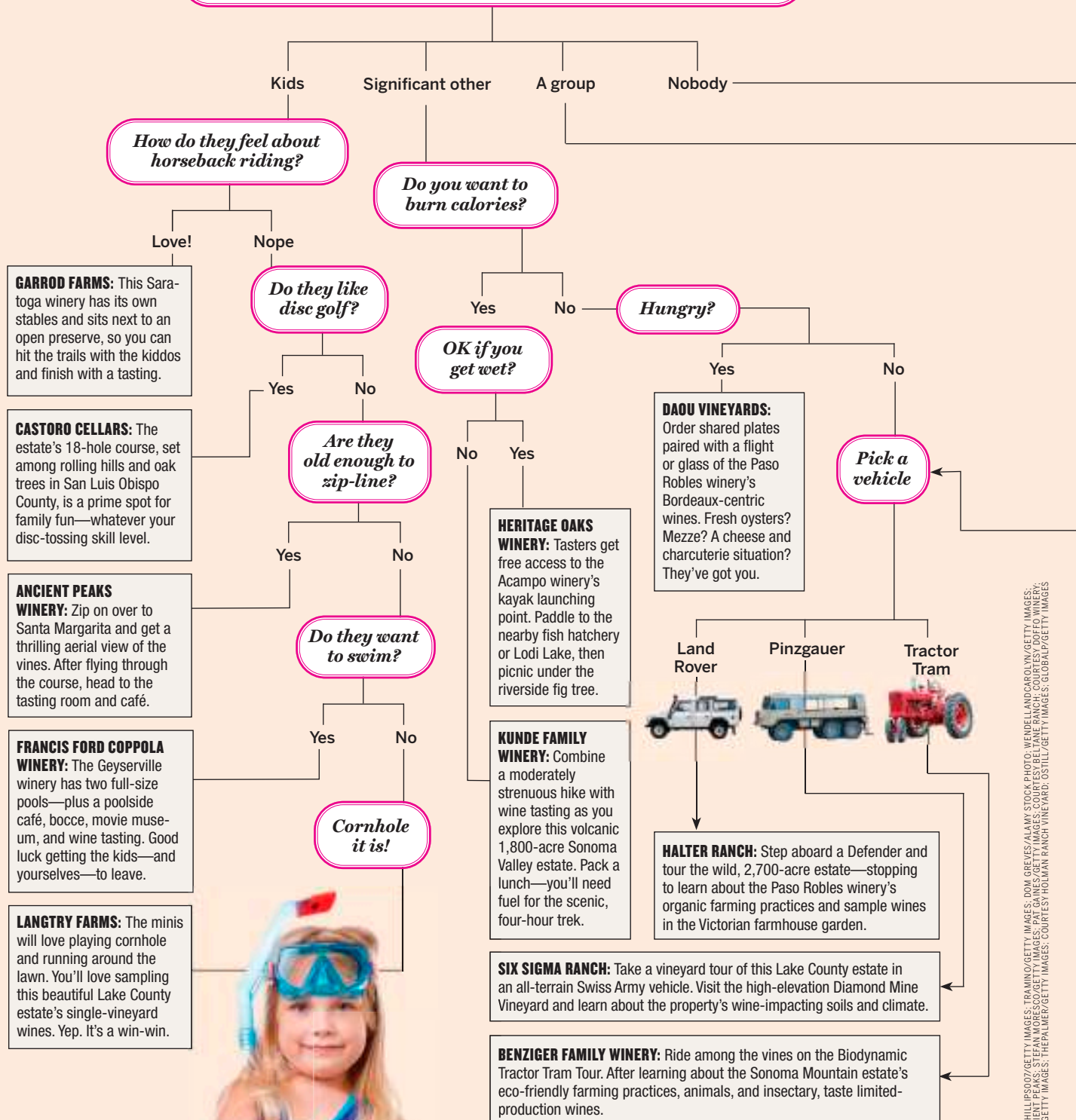
Spanish varietals

Syrah

GSM blend



Who are you tasting with?





Ancient Peaks



Holman Ranch Vineyard

Is the wine your sole focus?

I want more!

Yes

Are you bringing a dog?

Yes

No

SERA FINA CELLARS: Treat your pooch to a day in Amador County at this dog-friendly destination. Pack a picnic and head for the bocce courts, or romp around on the lawn.

DRAGONETTE CELLARS: Geek out with a private tasting at the Santa Barbara County estate and discover why critics gush over this under-the-radar winery's single-vineyard and reserve creations.

How do you like to rock?

Geological wonders

Subterranean structures

Cascading solos

LAVA CAP: Set in the spectacular High Sierra, this winery gets its name from lava that flowed down from the mountains millions of years ago, transforming into unique volcanic vineyard soils.

HOLMAN RANCH: The winery's hi-lo vineyard tour and cave tasting explores the upper vineyards via ATV, then heads down to the caves for a tasting of Carmel Valley wines.

HELWIG WINERY: Rock out with summer concerts in the amphitheater at this Plymouth winery. Tickets include dinner, dancing, and wines to pair with shredding guitar solos.

Do you have a surly so-and-so who doesn't really want to be there?

No

Yes

DOFFO WINERY: The MotoDoffo Vintage Motorcycle Collection at this Temecula winery—a tribute to the Doffo family's need for speed—includes 200 motorcycles and scooters from around the world.

Do you want to meet animals?

No

Yes

Take your pick



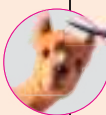
Goat

Alpaca

Longhorn

Pigs

Chickens



PENNYROYAL FARM: This Anderson Valley winery and creamery takes wine-and-cheese pairing to another level. Tour the farm and meet the dairy critters behind Pennyroyal's delicious farmstead cheeses.

SARACINA VINEYARDS: Learn the difference between alpacas and llamas—is there a difference?—at this working ranch in southern Mendocino County.

BELTANE RANCH: The Glen Ellen agricultural preserve's "grazing team" includes impressive longhorn cattle, plus adorable sheep and burros you can feed on the winery's farm tour.

FOLDED HILLS WINERY: Furry kunekune pigs are just one of the animal attractions on this Santa Ynez Valley farmstead. You'll also meet goats, mini donkeys, and a petite cow named Peaches.

JULIETTA WINERY: Get over to Clarksburg in Yolo County and strut with the winery's resident chickens. Then hang out for wine, bocce, cornhole, and giant Jenga. Cluck yeah!





A photograph of a snowy ski slope. In the foreground, a yellow traffic cone with a cartoon character on it sits on the snow. Behind it, a blue safety net runs across the slope. In the background, there is a dense forest of evergreen trees under a clear blue sky.

A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO *California Skiing*

BY ANN MARIE BROWN

You've been tempted to try skiing, but you're lingering on the sidelines. The benefits are obvious—being outside in white-frosted mountains and sharing après-ski fun with friends and family. But doubts are holding you back. We get it. That's why we brought in the experts. Follow their guidance, and soon you'll be clicking in to your bindings and cheering for snow.



How do I know if I'm fit enough to ski?

For a first-timer, strength and aerobic fitness don't help much. "Long-distance runners are super fit, but they're not always great at learning to ski," says Robin Barnes, director of ski services at Heavenly Ski Resort. "It's not about being an athlete. What's most important is to be a good learner, try things out, and learn from your mistakes. Show up with an open mind and you'll have a good experience."

Andy Adams, ski school manager at Kirkwood, says a base level of fitness is useful, but "skiing isn't out of reach for anyone. On your first day, you're asked to do some physical maneuvers that you're not used to and that require some coordination. It can be a little bit humbling, but we pace the lessons so everyone can handle it."

Is skiing safe? I don't want to get injured.

"It's surprisingly rare that anyone gets injured in a beginner ski lesson," says Elianne Furtney, managing director of the Mountain Sports School at Palisades Tahoe. "We teach with a step-by-step learning progression on gentle terrain. The experience is designed to be safe. Beginners are sliding slowly, not speeding down a hill."

Accidents most often occur when new skiers get ahead of themselves, Barnes says. After finishing a first lesson, a beginner might be tempted—often by their more advanced friends—to try out terrain that's above their skill level. "It's like you've just learned to walk, and then you decide to run a marathon," she says. "You don't want to bite off more than you can chew."

Why should I learn to ski in California?

California has 20-plus resorts, each with world-class instructors and an array of lesson programs. You can ski in the mountains east of Los Angeles or 650 miles north on Mt. Shasta—or in dozens of places in between. Resorts range from Lake Tahoe's 6,000-acre Palisades Tahoe, with amenities like glitzy restaurants and après-ski parties, to intimate ski hills like Yosemite's Badger Pass, a mere 90 acres but with astounding scenery. California's mountains receive plentiful snow: Lake Tahoe and Sierra Nevada resorts average 300–400 inches per year, and Southern California resorts average 100 inches. Airports in Sacramento, Fresno, Ontario, Burbank, Oakland, Bishop, and other cities make it easy to deplane in the morning and ski in the afternoon.

**How do I fit in on the slopes?
I don't want to look like a newbie.**

You may not understand all the ski-culture subtleties on your first day, but it makes no difference. When you're a beginner, you're surrounded by beginners, not Olympic champions—and your instructor has your back.

"We teach you more than how to ski," says Caleb Lee, director of winter sports at Mountain High Ski Resort. "We show you how to manage equipment, how to put on and take off your skis, and how to communicate with other skiers."

OK, what can I expect out of lessons? "A lot of people think that if they take one lesson, they'll learn enough to be able to ski all over the mountain. That's almost never true," Barnes says. She recommends you take a second lesson the day after your first, then spend some time mastering your

skills on the beginner runs until you feel completely confident.

Most resorts sell single lessons and three-lesson packages. At China Peak Mountain Resort near Fresno, instructor Spencer NeVille says that "one lesson lets you dip your toes into skiing, but we always suggest that students take three lessons. That gives them a real plan, a foundation to become active in the sport."

No matter where you go, your first lesson, which typically lasts for two to three hours, starts with "flatland" activities. "We do static exercises on level ground. We learn how skis slide on the snow, which is really foreign to a lot of students," says Lee at Mountain High. After learning the basics on the flats, beginners progress to a hill with a slight incline. At some resorts, you'll ride a chairlift to the top of the hill. Other resorts use "magic carpets" or moving conveyor belts to transport beginners.

Bobby Garrett, a Mammoth Mountain ski instructor, says the first lesson is mostly about building

PRO TIP: TRY THREE LESSONS

Wondering when you'll progress from the beginner slopes? "Beginners come with all different expectations. Some people just want to have a great experience for today. Other people hope that in three days they'll be able to conquer the whole mountain," Barnes says.

About 20 percent of terrain is marked with a green circle, signifying beginner slopes, while 60 percent are blue-square intermediate slopes. The remaining are expert-level black diamonds. There's no shame in sticking to the green runs, but if you really like skiing, you'll naturally want to progress. That's why most resorts recommend a three-lesson progression. Your third lesson will give you the skills and confidence to handle more varied terrain. "After the third lesson, the mountain opens up for you," Barnes says.



Sierra-at-Tahoe

confidence. "The whole point of the first lesson is to enjoy yourself and enjoy being on the snow. Your instructor will help you gain some skills and get comfortable performing those skills. When your first lesson is fun, you'll want to come back and learn more."

Do I need to reserve lessons in advance, or can I just show up? Whether you choose group or private, book lessons online and in advance. Not only do lessons often sell out on weekends and holidays, but when you book ahead, the ski school can send you information about what to bring, where to get your equipment, and what time to show up. When booking, check the age restrictions for both children and adult lessons—most resorts will allow kids as young as 4 in children's group lessons and teenagers as young as 14 in adult group lessons.

When is the best time to go?

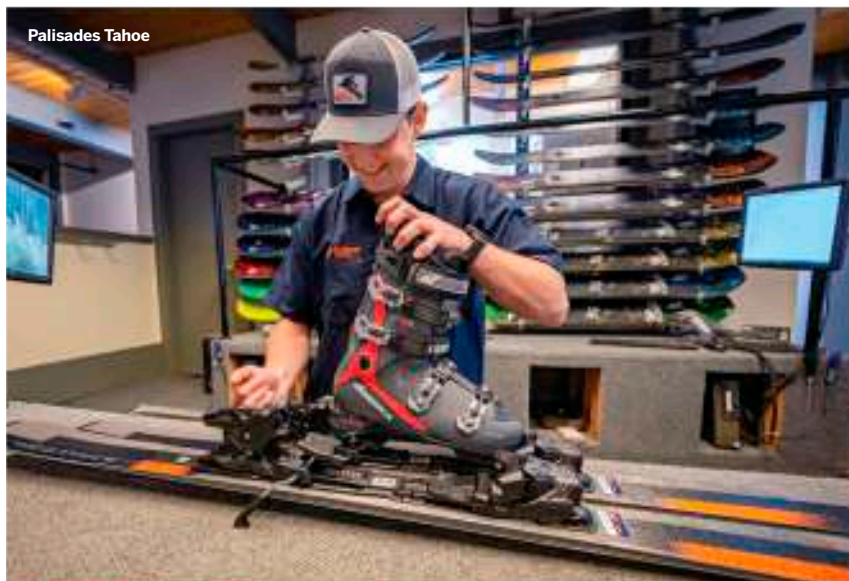
December to April, when the California ski season is in full swing. Many resorts open as early as Thanksgiving and a few remain open until June or sometimes even July. That gives you 150 to 250 days to learn how to ski, so choose wisely, says Adams. “You’re definitely going to have a better experience and get more personal attention if you come midweek. There are less people on the slopes, on the roads, in the parking lot, and at the learning area. For beginners, that makes everything a lot easier.” Don’t think you need to wait for a big snowfall, says Caleb Lee at Mountain High. “A lot of fresh snow doesn’t make a huge difference when you’re learning, and a big storm makes the resort busier.” Taking your first lesson early in the winter

has one advantage: You have a long window to return for additional lessons or to practice your newfound skills, rather than having to wait until next year.

Should I learn skiing or snowboarding?

Skiing is typically easier for adults to learn than snowboarding. “For the average person who wants to introduce themselves to snow sports, a beginner ski lesson will get you up on the mountain and enjoying yourself faster. Snowboarding has a steeper learning curve,” says Andy Adams, ski and snowboard school manager at Kirkwood. Mammoth Mountain’s Garrett adds that “within two to four hours, I can teach a very high percentage of adults the foundation of gliding on skis, but it takes much longer to learn the basics of snowboarding.”

Palisades Tahoe



PRO TIP: RENT FROM THE RESORT

The gear you need for your first few days of learning is different than the gear you’ll need after you’ve progressed, so renting makes sense. Many resorts sell beginner packages that include lessons and gear rentals—skis, boots, poles, and a helmet. You’ll pay one price for everything.

Garrett strongly recommends renting directly from the resort, not from an off-mountain rental shop. “That way if there’s a problem with any of your gear, or if it doesn’t fit quite right, you can walk into the rental shop and swap it out, and you’re back at your lesson in five minutes.”

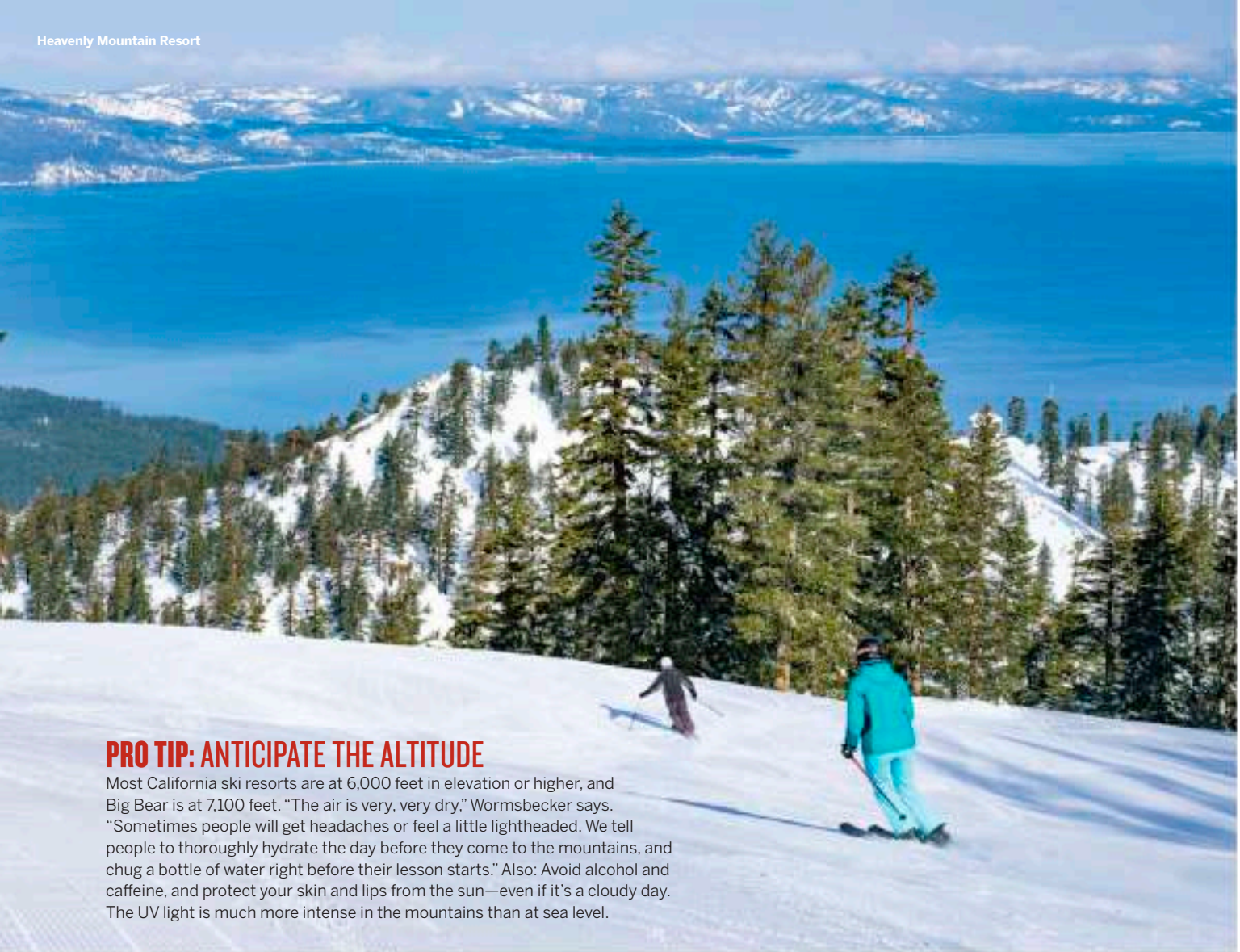


FROM LEFT: COURTESY PALISADES TAHOE; COURTESY HEAVENLY MOUNTAIN RESORT/VAIL RESORTS

SNOW LINGO **CORDUROY:** Freshly groomed snow that’s machine-packed into a ribbed texture that resembles corduroy **POWDER:** Extremely light,



fluffy snow that falls during periods of cold temperatures and low humidity. Powder is the opposite of “Sierra cement,” which is very wet and heavy snow.



PRO TIP: ANTICIPATE THE ALTITUDE

Most California ski resorts are at 6,000 feet in elevation or higher, and Big Bear is at 7,100 feet. “The air is very, very dry,” Wormsbecker says. “Sometimes people will get headaches or feel a little lightheaded. We tell people to thoroughly hydrate the day before they come to the mountains, and chug a bottle of water right before their lesson starts.” Also: Avoid alcohol and caffeine, and protect your skin and lips from the sun—even if it’s a cloudy day. The UV light is much more intense in the mountains than at sea level.

What should I wear?

but all our experts recommended the same recipe: two lightweight layers, weather-resistant outerwear, waterproof gloves, eye protection, proper socks, and a helmet.

“Being prepared for the elements means weather-resistant clothing, top and bottom—not your jeans,” says Furtney. But that doesn’t mean you need a big, thick parka. “If you wear light layers under a water-resistant shell, you can move more easily, and you’ll be a lot more comfortable.”

NeVille adds: “Sometimes it’s sunny and 45 degrees and people start sweating. It’s great when skiers

Dressing for a day in the snow might seem overwhelming,

can purge a layer if they need to.”

The recommendation: Start with a moisture-wicking layer made of wool or silk, then add a warm middle layer such as a fleece or insulating vest. If you’re worried about getting cold, bring an extra layer with you rather than wearing something thick and heavy.

Your gloves should be waterproof, Barnes says. “You’re going to touch your skis, the snow, touch things that are wet. If you’re wearing knit gloves or gloves that soak up water, your hands are going to get cold.”

She adds that “new skiers often forget goggles or sunglasses, and their eyes can get sunburned. Even if it’s a cloudy day, the snow and high elevation are hard on your eyes. If it’s snowing, goggles are the only option

because sunglasses fog up. If it’s not snowing, sunglasses will suffice.”

Good socks are key, says Adams. “I see too many people wearing cotton socks or wearing multiple pairs. Your feet will get wet and cold in cotton, and multiple pairs create pressure points and blisters.” Any thin, calf-height sock made out of a synthetic fiber will work, or you can purchase ski-specific socks.

In California, helmets aren’t required for skiers older than 18, but most ski schools provide them for free. Mary Wormsbecker, Big Bear Mountain Resort’s ski school director, says that instructors always wear helmets, and it’s not just ski-school policy. “They want to protect themselves, and they want to set a good example.”

FROM LEFT: COURTESY HEAVENLY MOUNTAIN RESORT/VAL RESORTS; COURTESY NORTHSTAR CALIFORNIA/VAL RESORTS; COURTESY PALISADES TAHOE

SNOW LINGO **TERRAIN PARK:** A designated area dotted with jumps, rails, and other manmade features **HALFPIPE:** A U-shaped channel carved out

OK, I've booked lessons and rentals, and I have my ski clothes. What else do I need?

If you don't live close to a ski resort, you'll need lodging. Ideally, your hotel room will be near the resort where you're taking lessons—you'll want to spend more time on the slopes and less time in the car. Look into transportation options from your hotel. Mountain towns like South Lake Tahoe, Truckee, and Mammoth Lakes offer shuttle services to some ski resorts, saving you the hassle of driving and parking.

Make sure your car is prepared for the mountains, where roads may be icy. For winter driving in the mountains, California law requires that your car has four-wheel-drive or all-wheel-drive and snow tires. If your car is two-wheel-drive, you must carry tire chains or cables, which wrap around your tires to provide traction. When highway signs indicate "chain control" conditions, you'll need to stop at a checkpoint and install your chains.



PRO TIP: CHOOSE THE RIGHT LESSON FOR YOU

Are you a team player? That helps for group lessons, which typically include five to 10 beginners. "Group lessons are great because you're with like-minded people who are learning just like you," Neville says. They also provide the benefit of watching other beginners learn. "It's as if you have more than one instructor because you're constantly learning from watching everyone else," Barnes adds.

Private lessons cost three to four times as much, but they're completely focused on you. "Everything is custom-tailored to your learning pace and style, your sports experience, and what your goals are," says Adams. If you're a parent who wants to learn with your young children, private lessons are a must since families can stick together.

You can buy tire chains or cables at any well-stocked auto parts store (be sure to purchase the correct tire size). And since "chain control conditions" typically happen during a storm, it's smart to practice installing and removing tire chains in your sunny driveway before you drive to the mountains.

Watch the weather forecast as your ski trip draws closer. A major storm can create treacherous travel conditions and possibly even shut down the road to your ski resort. Knowing the forecast will help you decide how much time to allow for driving to the mountains.

What's all this going to cost? That all depends on where and when. During Christmas-to-New Year's week or Presidents Day week, prices are at their highest. But there are deals galore during ordinary midweek days. Spend some time online at the resorts' websites, and you can find adult group lesson-and-rental packages for as low as \$100 to \$150 per day (less than a single-day lift ticket, in many cases).

For the items you need to wear or bring—ski clothes, gloves, goggles, and so on—keep in mind that

beginners don't need top-of-the-line gear. You can borrow clothes from your skiing friends, or buy low-cost ski wear from big-box stores or even thrift shops. "You don't need to have brand new gear when you're starting out. What matters is that you're warm, dry, and comfortable," says Lee at Mountain High.

I'm going to give it a shot. But which California resort should I go to?

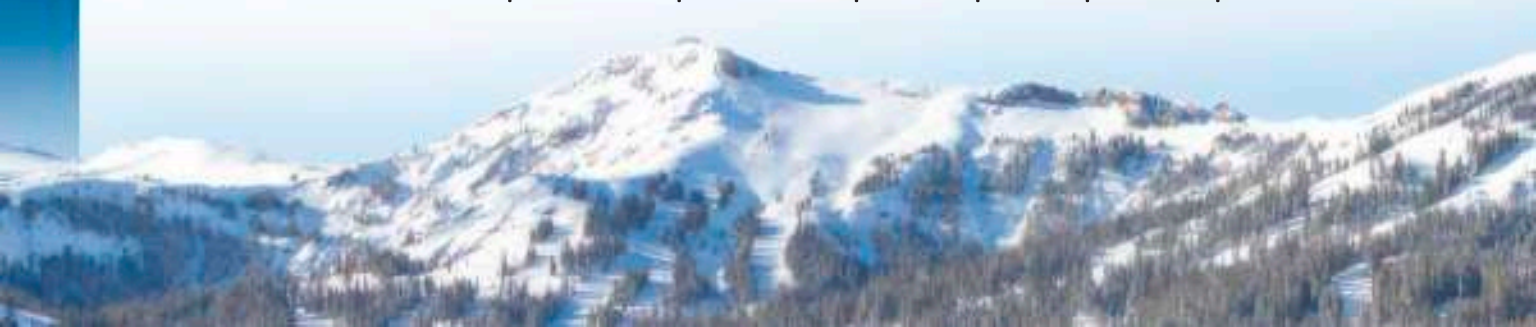
You can't go wrong here. Every California resort offers lessons, rentals, and special discounts and perks to attract new skiers, both adults and children. As a beginner, you're going to spend most of your time at the resort's learning area and on gentle beginner runs, so any resort will do. To narrow down your options, think about what else matters to you. Do you want a wealth of shopping and dining options? Do you want to sleep in a hotel right on the slopes? Are you traveling with companions who want easy access to other activities, like snow-tubing, snowshoeing, or snowmobiling? Check the chart on the next page to see what each California ski resort has to offer.



Northstar California

Where should I go skiing?

	REGION	ELEVATION	TRAILS	LIFTS	ACRES	FOOD
BADGER PASS	High Sierra	7,200 feet	10	5	90	1 eatery
BEAR VALLEY MOUNTAIN RESORT	High Sierra	6,600 feet	122	9	1,680	4 eateries
BIG BEAR MOUNTAIN RESORT	Inland Empire	7,140 feet	60	31	678	5 eateries
BOREAL MOUNTAIN RESORT	High Sierra	7,200 feet	34	7	380	2 eateries
CHINA PEAK	High Sierra	7,030 feet	45	10	1400	3 eateries
DODGE RIDGE	High Sierra	6,600 feet	70	10	862	3 eateries
DONNER SKI RANCH	High Sierra	7,030 feet	52	6	500	1 eatery
GRANLIBAKKEN	High Sierra	6,380 feet	2	2	3	2 eateries
HEAVENLY MOUNTAIN RESORT	High Sierra	6,657 feet	97	28	4,800	9 eateries
JUNE MOUNTAIN	High Sierra	7,545 feet	41	6	1,500	3 eateries
KIRKWOOD MOUNTAIN RESORT	High Sierra	7,800 feet	86	15	2,300	7 eateries
MAMMOTH MOUNTAIN	High Sierra	7,950 feet	175	25	3,500	20+ eateries
MOUNTAIN HIGH	Inland Empire	6,600 feet	61	14	290	6 eateries
MT. BALDY	Inland Empire	6,500 feet	26	4	800	2 eateries
MT. SHASTA SKI PARK	Shasta Cascade	5,500 feet	38	6	635	6 eateries
NORTHSTAR CALIFORNIA	High Sierra	6,330 feet	100	20	3,170	12 eateries
PALISADES TAHOE	High Sierra	6,200 feet	270	42	6,000	12 eateries
SIERRA-AT-TAHOE	High Sierra	6,640 feet	48	14	2,000	9 eateries
SODA SPRINGS	High Sierra	6,750 feet	15	5	217	2 eateries
SUGAR BOWL	High Sierra	6,880 feet	103	12	1,650	7 eateries
TAHOE DONNER DOWNHILL	High Sierra	6,750 feet	17	5	120	1 eatery

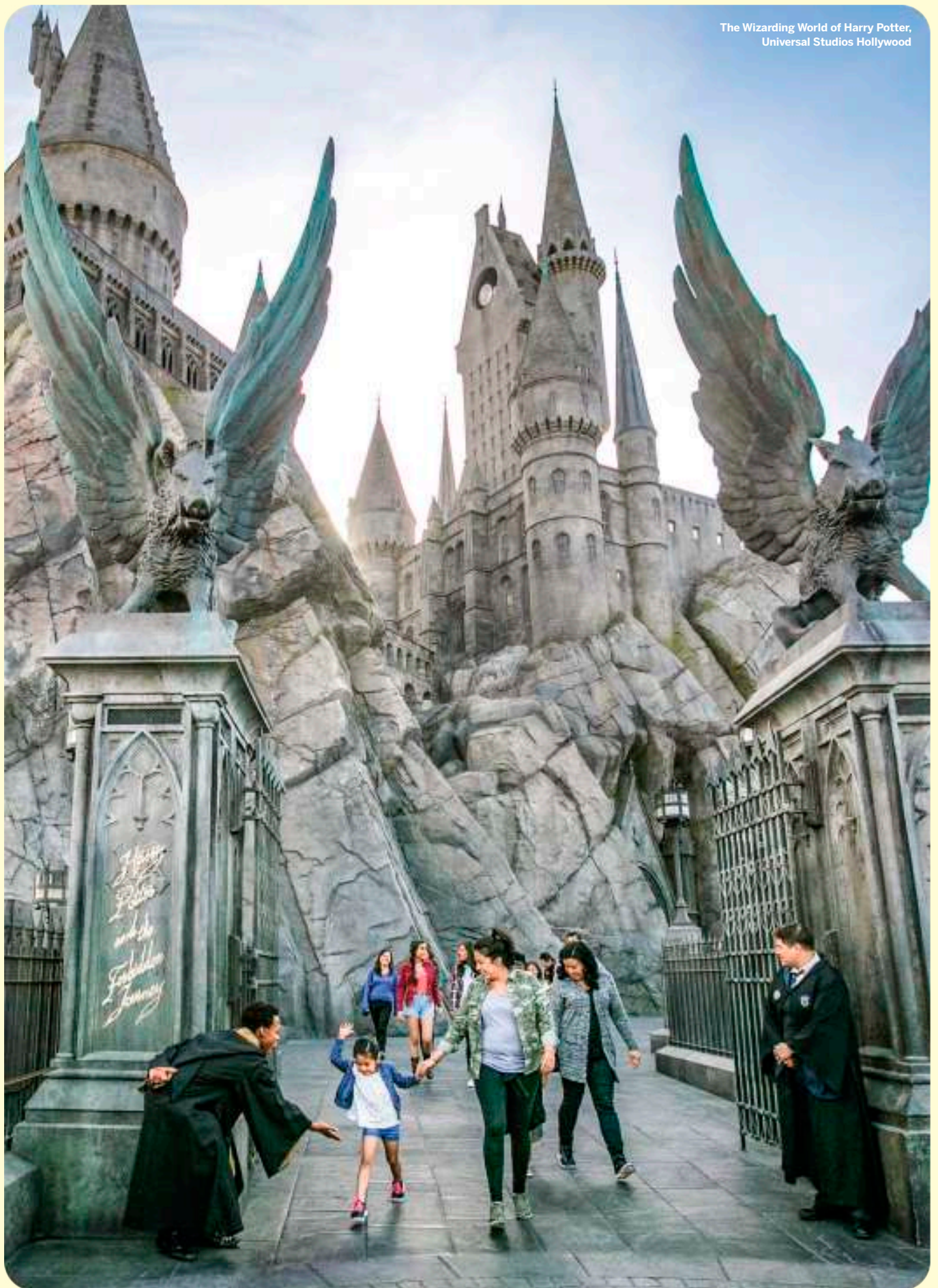


LODGING	OTHER ACTIVITIES	WHAT YOU'LL LOVE	WEBSITE
Nearby in Yosemite Valley	snowshoeing, tubing, XC skiing	Learn to ski on a bucket-list trip to Yosemite	travelyosemite.com
Slopeside	snowshoeing, XC skiing	This off-the-radar resort oozes old-school vibes	bearvalley.com
Nearby in Big Bear Lake	snowshoeing, tubing	One ticket gives you access to three mountains	bigbearmountainresort.com
Nearby in Truckee and Soda Springs	tubing	Stay for the sunset, then ski on lighted runs till 8 p.m.	rideboreal.com
Slopeside and nearby in Shaver Lake	weekend tubing	Slopeside views of Huntington Lake and cocktails at JW's Original Bar	skichinapeak.com
Nearby in Pinecrest or Sonora	snowshoeing, tubing, XC skiing	Ride the Ski Bus from Sonora—no car needed	dodgeridge.com
Nearby in Truckee and Donner Lake	tubing	"Old School Days" deep discounts every Tuesday–Thursday	donnerskiranch.com
Slopeside	Sledding, XC skiing	So small and friendly, you'll think you're at a private club	granlibakken.com
Slopeside and nearby in South Lake Tahoe	scenic gondola rides, tubing	Endless food, shopping, and fun at Heavenly Village	skiheavenly.com
Nearby in June Lake	N/A	Kids 12 and under ski free every day	junemountain.com
Slopeside	XC skiing	Snowfall averaging 354 inches each winter	kirkwood.com
Slopeside and nearby in Mammoth Lakes	scenic gondola rides, snowmobiling, snowshoeing, tubing, XC skiing	Skip the drive and fly into Bishop or Mammoth airports	mammothmountain.com
Nearby in Wrightwood	scenic chairlift rides, snow bikes, sledding, tubing	Closest ski resort to Los Angeles; requires no mountain driving	mthigh.com
Nearby in Mt. Baldy Village	scenic chairlift rides, sledding, tubing	Stunning views of the L.A. basin from Top of the Notch restaurant	mtbaldyresort.com
Nearby in Mt. Shasta City and McCloud	backcountry skiing, tubing	Learn to ski on a dormant, glacier-capped volcano	skipark.com
Slopeside	ice skating, snowshoeing, tubing, XC skiing	Complimentary s'mores at The Village at Northstar's fire pits	northstarcalifornia.com
Slopeside and nearby in Truckee	snowshoeing, tubing, aerial tram sightseeing rides	The Village at Palisade's 50-plus restaurants, bars, and boutiques	palisadestahoe.com
Nearby in South Lake Tahoe	kids' snowplay park, snowshoeing, tubing	Learn about the Sierra's natural history on guided mountain tours	sierraattahoe.com
Nearby in Truckee and Soda Springs	kids' snowplay park, tubing	California's oldest continuously operating ski resort, founded in 1935	skisodasprings.com
Slopeside	tubing, XC skiing	Bavarian-style architecture makes you think you're in Europe	sugarbowl.com
Nearby in Truckee and Tahoe City	snowshoeing, XC skiing	Wide-open bowls and top-notch grooming	tahoedonner.com



*We asked theme park aficionados
to share their best tips and tricks for
making the most of the experience.
Here's what they told us.*

BY KATRINA HUNT



Take a Ride to the Next Level

Be the GOAT on Big Thunder Mountain Railroad

Want to feel more speed on Disneyland's timeless classic Big Thunder Mountain Railroad? (Of course you do.) Take this advice from influencer "Magical" Miranda Lee: "Keep your eye on the goat on the right-hand side," she says. "When you turn your head, the g-force kicks into gear and makes you feel like you're going even faster!"

Get the Prime View on Soarin' Round the World

The Disney California Adventure Park ride makes you feel like you're flying over landmarks including the Eiffel Tower and the Taj Mahal. "Request gate B1, in the middle front," insists "Theme Park Explorer" blogger Bryan Geraards. "This is by far the best spot." The science backs him up, too: Imagineers reportedly designed the ride from that perspective, so there is the least possible distortion on the screen.

Feel Even More G-Force on the Twisted Colossus

This wood-and-steel loop coaster at Six Flags Magic Mountain features two trains racing along the track, with an 80-degree drop and an upside-down "roll." Sitting up front gives you the full shriek-inducing experience of the drops—but sit in the back to boost the intensity of the twist. According to one park insider, in back you get "a ton more airtime, which changes up the entire ride experience." Fun fact: The ride, when it was just known as Colossus, made a cameo in *National Lampoon's Vacation*.

Get the Best Vantage Point on the World-Famous Studio Tour

At Universal Studios Hollywood, the first tram of the tour is ideal if you want to engage with the guide. But superfans love the second or third car for the most unobstructed views of the movie sets and a sweet spot for hearing the narration clearly. That middle car is also just right for experiencing special effects like the light misting during the *Jaws* and "earthquake" segments of the tour.

Get a Pic with a Manta Ray

SeaWorld San Diego has become a coaster-lover's park, and the launch-style ride Manta—which glides and dives like a swimming manta ray—is just one reason why. Theme park and "Scareventures" expert Kris Golojuch says, "My favorite spot is the very last seat to get a lot of movement and action. But if you want the accelerating rush, sit in the very front seat. This also makes for a great picture since the front car features the manta ray itself."

Unlock Chewie on Millennium Falcon: Smuggler's Run

Chewbacca makes an excellent copilot on this interactive Star Wars ride at Disneyland Park. If you take a few steps when boarding, you can replace the usual narration with the bellows of Chewbacca. Before pushing the buttons to activate the ride, the left and right pilots (the front seats) need to move their controls to the far left, while the four engineers and gunners behind them should push their white buttons before the orange buttons. (You can also ask a Cast Member for help.) Then, listen for that trademark yowl for the rest of your ride.

Manta, SeaWorld San Diego



Win Big on the Mario Kart Ride

At the SUPER NINTENDO WORLD area within Universal Studios Hollywood, getting a Power-Up Band is a major part of the experience so that you can earn points on the app that is linked up to your play. That includes both completing the challenges and scoring points on the Mario Kart Ride. Some

games are hidden in plain sight, like the Frosted Glacier Wall. Enter the doorway marked with a yellow question mark block next to the Bowser Jr. Shadow Showdown. Go upstairs to play games on the interactive wall—using your hands to, say, wipe out the Winged Frozen Goombas. "Theme Park Shark" blogger Dustin Sparage has

EASTER EGG: SPOT ET ON THE REVENGE OF THE MUMMY—THE RIDE

This indoor coaster at Universal Studios Hollywood has ancient-Egyptian-tomb vibes, but there is also a hidden ET figure there, to give homage to the *ET: The Extra Terrestrial* ride that used to be there.



hacks even if you don't use the wristband. "You can get a bonus for coins at the start of the Mario Kart Ride," he says. "Hold both buttons down on your wheel when you see the number 2 and keep holding them until coins appear after it says 'Go'—at this point, let go." Also, "There are three endings! An ending where you get the Golden Cup is possible if everyone in your car scores enough points." Shoot for about 100 coins for your team.

Don't Skip the Line at Hogwarts Castle

Harry Potter and the Forbidden Journey at Universal Studios Hollywood is a can't-miss ride for any would-be wizard—the scenic indoor "robocoaster" has you careening over the Quidditch pitch and coming face to face with Dementors. But bypassing the line with an Express Pass will mean you miss out on some of the best details inside Hogwarts Castle. Embrace the queue to appreciate the talking portraits, Dumbledore's Office, The Mirror of Erised, and more.



Studio Tour,
Universal Studios Hollywood



EASTER EGG: IT'S A SMALL WORLD, CHARLIE BROWN

Between your search for Hidden Mickeys at Disneyland, spot the tiny Charlie Brown on a postcard stamp as your boat exits It's a Small World. Fun fact: Each room in the ride also has its own sun and moon.



Looft Carousel, Santa
Cruz Beach Boardwalk

Forgotten Favorites

Scope out the Grand Canyon at Disneyland

The Disneyland Railroad offers a low-key way to get around the park and also has its own secret gems, like the diorama of the Grand Canyon and the roaring dinosaurs after you depart Tomorrowland. At the New Orleans station, listen for the Morse code version of the speech given by Walt Disney on the 1955 opening day of the park.

Grab a Brass Ring

When you ride the 1911 Looft Carousel at the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk, grab one of the "brass" rings and try to toss it into the mouth of the giant clown face. Listen as the crowd goes wild when anyone hits the target—you'll see why old carousels

were considered a thrill.

This is one of only about 20 carousels in the U.S. to still use rings, and the park predicts that 1 in 6 get taken home as a souvenir.

Climb Aboard an Antique Camel or Rabbit

Standing at 101 feet tall, the double-decker Carousel Columbia at California's Great America is the tallest in the world. First opened in 1976, it also boasts more than 100 replicas of rare antique animals. Look up at the trim to admire the oil paintings made by George Gibson, the Hollywood artist who created backdrops for *The Wizard of Oz* and *An American in Paris*. Learn more about the rotating masterpiece at the little museum next to the park's Gold Striker Gifts.

Do the Ultimate Cowboy-Friendly Flume Ride

The Timber Mountain Log Ride was one of the nation's first flume, or water channel, rides when it opened at Knott's Berry Farm in 1969. Back then, OC local John Wayne took the first ride. At 85 feet, it's still one of the tallest flume rides in the world.

Do Some Time Travel on the First Vertical Loop

Six Flags Magic Mountain is known for its record-breaking roller coasters and "if you love history, don't skip The New Revolution," says Geraards. "It is the world's first modern coaster to feature a vertical loop." Originally named the Great American Revolution when it debuted in 1976, the ride turns 50 next year.

Hidden-Gem Treats

The Korean Corndog at Six Flags Discovery Kingdom

Try this under-the-radar culinary delight at the park's Lakeside Pavilion—currently offered at only two Six Flags parks in the U.S. They're like classic corndogs but filled with both a frank and melted cheese, then rolled in toppings like diced potatoes or hot Cheetos.

Gil's Garlic Funnel Cake at Gilroy Gardens

The garlic fries at the park's Castroville Corners are a staple for fans of Gilroy's top crop, but the funnel cake at the Sugar Plum Farms offers a one-two punch: It's topped with garlic butter but still dusted with powdered sugar.

Cupcake-Topped Milkshakes at Universal CityWalk

Toothsome Chocolate Emporium, located just outside Universal Studios Hollywood, serves rich shakes that look like a tower topped with a cake or brownie plus whipped cream. Pro tip: Make a reservation to avoid a wait.

The Japadog at Pacific Park

The Santa Monica Pier is the only U.S. location for this small but popular Vancouver-based chain that offers a Japanese take on the American dog. Consider the Wagyu TeriMayo, with a Wagyu beef frank, seaweed, teriyaki sauce, Japanese mayo, and fried onions.

Meat Skewer—Cheesy Pretzel Mashup at Disneyland Park

Sparage recommends the ultimate Disney foodie hack that everyone has been trying lately: "Take either a beef pork or chicken skewer from Bengal Barbecue in Adventureland and take that skewer to Maurice's Treats in nearby Fantasyland and order the garlic cheesy pretzel bread. Adding the meat skewer to the pretzel is a game changer."

Dole Whip Cocktails at Disney California Adventure Park

"The Lamplight Lounge is my favorite spot to grab adult beverages off their 'secret menu,'" says influencer Lee. Her go-to drinks include the



Boysenberry Frappuccino, Knott's Berry Farm

Dole Whip shot (coconut rum, vanilla vodka, pineapple juice, and whipped cream), the Black Pearl (gin, vodka, rum and blackberry liqueur), and the Fun Wheel (passion fruit vodka, pineapple juice, blue curaçao).

The Seriously Happy Hour at SeaWorld San Diego

The park offers an unbeatable happy hour Fridays and Sundays starting at 4 p.m.:

Enjoy \$4 draft beers and \$6 specialty cocktails (both typically about \$14 each) at the park's Underwater Cantina and High Tides Brews, and pair them with wallet-friendly wings and nachos.

Boysenberry Frappuccino at Knott's Berry Farm

The Starbucks in the Knott's Marketplace takes the Frappuccino to the next level by



EASTER EGG: VISIT THE LITTLE MAN OF DISNEYLAND

Near the entrance to Indiana Jones Adventure, look for a tree that has a diminutive house carved at the base. You'll see a little door and chimney that mark the home of Patrick Begorra, the leprechaun and tiny Anaheim landowner who inspired a 1955 storybook about the beginnings of Disneyland.

Time-Is-Money Hacks

Start Your Day at the Back

"Never ride the first attraction you encounter near the entrance," says Geraards. "Most people will go to that line. Instead, start at the back of the park." Three great examples: Twisted Colossus at Six Flags Magic Mountain, Medusa at Six Flags Discovery Kingdom, and Star Wars: Rise of the Resistance at Disneyland Park. For all three, lines get longer as the day goes on.

At SeaWorld San Diego, "run to the coasters first and do all the inside aquariums later to defeat the heat," says theme park influencer Francis Dominic. Two good options: Emperor, with its nearly 90-degree hill, and the inverted loops of the Electric Eel.

Make the most of the morning at Disneyland's Fantasyland. Most of the smaller rides in this classic

area don't use Lightning Lanes, so morning is the best time to avoid long waits. "Go to rides like Peter Pan, Alice in Wonderland, and Mister Toad's Wild Ride," Geraards says. "In the morning you can ride these back-to-back with no wait."

Kick Off Your Birthday at Guest Services

Most parks hand out a button or sticker for birthdays—but they often also have buttons for graduates, anniversary couples, honeymooners, and more. Stop into Guest Services to get same-day tips on making the most of your visit. Wearing a button can sometimes get you front-of-the-line privileges or a song sung to you on various rides.

Get Refills at Six Flags

The refillable drink cup plan—as low as \$12 when you book




Twisted Colossus, Six Flags Magic Mountain

your tickets online—is a serious value and super-easy to refill all over the park. If you just want ice water occasionally, good news: Park restaurants will usually give you a cup of water for free.

Book a Table with a View

For an evening show at Disneyland like *Fantasmic!*, booking the dining package pays off in a few ways. For starters, you get a three- or




including the park's signature pureed boysenberries.

To-Die-For Breakfast Burritos at Knott's Ghost Town Bakery
Each day, this restaurant makes a relatively small number of the portable breakfasts—stuffed with potatoes, breakfast sausage, or chorizo—and when they're gone, they're gone.

Epic Fried Chicken and Pie at Knott's Berry Farm
Many folks don't realize that the Buena Park theme park's signature culinary creations sit outside the park gates—namely the fried chicken and boysenberry pie at Mrs. Knott's Chicken Restaurant.

Sushi at Belmont Park
Sitting on one side of the old-school amusement park in San Diego, the Cannonball restaurant offers “elevated” theme park cuisine in two ways: the food (artfully created sushi rolls along with nigiri, oysters, and cocktails), and the setting (a rooftop deck with views of the rides and the ocean).



four-course meal from a reserved viewing section in New Orleans Square. “When you book a dining package, you are guaranteed a spot to watch the show,” says Miranda Lee. “Guests will show up hours before to save their spots, and your time is better spent snacking or riding rides while you wait for the show.” Even better, packages start at just \$30 per person.

Bundle Your Tickets
“A fantastic way to enjoy amusement parks in Southern California is through the City Pass San Diego,” says family travel blogger Mary Williams. “It grants you access to LEGOLAND, SeaWorld, and three additional attractions (such as the zoo, city cruises, and/or the aquarium) all for one price. The savings are incredible.”



FOR MORE THEME PARK DETAILS,
HOLD YOUR PHONE'S CAMERA
OVER THIS QR CODE

Hotels That Elevate Your Trip

Enjoy Easy Perks at Hotels Near Disneyland
Besides being budget-friendly, plenty of Good Neighbor Hotels have their own delights—like the water playground at the Howard Johnson by Wyndham Anaheim Hotel & Water Playground. “The hotel is only an 8-minute walk to the entrance, and their rooms are subtly themed as retro Disneyland,” says Miranda Lee. “And the water playground makes you feel like you're right in the middle of Pirates of the Caribbean!”

“We always stay at the Grand Legacy Hotel,” says theme park influencer Aline Cappelli. “It's located literally across the street from Disneyland, and the staff is amazing. And they have a rooftop restaurant, The Fifth, that is a must-stop, as you have an amazing view for the fireworks.”

Geraards, meanwhile, likes the Super 8 in Anaheim. “You can watch the fireworks from their jacuzzi with a perfect

view. We even synchronize the music on our phone to have the full experience.”

Along with convenient perches right next to the parks, the three Disneyland Resort hotels—Disneyland Hotel, Disney's Grand Californian Hotel & Spa, and Pixar Place Hotel—offer guests special perks. You can head into the parks a half hour before they open, use short-cut park entrances, and make the most of “preferred access” to some sought-after dining reservations. Hotel guests can also book special activities, like yoga classes inside the parks before they open for the day.

Enjoy a Private Entrance to LEGOLAND

Even though it's not an onsite hotel, the Sheraton Carlsbad, next door to LEGOLAND California, has its own, hotel-guests-only back entrance into the park. You'll enter the park in the Castle Hill area, right near

The Dragon coaster and the Hideaway play area.

Stay for Nearly Free at Knott's Berry Farm

It's always cheaper—sometimes by a lot—to book theme park tickets online. Sometimes that includes your hotel too: The hotel packages for Knott's Berry Farm Hotel—which add in park tickets for everyone in your group, breakfast, and parking—make the hotel room nearly free when you compare the price to walking up to the park gate to buy your admission tickets.

Pick Up More Movie Magic Experiences Near Universal Studios Hollywood

Stay at the BLVD Los Angeles, a boutique hotel that pops with color and is a 10-minute walk from the park. Staying there also offers ticket discounts—both for Universal Studios Hollywood and nearby Warner Bros. Studio Tour.



LEGOLAND California

Win-Wins When You Chat Up Staffers

Score Some Mystery Trades

Take your pin-trading game to the next level at Disneyland by seeking out Mystery Trades. Look for cast members who are not only wearing pins on their lanyard but a pin that is fastened backward. Ask if they have a mystery pin to trade and be ready to answer a trivia question to get it.

Bring a Cool Rock or Shell to Gilroy Gardens

Head to the Green Barn at the Gilroy theme park, where the Nature Exchange program invites kids to bring in rocks, shells, or leaves to learn how to identify them. The staffer will give your rock, leaf, or shell a "score," worthy of trading in for a prize.

Hit up LEGOLAND's Model Citizens

"Model Citizen" staffers are always game to trade LEGO minifigures and pin-style "pop badges." Look for staffers wearing a yellow or teal shirt who tend to bring out a "trading wall" each day stocked with more than 200 LEGO Minifigures. (A good time

and place to find them: early afternoon outside Ninjago World.) Next, ask if they have a Mr. Gold pop badge—one of the rarest—or where to find the Golden Envelopes. On any given day there are about 10 envelopes—filled with pop badges, mini figures, and more—tucked behind coy spots around the park.

Get Some Serious Face Time with Big Bird

The Dine with Elmo & Friends, located at Sesame Place San Diego's Sunny Day Café, "offers a more intimate experience than standard character dining," says family travel blogger Mary Williams. "It's truly an unforgettable meal where you can sing, dance, and take photos with your favorite Sesame Street characters. And with prices starting at \$29.99, it's a fantastic value for such a delightful buffet experience."

Take a Call from Houdini

Pop into the Magic Shop on Disneyland's Main Street USA and pick up the old-fashioned phone hanging near the cash register. You can hear a real



Sesame Place

FROM LEFT: COURTESY SESAME PLACE; JASON O. WATSON/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; COURTESY GILROY GARDENS



EASTER EGG: FIND THE TERMINATOR IN SECRET LIFE OF PETS

On Universal's ride that celebrates *The Secret Life of Pets*, look for a Cyberdyne sticker on an outside window on Pets Place, paying homage to the old *Terminator* show that used to be there.

Eagle-Eye Delights at Disneyland

Boost Your Hidden-Mickey Game

Disneyland is famous for the hidden Mickeys—the outline of Mickey Mouse's head—that cover the park, from the one on the Big Ben clock face in Peter Pan's Flight, to the skeleton wearing Mickey ears inside the temple on Indiana Jones Adventure. They're not just Mickeys, either. Pay attention to the ships on Pirates of the Caribbean—you can see Grogg, aka "Baby Yoda," peeking out of one ship's window. Download the Disney Play App to help you find more during your visit.

Make a Wish and Notice a Charming Error in Fantasyland

Stop by the Snow White Grotto, a little wishing-well garden hidden in plain sight just west of Sleeping Beauty's Castle.

The statues were reportedly gifts to Walt Disney, and staffers placed Snow White higher than the dwarfs to downplay a mistake: the Snow White statue is the same height as the should-be-shorter dwarfs.

Feel the Mystery Heat on Alice in Wonderland

On this classic dark ride featuring Alice, the White Rabbit, and the Queen of Hearts, you'll get a visceral sense of how these Fantasyland attractions are literally connected. Notice how it feels warmer as you glide through the area where the playing cards are marching—it's because this section of the ride shares a wall with Mr. Toad's Wild Ride—the part of that ride where Mr. Toad is in Hell.



1914 recording of master magician Harry Houdini that was reportedly given to the park by another famed magician, David Copperfield.

Open the Gate at LEGOLAND

Come to the entrance about a half hour before the park opens for the day—a Model Citizen always picks a kid in the crowd to “help” a costumed character open the gate.

Join the California Sea Lions Onstage at SeaWorld

Each sea lion presentation has an opportunity for a few people to come onstage, says Golojuch. “Just be prepared to get a little (or extremely) wet. Arrive 25–30 minutes before the show starts, and sit front row, looking for leadership with the clipboard.” And that’s not the only way to see the animals up close. “One of my favorite things to do is attend feedings and keeper talks,” Golojuch adds. “These are a great opportunity for guests to... speak with the passionate wildlife care specialists that devote themselves to these magnificent animals.”



EASTER EGG: SPOT SASQUATCH AT LEGOLAND CALIFORNIA

The park’s Miniland USA is a treasure trove of fascinating details, often in the tiny LEGO people populating them. Look for Elvis on the Las Vegas Strip, and a tiny Sasquatch in the outskirts of Seattle.



Monarch Garden, Gilroy Gardens

Secret Spots and Insider Views

Watch the Fireworks from the Waterfront at SeaWorld San Diego

For some downtime, head to the Waterfront area in the back of the park, next to the Bayside Amphitheater. This mellow spot with picnic tables flies under the radar but is an excellent spot to enjoy views of Mission Bay, watch the evening fireworks, and grab a nearby park favorite—the mac ‘n’ cheese bites—paired with a local craft beer.

Watch Disneyland’s Fantasmic! from the Haunted Mansion

For a great view of the evening show in the skies over the Frontierland area, “Theme Park Shark” Sparage suggests you “go to the very end of the road by Haunted

Mansion and the Harbour Galley restaurant and ask cast members if you can stand in the standby. They have an entire section dedicated to watching over there that most guests don’t know about. You can show up literally 10 to 15 minutes before show time and have a fantastic view.”

Love Coasters but Prefer Just to Watch?

At California’s Great America, enjoy a lunch of barbecue or a burger at Maggie Brown’s, then sit on its outdoor patio facing the lawn for a front-row view of the park’s fastest coaster, Gold Striker.

Enjoy a “Hidden” Aquarium at SeaWorld San Diego

Even if you don’t usually go

for thrill rides, be sure to join the queue for the Manta coaster. The aquarium at the beginning of the queue—lined with touch pools and giant tanks that are home to a variety of rays, leopard sharks, and guitarfish—is one of the most vivid marine-life viewing areas in the park. You don’t even have to get on the ride to enjoy it.

Bask in Butterflies at Gilroy Gardens

This tree-lined park is dotted with several relaxing nooks that are easy to miss. Check out Claudia’s Garden, filled with conifers and a small waterfall, and the 60-foot-tall greenhouse Monarch Garden, filled with butterflies that tend to pass through nearby Santa Cruz and Pacific Grove.



Alice in Wonderland, Disneyland



SHASTA CASCADE

Discover grand landscapes carved by volcanic and glacial forces

Redding has 225 miles of trails within 15 miles of downtown, earning it the title "Trails Capital of California"

Two annual events—the Lemurian Classic and Bigfoot Adventure Challenge—offer group trail experiences

AVERY ROSENTHAL-MURRAY/COURTESY/JUST TREDDING

Located near Redding,
Trail 76 is an exhilarating
two-mile downhill run

Wildlife species in the area
include osprey, bald eagles,
mule deer, and bears

The Chappie-Shasta OHV
Area features over 250
miles of roads and trails





Lake Britton Bridge along the Great Shasta Rail Trail



FORTY MILES
OF THE
PROPOSED
80-MILE-
LONG GREAT
SHASTA RAIL
TRAIL ARE
NOW OPEN
FOR USE

Sierra Nevada Brewing Company, the town of **Chico** is synonymous with craft beer. But check out the new kid in town: Ramble West Brewing has a new taproom and hyper-local menu of pale ales to porters. Check their online calendar for trivia nights and local food trucks. To taste more Chico beer, pop into Secret Trail Brewing and Nor Cal Brewing too. Historic **Johnsville** has less than 100 residents, but it contains one of Plumas County's best-loved restaurants. The Iron Door, housed in a 1906 general store, honors its roots with thoughtfully prepared old-school dishes: filet mignon, veal schnitzel, and shrimp scampi. A high-raftered ceiling, old-timey bar, and resident ghost complete the Old West experience.

New & Noteworthy

OUTDOORS

Great news for bikers, horseback riders, and dog walkers: Forty miles of the proposed 80-mile-long Great Shasta Rail Trail are now open for use. Built on the old railroad right-of-way, the mostly forested, car-free path has several access points in **McCloud** and **Burney**. The route is suitable for bicycling families, but make sure your bikes have wide tires—the trail surface is red cinders and gravel. Get maps and info at greatshastarailtrail.org.

REVAMPED

Dunsmuir's Cave Springs Resort has been welcoming guests since 1923, but new

owners have given the midcentury getaway a major spiff-up. Perched near the trout-filled Sacramento River and just a short drive from Mt. Shasta, the resort offers historic cabins and Airstreams, modern cabins and hotel rooms, and community spaces with firepits and lawn games. If you stayed here years ago, you'll be glad to know the retro neon sign and awesome Mt. Shasta view remain the same.

FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Redding Market Center is downtown **Redding's** new public market and food hall. Modeled after Napa's Oxbow Market, the facility holds a grab-and-go grocery, artisan bakery, and local favorites Fall River Brewing Company and The Bantam Kitchen gastropub. The Vault is **Cedarville's** go-to spot for a caffeine jolt, a brownie or scone, and some friendly chitchat. In

a 1906 red-brick building that once housed the Bank of Surprise Valley and later a grocery store, you can sit by the large arched windows and linger over a chai latte. Need a gift? Browse the selection of locally made artisan soaps, flavored popcorns, and take-home treats. Just 25 minutes from Lassen Volcanic National Park and even closer to Lake Almanor, Timber House Brewery, Distillery, and Lodge is **Chester's** new sip-and-dine hot spot.

Brews run the gamut from light lagers and pale ales to a barrel-aged imperial stout served on nitro. Pair your beer with something from the hearty menu of pulled pork, brisket, and steaks sized from 10 to 16 ounces. You can spend the night here, too, in one of nine newly remodeled rooms. Thanks to



The Vault

Small Town Scoop



Almendra Winery and Distillery

“Durham is where almonds meet rice. It’s a one-stop-sign town.”

- CAROL BERTAGNA, OWNER OF ALMENDRA WINERY AND DISTILLERY

steakhouse, listen to live music, or grab a morning smoothie or coffee.

Some show up just to see the building’s stunning makeover from an abandoned grocery store to a contemporary restaurant and tasting room with floors and tables milled from salvaged trees, glowing chandeliers, a Rémy Martin copper still, and dozens of oak barrels.

“My husband and I bought an old building that was in complete disarray,” Bertagna says. “It took a lot of work just to get it empty and clean.”

When visitors ask Bertagna what else to do and see in Durham, she points them to Barb’s Buy-Gones, where Barbara Gore has been selling vintage Lusterware pottery and antiques for 40-plus years. She also recommends browsing Vanella Farm Store. “People are always surprised that it’s not just hay and dog food. The owner sells housewares, jewelry, and cute little stuff,” she says.

Bertagna, a graduate of California State University, Chico, recommends strolling through the tree-shaded campus to see its historic buildings and multiple bridges across Big Chico Creek. She says locals also love to

walk the “tree farm trail” at the Forest Service’s Genetic Resource Center. The gentle path winds through a forest of 130 different tree species alongside Comanche Creek.

Chico’s Bidwell Park, one of the country’s largest municipal parks at 3,670 acres, offers trails for hikers, bikers, and horseback riders, ranging from all-day treks to easy strolls. “Monkey Face is a short trail to a cliff that looks like a monkey’s face,” she says. The rocky landmark is also the brand name of Almendra’s spirits—

Monkey Face vodka, gin, bourbon, and brandy.

Downtown Chico’s must-see is Sierra Nevada Brewery, famous for its innovative brewing and sustainability practices. Visitors can tour the facility, taste from a long list of rotating beers, or dine at its restaurant. “It’s a very impressive facility, and the tours are really interesting,” Bertagna says. “It’s a place that’s on everybody’s radar. They put Chico on the map.” 🌟

Leafty Chico is one of Northern California’s most-loved towns. Ninety miles north of Sacramento, it has a vibrant state college and one of America’s best-known craft breweries, Sierra Nevada Brewing Company. With a population of 100,000, it seems like a major metropolis compared to neighboring Durham, an off-the-radar ranching hamlet seven miles south.

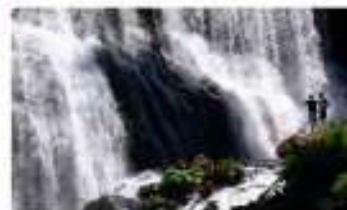
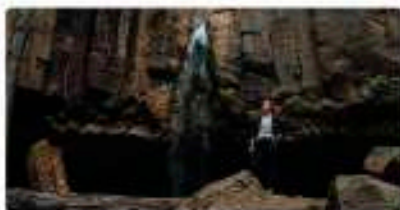
“Durham is where almonds meet rice. It’s a one-stop-sign town,” says Carol Bertagna, who owns Almendra Winery and Distillery, located a half-mile from that sign.

Durham’s agricultural legacy dates back 150 years. Many of its 6,400 residents have deep family ranching ties to the region, including Bertagna’s husband, a fourth-generation almond farmer. But when the Bertagnas opened Almendra in 2016, Durham got a modern update. Now visitors come to taste the wines and spirits made in-house, dine at a family-friendly



Barb’s Buy-Gones

WEEKEND “WATERFALL” WARRIORS!



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If you're looking for a one-of-a-kind adventure, then choose Redding and explore over 50 breath-taking waterfalls! Just a few hours north of San Francisco, the Shasta Cascade area is overflowing with picturesque cascades tucked away in lush forests, only to be found in this region of the Golden State. Make Redding, CA your lodging homebase and you'll be able to explore majestic waterfalls in any direction. Have a "Waterfalls of UpState California" brochure mailed to you for **FREE** and start planning your next adventure!

Pro Tip: Stay two nights and get a **FREE** gift card for local spots. Don't miss our "Stay & Play" deals when booking on ChooseRedding.com!



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Photo: Whiskeytown National Recreation Area

COUNTIES OF UPSTATECA: BUTTE LASSEN MODOC PLUMAS SHASTA SISKIYOU TEHAMA TRINITY



Lake Shasta Caverns
LakeShastaCaverns.com
800-795-CAVE



Win-River Resort & Casino
winriver.com
800-280-UWIN



Turtle Bay Exploration Park
TurtleBay.org
530-243-8850



**Timber House Brewery-
Distillery-Lodge**
TimberHouseLodge.com
530-815-8159



Antlers Inn
AntlersInn.com
530-258-2722



Shasta Marina at Packers Bay
ShastaLake.net
800-959-3359



**McCloud River Mercantile Co.
Store & Hotel**
McCloudMercantile.com
530-964-2330



**For a FREE visitors guide,
go to UpStateCA.com**

Phone: (530) 365-7500



TRINITY CENTER:
Alpen Cellars

Wine lovers visiting Alpen Cellars Winery get to sip Chardonnay or Blaufränkisch (an acidic, Austrian red) with a view of remote wilderness. The outdoor tasting room sits in a pastoral valley cut by the Trinity River, about 70 miles north of Redding. Guests also learn how the Groves family manages a thriving 40-acre vineyard that's completely off the power grid. The closest public utility is 20 miles away, so the family generates their own hydroelectricity from a gravity-fed spring. In a fortunate twist to their property's history, it includes pre-1914 water rights to the river, which makes growing possible—the vines are watered with river water. In 2018, Alpen Cellars added two glamping tents to their property, giving visitors the opportunity for an off-the-grid overnight. Guests enjoy wine tasting and stargazing, but the biggest attraction might be the short walk to a swimming hole on the Trinity River.



Find WHAT DELIGHTS YOU



Butte County is calling. Explore the wilds of the Sierra Nevada, and delight in sun-soaked days that turn into star-filled nights. Discover Lake Oroville, farm-to-fork dining, and endless trails ready to be explored.

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www.ExploreButteCounty.com



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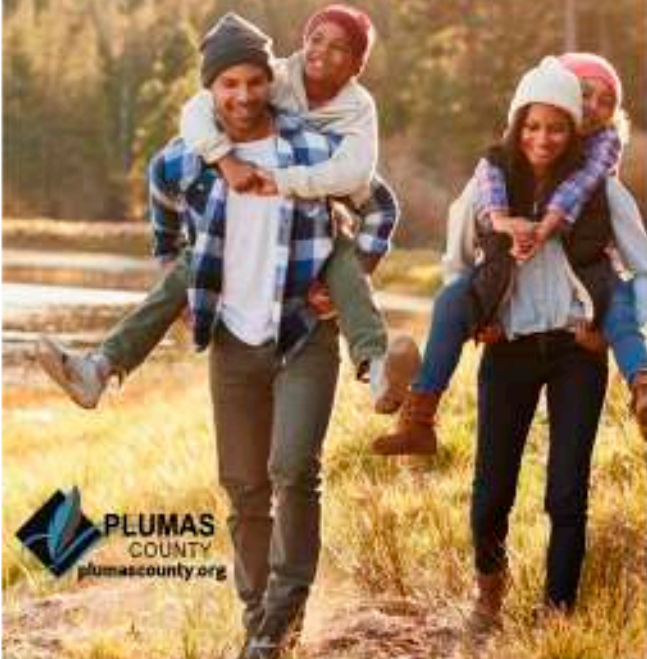
St. Bernard Lodge is surrounded by scenic year-round views. Hike Lassen Volcanic National Park for the summer, or enjoy back-country skiing & snowshoeing in the winter. Enjoy thrilling motorcycle rides or bring your horse for mountain horseback rides.

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California Welcome CenterSM

Anderson:
1699 Highway 273:
530/365-1180

More information
Shasta Cascade
Wonderland Association
upstateca.com



visit

ALTURAS

Modoc National Forest. See lava beds, high-desert plateaus, and the magnificent wild horses of the Devil's Garden; enjoy the excellent trout fishing, hiking, and hunting of the South Warner Wilderness area. fs.usda.gov

Modoc National Wildlife Refuge. View wildlife at this 7,000-acre high-desert oasis created from snowmelt into the Pit River from the Warner Mountains. This refuge attracts seasonal migrants and offers a permanent home for upland game, owls, and small mammals. fws.gov

ANDERSON

California Welcome Center. 1699 Hwy. 273. Our friendly staff is available to assist you seven days a week, 361 days a year. Free maps and brochures. Visit our wild trout pond and gift shop featuring local products. 530/365-7500; upstateca.com See ad, p. 69

BIEBER

Ash Creek Wildlife Area. Fish, camp, and bird-watch among 14,400 acres of freshwater wetlands. Bring your binoculars to spot wildlife including pronghorn antelopes, beavers, bobcats, and bald eagles. wildlife.ca.gov

BLAIRSDEN

Plumas-Eureka State Park and Museum. Discover buildings that depict life in Gold Rush-era California. In the summer, enjoy docent-led tours of a miners' bunkhouse, the Mohawk Stamp Mill, stable, and mine office. parks.ca.gov

BURNEY

McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial State Park. Relax and cool off in the spray of the park's centerpiece, the 129-foot Burney Falls. The cascade flows at 100 million gallons every day. parks.ca.gov

BUTTE COUNTY

Explore Butte County. Enjoy a weekend getaway and discover seasonal waterfalls and wildflowers, miles of waterways, hiking and biking trails, craft breweries, local wineries, and fun events year-round! 530/918-4585; explorebuttecounty.com See ad, p. 71

CASTELLA

Castle Crags State Park. See 170-million-year-old, 6,000-foot-tall granite pinnacles. Hike along 28 miles of trails, camp at 76 developed campsites, and fish at various access points along the Sacramento River. parks.ca.gov

CHICO

Bidwell Mansion State Historic Park. A beautiful, 26-room Victorian House Museum that stands as a memorial to political activists John and Annie Bidwell. Explore the mansion through a one-hour tour. parks.ca.gov

Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park. Fish for salmon, steelhead, and shad. Float down the river on an inner tube, kayak, or canoe. Stay on the lookout for frolicking river otters. parks.ca.gov

Chico Air Museum. Located at the Chico Municipal Airport, find nearly 100 years of aviation history, including uniforms, historic flight logs, and aircraft like a WWI biplane and Czech jet trainer. chicoairmuseum.org

National Yo-Yo Museum. The largest display of yo-yos and yo-yo memorabilia in the nation, including the 256-pound "Big-Yo," which won the Guinness World

Record for “World’s Biggest Working Wooden Yo-Yo.”
nationallyoyo.org

COTTONWOOD

Battle Creek Wildlife Area. Lush marshes and riparian woodlands provide nesting grounds for bald eagles and ospreys. Hike and bird-watch to see California quail, wood ducks, and more. wildlife.ca.gov

DUNSMUIR

Dunsmuir Botanical Gardens. Visit in spring to see the park in full bloom with native white dogwood trees. Any time of year, enjoy walking paths through manicured gardens and wooded areas. dunsmuirbotanicalgardens.org

Dunsmuir Railroad Depot Museum. Explore Dunsmuir’s rich railroad heritage through exhibits on early transportation, early settlers, and the fascinating story of Alexander Dunsmuir. dunsmuirdepot.com

DURHAM

Patrick Ranch Museum. Get a glimpse into the history of farming and rural life at this museum, featuring exhibits on early agricultural practices, vintage farming equipment, and the legacy of the Patrick family’s influence on the region’s development. patrickranchmuseum.org

FALL RIVER MILLS

Fort Crook Museum. View period structures, including the Pittville School House (constructed in 1884) and the Fall River Jail. Attend a blacksmithing workshop or explore the three-story Main Museum, filled with artifacts. fortcrook.com

FORT JONES

Fort Jones Museum. Learn about obsidian, fossils, and other geological artifacts. See the Shasta Rain Rock, a pitted boulder once used by Native Americans to control rainfall. fortjonesmuseum.com

GRIDLEY

Gray Lodge Wildlife Area. This 9,100-acre area is located on the Pacific Flyway, making it a haven for migrant birds. Find a prime viewing spot to watch for more than 300 species. wildlife.ca.gov

LAKE ALMANOR

Lake Almanor Country Club Golf Course. Nestled in the pines with breathtaking views, the beautiful LACC golf course is a semi-private course open to the public. Enjoy a challenging yet fun 9 or 18 holes, pro-shop, and full bar. lakealmanorcountryclub.com

Lake Almanor West Golf Course. Lake Almanor West Golf Course, located on the west shore of scenic Lake Almanor, offers the very best golfing experience and BBQ around. Come golf at our pristine course and enjoy a hearty BBQ lunch overlooking the golf course. lakealmanorwest.org

LAKEHEAD

Lake Shasta Caverns National Natural Landmark. 20359 Shasta Caverns Rd. Two-hour tour includes a boat ride across Shasta Lake, a scenic bus ride to the caverns, and a one-hour guided tour of the caves. Open all year. 800/795-2283; lakeshastacaverns.com See ad, p. 69

Shasta Marina at Packers Bay. A full-service marina offering luxury houseboats, patio boats, kayaks, paddleboards and lily pads. New store open year-round. We have fuel, ice, food, drinks, and souvenirs. Moorage available. 800/959-3359; shastalake.net See ad, p. 69

MCARTHUR

Ahjumawi Lava Springs State Park. Full of breathtaking views, this striking park is only accessible by boat and features aqua bays, tree-dotted islets, and over 20 miles of trails through rugged lava rock. parks.ca.gov

MINERAL

Lassen Volcanic National Park. Known for its hydrothermal activity, this park is filled with steam vents, fumaroles, and bubbling mud pots. Paddle on the crystal-clear Manzanita Lake and stroll through fields filled with summertime flowers. nps.gov/lavo

MOUNT SHASTA CITY

Mt. Shasta Ski Park. All abilities can ski or snowboard at Marmot Ridge, Douglas Butte, and Coyote Butte. Visit in summer to enjoy scenic chairlift rides and mountain biking. skipark.com

Mt. Shasta Sisson Museum. Located on the grounds of a fish hatchery, this family-friendly museum explores local history. Get your photo taken on the 1915 fire truck and learn about Native American basket weaving. mtshastamuseum.com

OROVILLE

Lake Oroville. The second-largest reservoir in California, this lake has more than 167 miles of shoreline. Fish, swim, boat, camp, picnic, kayak, paddleboard, snorkel, and more. parks.ca.gov

Clay Pit State Vehicular Recreation Area. This 220-acre SVRA provides a fenced open-riding area for motorcycle, ATV, and 4x4 recreationists. The pit was formed when clay was mined and used in the construction of the Oroville Dam. parks.ca.gov

PLUMAS COUNTY

Plumas County Tourism. Escape the crowds and enjoy four seasons of adventure, fun, and relaxation in Plumas County. Experience unparalleled access to the wonders of nature. Truly a unique place for making memories. plumascounty.org See ad, p. 71

QUINCY

Plumas National Forest. Hike, bike, and horseback ride through mixed conifer forests and rich mountain valleys. About 75 miles of the Pacific Crest Trail stretch through this protected area. fs.usda.gov

RED BLUFF

William B. Ide Adobe State Historic Park. Set on the west bank of the Sacramento River, the historic adobe and park stands as a memorial to one of the leading participants in the Bear Flag Revolt. parks.ca.gov

REDDING

Choose Redding Lodging. Traveling north of Los Angeles and south of Portland? Redding is the place to stay with the largest variety of lodging options in UpStateCA. Quaint B&Bs or favorite lodging brands, Redding has it all. 530/365-7500; chooseredding.com See ad, pgs. 68–69

Shasta-Trinity National Forest. Steep canyons, bare granite spires, alpine lakes, and dense conifer forests are why hikers, campers, climbers, and nature lovers of every stripe flock to this location, the largest national forest in the state. fs.usda.gov

Turtle Bay Exploration Park. A fun, nonprofit, 300-acre cultural hub located along the Sacramento River. Featuring the Sundial Bridge, museum, playgrounds,

forestry and wildlife center, botanical gardens, and more. 530/243-8850; turtlebay.org See ad, p. 69

Win-River Resort & Casino. 2100 Redding Rancheria Rd. Native American Gaming Resort & Casino offering entertainment, hospitality, latest slots, table games, and a relaxing spa in the North State. 800/280-UWIN; winriver.com See ad, p. 69

TULELAKE

Lava Beds National Monument. Dotted with volcanic features, the biggest draws to this park are the historical sites of the Modoc War (1872–73) and lava-tube cave exploring. nps.gov

WEAVERVILLE

Highland Art Center. Centered by an 1893 white Victorian farmhouse, this campus features galleries, gardens, artists’ studios, and a library. Enjoy monthly art shows. highlandartcenter.org

Trinity County COC. Discover where wild lives. From the serenity of the Trinity Alps, the Trinity River, and our many lakes; to cultural discoveries in art, history, and great food. 1-877-21-TRINITY; visitrinity.com See ad, p. 71

Weaverville Joss House State Historic Park. Known as the Temple of the Forest Beneath the Clouds, this is the oldest continuously used Chinese temple in California. parks.ca.gov

stay

HOTELS AND RESORTS

CHESTER

Antlers Inn. Antlers Inn offers comfortable accommodations with modern amenities, close to Lake Almanor. A perfect getaway for outdoor enthusiasts, with easy access to fishing, hiking, and boating activities. 268 Main St., 530/258-2722; antlersinn.com \$\$\$ See ad, p. 69



Timber House Brewery-Distillery-Lodge-Restaurant. 501 Main St. Timber House offers a unique place to stay, eat, and enjoy drinks, only 25 minutes from Lassen Volcanic National Park and 10 minutes from Lake Almanor. 530/815-8159; timberhouselodge.com \$\$ See ad, p. 69



MCCLOUD

McCloud River Mercantile Co. Store & Hotel. 241 Main St. 12 rooms. A historic building, est. 1897, located in the heart of McCloud, with a unique hotel, event space, two restaurants, a café, and beautiful boutiques. 530/964-2602; mccloudmercantile.com \$\$ See ad, p. 69



MILL CREEK

St. Bernard Lodge. 7 rooms. 10 miles west of Chester on Hwy 36. Great location for visiting both the SW and SE entrances to Lassen Park. 15 minutes to Lake Almanor. Old European-style lodging with breakfast. Dinner and full bar available. Horse boarding & RV sites. 530/736-6188; stbernardlodge.com \$–\$\$ See ad, p. 71

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PETS
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UNDER
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\$100-\$200/
NIGHT



OVER \$200/
NIGHT



NORTH COAST

Take in charming villages where ancient redwood forests and the rugged coastline meet

The Klamath bioregion is home to old-growth redwoods and sugar pines

The Klamath River Basin supports Chinook salmon, coho salmon, and steelhead trout

In 2024, the Klamath River celebrated the biggest dam removal and river restoration in U.S. history

In August and September, Chinook salmon swim upriver to their original spawning grounds

A finished canoe made by a Yurok craftsman might weigh 500 pounds and stretch 20 feet



Stein & Wein

OUTDOORS

Montgomery Woods State Natural Reserve just gained an additional 80 acres of old-growth redwoods. The added parcel, known as Rocky Ridge, contains the headwaters of Montgomery Creek, an ecologically important watershed for this ancient forest. There's no trail access yet, but plans are in the works. For now, walk the two-mile-long Montgomery Grove Trail to enjoy cathedral-like redwoods and lush fern forests.

Still in its infancy, the Great Redwood Trail is a planned multi-use trail that will connect Humboldt Bay to San Francisco. When completed, the 307-mile pathway will be the longest converted rail trail in the U.S. with a big chunk traveling through remote redwood country. Short sections already exist: Blue Lake's Annie & Mary Trail, the Ukiah Rail Trail, Eureka Waterfront Trail, Humboldt Bay Trail, and Arcata Rail with Trail.



RESTAURANTS

North of **Mendocino**, the 1906 Caspar Inn was a fabled roadhouse and gathering place that hosted legendary musicians like Bonnie Raitt, John Lee Hooker, and Etta James. Shuttered since 2020, the inn's restaurant has reopened as Good Bones Kitchen. Stop in Friday to Sunday for rockfish stew, crusty sourdough, or a rice bowl with trumpet mushrooms.

In **Ukiah**, enjoy a French bistro-style lunch or dinner at Crepas Café.

The crepe-focused menu gives equal weight to savory and sweet, so start with turkey pesto and finish with berry cream cheese. The drink menu is Instagram gold: Snap photos before taking a sip from your cocoa tiramisu latte, affogato, or iced Spanish latte.

BEVERAGES

Mendocino's Fog Bottle Shop now has a natural wine bar. Operated by the owners of Fog Eater Cafe, the shop offers flights and single glasses of natural wines. Ask your pourer to suggest an ideal pairing for the deviled eggs, local cheese, and mushroom pâté on the small-plate menu.

Arrive by boat or by car to Stein & Wein, **Clearlake's** new gathering place with blue-water views, wines from Lake County

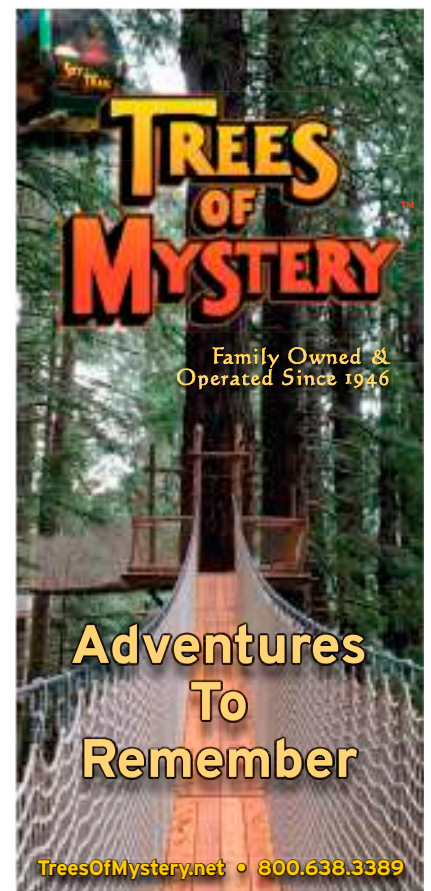
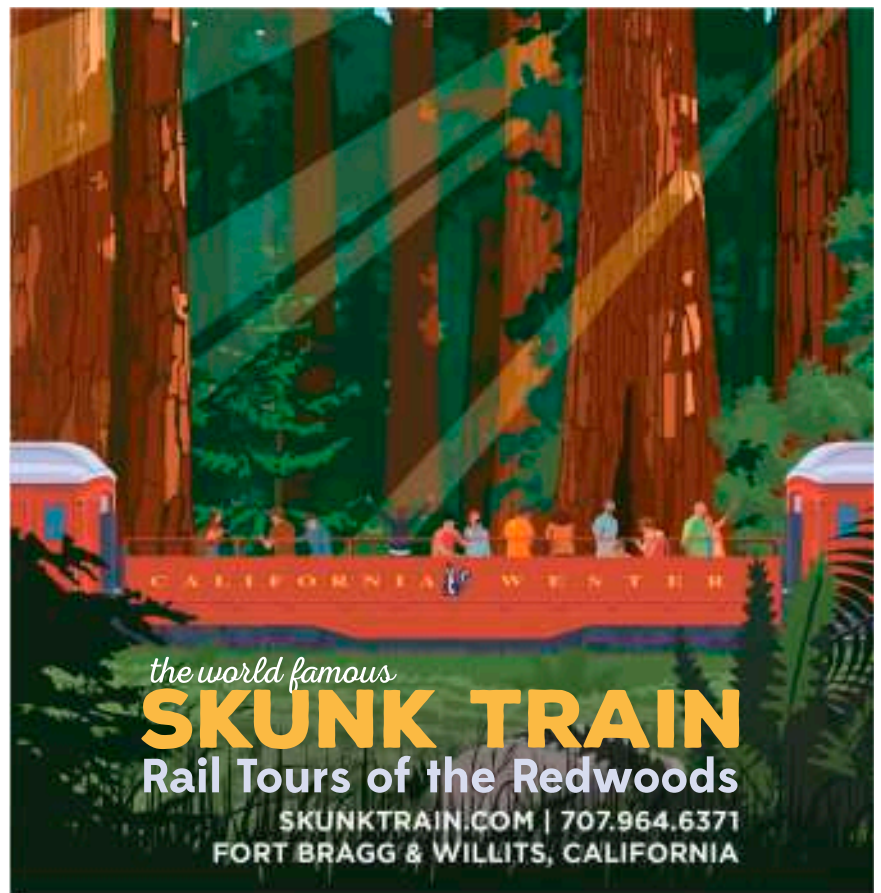
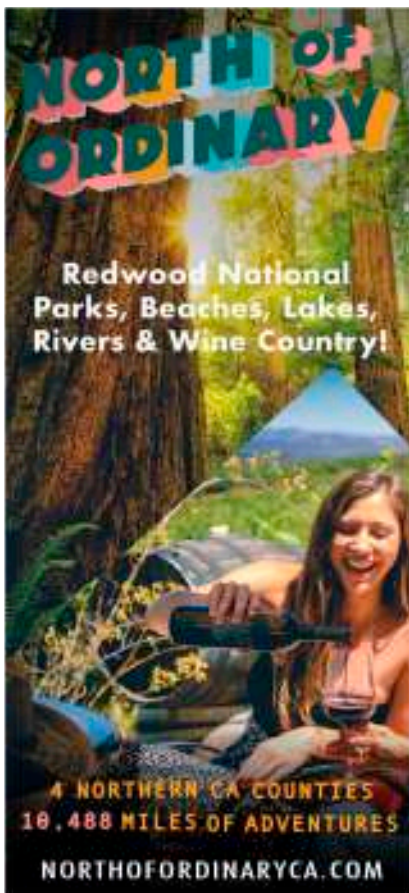
wineries, European beers, and a Swiss-German menu of tasty pub food—schnitzel, sausages, pretzels, and burgers. Bring a board game or deck of cards and make new friends at the communal tables.

ACCOMMODATIONS

There's nothing subtle about the interior design at The Fainting Couch, a self-proclaimed maximalist boutique located in the peaceful Cobb Mountain area of **Lake County**. The 18-room, dog-friendly hotel features whimsical touches like clawfoot tubs, ornate chandeliers, and vibrant flower wallpaper. The hotel is situated near opportunities for hiking, boating, and wine tasting.



Fog Bottle Shop



Small Town Scoop

The Makers' Space



“The proximity to the beach, the coastal trails, and the small-town vibes fit us to a T.”

- KATIE MATHER, ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE AT THE MAKERS' SPACE

the arts,” she says. “At The Makers’ Space, artists have a place to come together, show their work, and connect with others by teaching classes.”

Making art is a good counterpoint to McKinleyville’s active outdoor recreation. Locals and visitors head to Clam Beach County Park to surf the waves, walk a broad expanse of driftwood-dotted sand, and camp on the beach. Just north lies Moonstone Beach, where the Little River empties into the sea. It’s Mather’s favorite spot for kayaking and wildlife spotting.

“We put in our kayaks at the river mouth, then paddle inland and float back down,” she says. “It’s a beautiful estuary and a peaceful float. We always see a family of otters when we go in the morning.”

Mather also likes to walk the trails of the newly opened McKinleyville Community Forest, a woodsy landscape

that once belonged to a logging company but now welcomes hikers and bikers. “It’s a little hidden gem. The old logging roads are now beautiful trails,” she says.

Bike riders can explore the paved Hammond Trail, which follows an old railroad right-of-way 5.5 miles from the Little River mouth to Mad River Beach.

On rainy days, Blake’s Books is a great diversion. “It’s a lovely old-school bookstore,” Mather says. “We love going in there just to hang out and read. My kids could stay there all day.”

She also recommends a visit to family-friendly Six Rivers Brewery, perched on a hilltop with a view of the coast. “Six Rivers is one of the first women-run breweries in California. Owners Meredith Maier

and Talia Nachshon are all about community. They have fun games and trivia nights.” Another local favorite is Papa Wheelies Pub, known for its grass-fed burgers and walls draped in eclectic bric-a-brac. “It looks like an English pub, but it’s cooler and more Humboldt-funky,” Mather says. 🌻

North of Eureka, Highway 101 curves inland to skirt Humboldt Bay, then swings back to the coast at McKinleyville (pop. 16,913), a onetime logging hub. The redwood-studded town is a cozy spot where fleece-clad artists, farmers, teachers, loggers, and travelers mingle at the local brewery or trade neighborly chitchat in the grocery aisles.

Artist Katie Mather describes McKinleyville as a “family-friendly town with parks, trails, and quiet neighborhoods.” Mather grew up in Arcata and now lives in McKinleyville with her husband and two children. “The proximity to the beach, the coastal trails, and the small-town vibes fit us to a T.”

Mather teaches mosaic workshops at breweries and wineries throughout Humboldt County, and she’s the artist-in-residence at The Makers’ Space, an arts education center at Sea Goat Farmstand, a nonprofit that grows and sells organic produce.

“Our community is overwhelmingly supportive of



Moonstone Beach

Seaweed

Seaweed has been a staple in Asian, Scandinavian, and Indigenous American diets for centuries, but it's a relatively new food for many Americans. Hundreds of seaweed species are edible, but some are more delicious and valuable than others, including dulse, nori, mbu, wakame, sea moss, and sea grapes. Chefs love seaweed's briny umami taste, and eaters love that it's packed with nutrition and good for the planet.

Seaweed grows along the entire California coast, where it can be foraged and wild-harvested in accordance with state regulations. But a few entrepreneurs have started commercial seaweed farms to supply a rapidly growing market, including Torre Polizzi, who operates Sunken Seaweed on Humboldt Bay. Polizzi nurtures kelp seedlings in a lab, then transplants them to lines submerged five feet below the surface. "In about three months, they'll grow from tiny, three-millimeter kelp blades to 10- to 14-feet long."

Smaller seaweed species can grow in tanks, which allows the farmer to control nutrients and light. "In the tanks, we can make our dulse turn a deeper red. Chefs want seaweed that makes their dishes look really beautiful and also adds a new taste."



KELP IS ONE OF THE FASTEST GROWING ORGANISMS ON EARTH AND CAN GROW UP TO TWO FEET A DAY.



At the two-Michelin-star Harbor House in Elk, chef Matthew Kammerer and his staff forage seaweed from a private cove, then bake it into sourdough and blend it into the house butter.



Sunken Seaweed grows dulse, ogo, nori, sea lettuce, and sea truffle—all California native species. Each has a different taste, texture, and appearance.



Ravens Restaurant at Mendocino's Stanford Inn by the Sea incorporates kelp into various dishes such as sea palm pad thai with rice noodles, tofu, and vegetables.



visit

North of Ordinary. See the tallest redwood trees, vineyards, lakes, and beaches. Go on the ultimate road trip through Northern California's "North of Ordinary" region to our four uncrowded counties: Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake, and Mendocino. northofordinaryca.com See ad, p. 77

ARCATA

Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary. These 300 acres of constructed wetlands are a mecca for birds and also serve as a wastewater treatment facility. Visit the interpretive center, then walk, bike, or birdwatch on five miles of paths alongside freshwater and brackish marshes, tidal sloughs, salt marshes, and mudflats. cityofarcata.org

Natural History Museum. This Cal Poly Humboldt museum offers a fascinating glimpse into the region's history, showcasing exhibits on Native American culture, early settlers, and the area's rich natural heritage. natmus.humboldt.edu

CARLOTTA

Grizzly Creek Redwoods State Park. View majestic redwoods in this small, off-the-beaten-path park. Camp

along the Van Duzen River and explore five miles of secluded hiking trails. parks.ca.gov

CASPAR

Caspar Headlands State Beach. Explore a quiet stretch of sand sandwiched between Doyle Creek and Caspar Creek. Watch for migrating gray whales as you hike along the coastal bluffs. Also popular for surf fishing. parks.ca.gov

CRESCENT CITY

Del Norte Coast Redwoods State Park. Find solace at this remote stretch of rugged coastline. Hike the two-mile Damnation Creek Trail to travel from fern-filled redwood forests down to the coast. parks.ca.gov

Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park. Hike through the shady forest filled with giant, ancient trees and 20 miles of trails. Fish, kayak, or snorkel in the Smith River. parks.ca.gov

Redwood National & State Parks. Explore a spectacular network of parks protecting nearly half of the world's coast redwoods. Find lush rainforest, sandy beaches, massive trees, and herds of Roosevelt elk. nps.gov/redw

Tolowa Dunes State Park. Horseback ride or hike through 5,000 acres of pristine wetland habitat, ocean beach, and sand dunes. Visit in spring to see wildflowers. parks.ca.gov

ELK

Greenwood State Beach. Climb a steep trail down to this driftwood-laden beach. The cove is a popular spot with kayakers, who can paddle around a rock island, sea stacks, and rock arches. parks.ca.gov

Navarro River Redwoods State Park. Choose between sleeping under redwood groves or alongside a sandy beach at this park's two picturesque campgrounds. Day users take advantage of fishing and kayaking. parks.ca.gov

EUREKA

Clarke Historical Museum. Step inside the historic Bank of Eureka building to learn about the rich history of Humboldt County. Walk through period-decorated rooms for a journey through time. clarkemuseum.org

Fort Humboldt State Historic Park. Discover an 1853 military post situated on a bluff overlooking Humboldt Bay. Visit the historic hospital building to see a vintage mountain howitzer cannon and a dugout canoe. parks.ca.gov

Humboldt Botanical Garden. Located near Humboldt Bay, these gardens feature plants from both a coastal and Mediterranean climate. Practice moving meditation at *All Happy Now*, Peter Stanino's labyrinth-like art installation. hbgf.org

Morris Graves Museum of Art. Housed in a 1902 Carnegie Library, this museum's permanent collection features works by Morris Graves, a 20th-century American painter known for his mystical view of nature, as well as other internationally recognized artists. humboldtarts.org

Redwood Discovery Museum. Bring the kids to this interactive museum where they can play, tinker, and learn about science, art, culture, technology, and healthy living. discovery-museum.org

FERNDALE

Ferndale State Historic Landmark. This remote fairy-tale village and onetime dairy hub features carefully preserved Victorian-era homes, once known as Butterfat Palaces. Today you'll find art galleries, five-and-dimes, and diners in the one-square-mile town. visitferndale.com

FORT BRAGG

International Sea Glass Museum. Visit one of the world's largest permanent sea glass exhibits. Learn about the history of nearby Glass Beach, where the shore is covered with little pieces of rounded glass. internationalseaglassmuseum.com

Jug Handle State Natural Reserve. Enjoy beautiful ocean views, enchanting pygmy forests, and a bridge built in the 1930s. Hike the popular 2.5-mile Ecological Staircase Trail to explore wave-cut terraces. parks.ca.gov

MacKerricher State Park. Listen for barking seals on the rocky outcroppings and search for tiny creatures in the tide pools that line the shore. Popular with runners, cyclists, and equestrians. parks.ca.gov

Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens. Lose your sense of time in this 47-acre garden by the sea. Rhododendrons, camellias, and magnolias tower over cultivated displays of dahlias, begonias, roses, and more. Dogs welcome. gardenbythesea.org See ad, p. 77

Skunk Train. An adventurous ride deep into the redwood forest on one of America's most scenic railroads. Trips depart from Fort Bragg and Willits. 707/964-6371; skunktrain.com See ad, p. 77

GARBERVILLE

Richardson Grove State Park. Visit an exceptional grove of lowland trees, including one so big you can walk through its trunk, at one of California's first redwood parks, which has grown to 1,800 acres. Swim or fish for steelhead in the South Fork of the Eel River. parks.ca.gov

KELSEYVILLE

Clear Lake State Park. Located on the shores of California's largest freshwater lake, this park is a popular spot for fishing, boating, swimming, and water sports. parks.ca.gov

KLAMATH

Trees of Mystery. Redwood Hwy. 101. Explore Trees of Mystery. Experience the SkyTrail Gondola and the Redwood Canopy Trail. Walk among redwood carvings. Visit the End of the Trail Collection. CLIA member. 800/638-3389; treesofmystery.net See ad, p. 77

LEGGETT

Smithe Redwoods State Natural Reserve. Find the beautiful Frank and Bess Smithe Grove of redwood trees, as well as a 60-foot waterfall. Bring a picnic, a swimsuit, and your fishing pole. parks.ca.gov

Chandelier Drive-Thru Tree. This towering redwood has stood for more than 2,400 years and served as a reliable photo-op spot for more than 80 years. Drive your car through the six-foot-wide tunnel, which was carved into its trunk in 1937. drivethrutree.com

Standish-Hickey State Recreation Area. Established in 1922, this 1,012-acre park offers 10 miles of trails, steep canyon bluffs, and the towering 225-foot Captain Miles Standish Redwood Tree, which is more than 1,200 years old. parks.ca.gov

LITTLE RIVER

Van Damme State Park. Find a scenic trail system, lush fern-filled groves, kayak tours, and year-round camping. View stunted trees in the pygmy forest and watch salmon spawn in Little River. parks.ca.gov

LOWER LAKE

Anderson Marsh State Historic Park. Visit a 10,000-year-old archeological site of the Southeastern Pomo and a 19th-century ranch house at this 1,065-acre park. Explore protected habitats through hiking and boating trails. parks.ca.gov

MANCHESTER

Manchester State Park. A "catch basin" for sea debris, this five-mile-long beach is great for strolling at the base of sand dunes and searching for sea treasures. Also found here: wildflowers of all hues, tundra swans, and grazing sheep. parks.ca.gov

MCKINLEYVILLE

Azalea State Natural Reserve. Thanks to its namesake flora, each spring this reserve explodes with pink and white blossoms, their fragrant scent filling the air (April and May are peak bloom months). parks.ca.gov

Little River State Beach. Serene and undeveloped, this broad beach and its rolling dunes are bordered on the north by the Little River and on the south by Clam Beach County Park, which offers camping facilities. parks.ca.gov

MENDOCINO

Big River Beach. This broad, sandy beach where Big River meets the Pacific Ocean is ideal for strolling, dog-walking, picnicking, and birding. parks.ca.gov

Caspar Headlands State Natural Reserve. Four miles north of the town of Mendocino, this dog-friendly reserve features a jagged, rocky shoreline, wildflowers, and pounding surf. Camping is available at the adjacent Caspar Beach and RV Campground. parks.ca.gov

Ford House Visitors Center and Museum. Find travel information and volunteers to help plan your Mendocino County vacation in the historic 1854 Ford House. Visit the museum to see local artifacts and several works by Emmy Lou Packard. mendoparks.org

Kelley House Museum. Learn how lumbermen first moved to Mendocino in the late 1800s and started building homes out of the region's coast redwoods. Browse artifacts, photographs, and documents. kelleyhousemuseum.org

Mendocino Art Center. Founded by Bill and Jennie Zacha in 1959, this art center lured legions of artists to settle in Mendocino. See works by local creatives, shop the gallery store, or take a ceramics class. mendocinoartcenter.org

Mendocino Headlands State Park. Hiking, surfing, whale watching, and fishing are popular activities at this park's broad beach. It's minutes from the village of Mendocino. parks.ca.gov

Point Cabrillo Light Station. Visit this California State Historic Landmark to see a fully restored 1909 lighthouse and blacksmith and carpentry shops. On 270 acres of coastal bluffs. pointcabrillo.org

Russian Gulch State Park. Hike a 3-mile trail through a lush wash of greenery. Take in pristine beaches and a 36-foot waterfall. Watch the tumultuous Devil's Punchbowl. Also: bike, fish, dive, and kayak. parks.ca.gov

ORICK

Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park. Sandy beaches, giant sequoias, and fern- and lichen-draped trails are this park's signature attractions. Hike and camp or rent a cabin, and keep your eyes peeled for Roosevelt elk. parks.ca.gov

PHILO

Hendy Woods State Park. Two groves of towering redwoods are preserved at this park, located in the heart of Anderson Valley wine country. See trees that are 300 feet tall and nearly 1,000 years old. Enjoy hiking, camping, swimming, canoeing, and kayaking. parks.ca.gov

POINT ARENA

Point Arena Lighthouse & Museum. Standing watch over the rocky shore of Point Arena, this light station—the tallest on the Pacific Coast—offers guided tours. pointarenalighthouse.com

Point Arena-Stornetta Public Lands. Hike eight miles of marked trails along the rugged coastline. View sea arches, sandy beaches, and a milk barn dating back to the early 20th century. blm.gov

Schooner Gulch State Beach. This beach and its headlands are a scenic spot to commune with the Mendocino coast. Picnicking, surfing, and fishing are big draws, as is the minus-tide attraction known as Bowling Ball Beach. parks.ca.gov

SMITH RIVER

Pelican State Beach. Just south of the Oregon state line, the relatively small, secluded stretch of

coastline preserved here is great for sandy walks and beachcombing. parks.ca.gov

TRINIDAD

Humboldt Lagoons State Park. Freshwater ponds meet the wide-open ocean at this sprawling park. Spot whales, elk, and pelicans, and fish for trout and salmon. Kayaks available for rent. parks.ca.gov

Sue-meg State Park. Lush forests meet the sea at this park, where visitors camp, watch for migrating whales, observe sea lions and seals, or explore tide pools. You can also visit a native plant garden and reconstructed Yurok plank-house village. parks.ca.gov

Trinidad Museum. Housed in a renovated turn-of-the-century Italianate bungalow, this museum has Native American artifacts as well as exhibits on the Gold Rush and the region's whaling, shipping, fishing, and logging industries. trinidadmuseum.org

Trinidad State Beach. Dramatic rocky outcroppings and stands of alders dot this secluded cove, which surrounds a sandy beach. Open sunrise to sunset, come here during low tide to wander amidst the waves, picnic, or simply get away from it all. parks.ca.gov

UKIAH

Grace Hudson Museum. American painter Grace Hudson and her ethnologist husband spent the last years of their life in Ukiah. Visit their historic home and adjacent museum dedicated to their life and work. gracehudsonmuseum.org

Montgomery Woods State Natural Reserve. This daytime-use-only reserve is home to towering redwoods, most notably the magical Kellieowen Grove, which is accessible via the two-mile Montgomery Trail. parks.ca.gov

Visit Ukiah. Ukiah is known for its scenic landscapes, outdoor adventures, wine, culinary experiences, and a culture of innovators, creators, and mavericks. Discover our treasures, inspire your senses, enjoy a relaxed pace, and "Just Be U." 707/462-4705; visitukiah.com See ad, p. 77

WEOTT

Humboldt Redwoods State Park. One of the best places to view soaring redwoods by car is via the 32-mile Avenue of the Giants, an enchanting route that parallels Highway 101. The park also has more than 250 campsites and 100-plus miles of trails. parks.ca.gov

WESTPORT

Westport-Union Landing State Beach. Camp along the rugged North Coast shoreline—86 first-come, first-served family campsites on the bluffs overlooking the Pacific provide magnificent views. parks.ca.gov

WHITETHORN

Sinkyone Wilderness State Park. This 60-mile stretch of rugged terrain features the kind of untamed wilds that once dominated the Mendocino Coast. Trails are steep; campsites are primitive. This is how the Lost Coast earned its name. parks.ca.gov

WILLITS

Mendocino County Museum. Dive deep into local history with artifacts including a 10,000-year-old Clovis point spearhead, 19th-century stagecoaches, and recovered items from a famous shipwreck. mendocinocounty.org

Redwoods can absorb
up to 40 percent of their
water from fog each year

Muir Woods was designated a
national monument by President
Theodore Roosevelt in 1908



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Within the park, there are six miles of accessible boardwalk and paved trails

The 558-acre monument preserves one of the last ancient redwood forests in the Bay Area



Lo & Behold Bar + Kitchen



TAKE A SELF-
GUIDED TOUR
ALONG THE
MOCKTAIL
TRAIL IN
HEALDSBURG

at the h2hotel for a Spicy Citrus Spritz. In downtown **San Jose**, the Still O.G. vinyl record listening bar added Alter Ego Cocktail Club, a speakeasy within a bar. The hidden lounge lies behind a velvet curtain and features a darker, sexier vibe.

OUTDOORS

Panorama Park on San Francisco's Yerba Buena Island offers sweeping views of the San Francisco Bay plus the *Point of Infinity*, a 69-foot-high sculpture by world-renowned artist Hiroshi Sugimoto. Follow the winding walkway to the serene overlook dotted with Monterey cypress trees. The **Santa Cruz** Beach Boardwalk added two new rides: the Dream Wheel, a modern take on the Ferris wheel; and Surge, a thrill ride that spins and tilts in 360-degree motion.



Point of Infinity

New & Noteworthy

RESTAURANTS

Fans of The Slanted Door have a new location to love in **Napa** and another one on the way in its original **San Francisco** location. The restaurant serves many of the modern Vietnamese dishes that earned chef-owner Charles Phan a James Beard Award—including cellophane noodles with Dungeness crab and his famously tender shaking beef—along with new creations. **Oakland's** Vegan Mob food truck built a cult following for its healthy soul food barbecue, and

now the fleet has a new outpost in **San Bruno**. The truck is parked six days a week outside Hangry Planet, the nation's first convenience store offering only plant-based food and snacks. In **Redwood City**, Hurrica is a waterfront restaurant and aquarium attraction in one. The dining room's centerpiece is a floor-to-ceiling aquarium filled with 200 luminous jellyfish; as guests enjoy whole roasted dorade and kombu-wrapped lobster, they can watch the jellies float overhead.

BEVERAGES

USA Today named **Santa Rosa** as one of the top 10 beer cities in the United States for 2024. Home to multiple craft breweries, including world-famous Russian River Brewing, the city hosts multiple beer festivals throughout the year, including the

monthlong FeBREWary celebration. Trumer Pils, a 400-year-old Austrian brewery, expanded its presence in **Berkeley** with a new taproom that opened in late 2023. The taplist goes beyond its signature pilsner and includes dark amber lagers and oak-aged doppelbock, which are complemented by menu items like the bratwurst braised in Trumer Pils, served on a pretzel roll with housemade sauerkraut. In **Healdsburg**, the self-guided Mocktail Trail highlights bars and restaurants around the city with incredible booze-free cocktails. Stop at Lo & Behold Bar + Kitchen for a Guava Cucumber Cooler or swing by Spoonbar



Spa Talisa



Calistoga Spa Hot Springs

Splurge vs Save

LIVE THE HIGH LIFE OR KEEP IT LOW-KEY IN NAPA VALLEY'S MOST LAID-BACK TOWN

RELAX

Nourish mind and body at Spa Talisa with the Brave Spirit Ritual (\$495). The treatment features a foot soak and aura cleanse, a salt scrub fortified with marine algae, detoxifying mud application, and a restorative massage.

In 60 minutes of bliss, the Calistoga Spa Hot Springs' Volcanic Ash Mud Bath (\$162) melts away your cares with a mud bath followed by a mineral whirlpool soak scented with aromatherapy salts. Finish with an invigorating eucalyptus steam bath.

STAY

What could be more "Napa Valley" than a resort with its own winery estate? The Four Seasons Napa Valley also wows guests with vineyard-view suites. (Starting around \$1,000 low season; \$1,600 high season)

Soak up the retro vibe at the Calistoga Motor Lodge. The downtown retreat offers camper-themed rooms with private terraces, along with two geothermal pools, a spa, outdoor games, and cruiser bikes. (Starting around \$260 low season)

SIP

Wind your way up to Stony Hill Vineyard for the Residence Experience (\$150). Tour the estate's renovated midcentury modern home with its spectacular hilltop views, then sample elegant Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon.

Relax in the winery garden with the Palisades Mountains as a backdrop at Bennett Lane Winery. The Taste of the Napa Valley sampler (\$35) features four wines, including the popular Maximus Red Feasting Wine.

DINE

Indulge in the seven-course tasting menu at Auro at the Four Seasons. Calistoga's only Michelin-starred restaurant. The menu may include a marbled A5 Wagyu from Kagoshima, Japan. (\$340/person with wine pairing)

House of Better serves up relaxed backyard vibes on its bright, colorful patio. House-roasted New Mexican chiles are stars of the Southwest-inspired menu. (Mains \$14–\$26)

PEDAL

The Getaway Adventures Sip 'n' Cycle Tour (\$250) takes pedal-pushers on a guided ride along Calistoga's back roads, stopping along the way to sip Napa wines and refuel with a gourmet wine-country picnic.

Bike at your own pace on the Self-Guided Calistoga Cool Wine Tour (\$95). Calistoga Bikeshop creates custom itineraries with winery bookings, and even transports your wine purchases back to the shop.



Small Town Scoop



"I wanted everything that's beautiful about California, and I wanted to be in a place that had extraordinary apples."

- ELLEN CAVALLI,
CO-OWNER OF TILTED SHED CIDERWORKS

"There are a lot of makers here, a lot of small-business people, a lot of artists, and a lot of folks who are really into good living," Cavalli notes. "It's got all the small-town flavor that we love."

It also has the Gravenstein Apple Fair, an annual August gathering that celebrates Sebastopol's favorite fruit. There's a distinct Mayberry spirit to the two-day event, complete with piglet races, a rooster-crowing contest, and an ugly produce beauty pageant. But "Gravs," as the locals call them, are front and center. "They have a really nice tartness, without being too tart," Cavalli says of the local cultivar, "and they have a nice balance of sweetness so they're just that perfect eating apple. They sauce up well. They make pies really well. And you can make cider."

Sebastopol is located 15 miles from the Pacific, which helps keep summers mild and winters warm. It's within a 30-minute drive of Armstrong Woods' towering redwoods and Highway 1's undulating curves, but there's plenty to do if you want to stay in town.

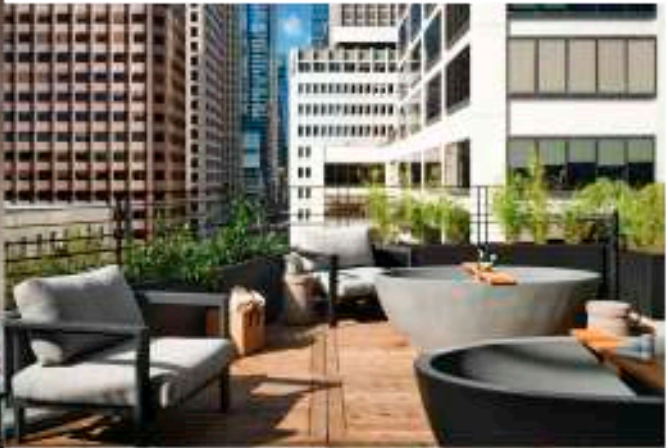
Cavalli might start her Sunday with a seasonal latte at Retrograde Coffee followed by a lap through the Sebastopol Farmers' Market, a place to gossip and spot the town's quirkiest characters. She might follow that up with breakfast at Americana, a farm-to-table eatery where the owners can tell you exactly where every morsel of food on your plate originates. When it's drink o'clock, Cavalli is likely to head over to Horse & Plow for local wine and cider, or perhaps to Ambix Spirits for some European-style apple brandy.

Dinner options abound, including the ethically sourced offerings at Handline and the small bites menu at The Redwood. Another option: Fern Bar, a cocktail-focused restaurant located in The Barlow, Sebastopol's 12.5-acre "maker marketplace." The facility is a community hub and features one-of-a-kind shops, a monthly street fair, refined wine-tasting outlets like Pax and Kosta Browne, and numerous places to grab a quick bite. ☀

Ellen Cavalli moved to Sebastopol in 2010 with her husband and young son mostly for the apple-friendly climate and culture. But since then she has fallen hard for nearly every aspect of this tiny town (pop. 7,338) in West Sonoma County.

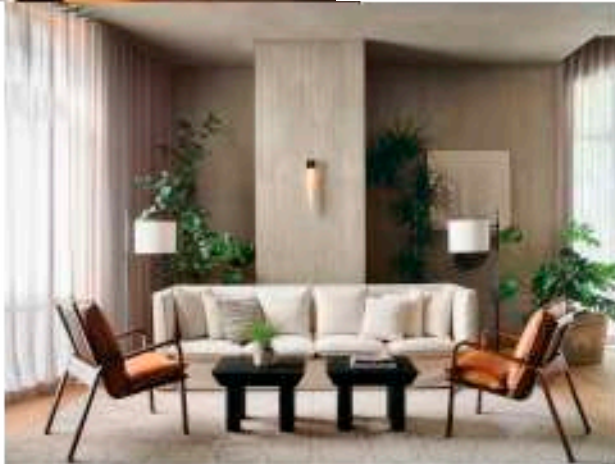
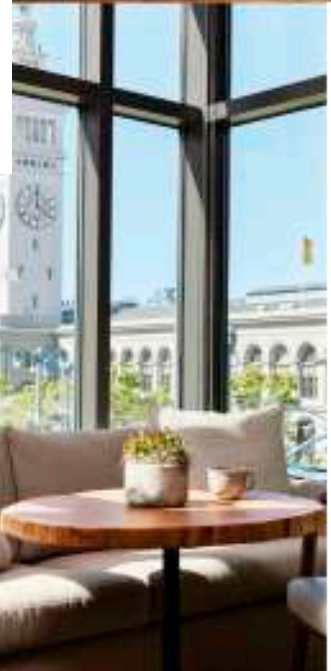
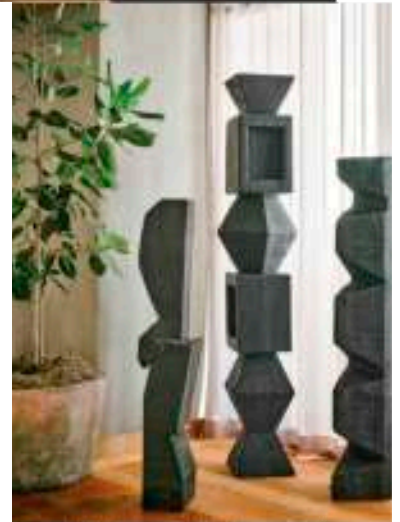
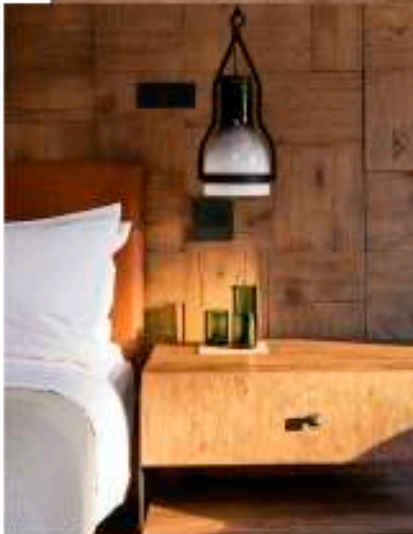
"I wanted fog, I wanted everything that's beautiful about California, and I wanted to be in a place that had extraordinary apples," says Cavalli, co-owner of Tilted Shed Ciderworks and program manager for Sonoma County Farm Trails. "We landed in Sebastopol because it's really the perfect mix of culture and agriculture." Located within the Green Valley subregion of the Russian River Valley AVA, Sebastopol is populated by numerous high-end winemakers. Where there's exceptional wine, exceptional food tends to follow, and the local restaurant scene punches far above its weight. Artisanal organic farms have popped up to supply area restaurants, drawing even more like-minded individuals to the community.





SAN FRANCISCO:
1 Hotel San Francisco

Just across the street from the iconic Ferry Building, 1 Hotel San Francisco sets the standard for stylish sustainability. Reclaimed materials play a key role in the construction and decor, from the lobby floor made from salvaged barn wood to elevator landings adorned with reclaimed redwood. 1 Hotel's environmental ethos carries over to the smallest details, including low-flow faucet fixtures, eco-conscious linens, and even hangers fashioned from 100 percent post-consumer recycled paper. At Terrene, its cafe and lounge, herbs often come from the chef's rooftop garden, and the dining room's dramatic hanging foliage is made from preserved plants, naturally treated to look fresh for months without water, soil, or sun. Guests can explore the city with a test drive in the emissions-free "house car" (an electric Audi e-tron), or pedal around on bikes made from recycled Nespresso coffee pods.



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More information
San Francisco Travel
Association
sftravel.com

visit

ALAMEDA

Robert W. Crown Memorial State Beach. This 2.5-mile-long beach was once known as the "Coney Island of the West." Go to the visitor center to learn about the park's past. parks.ca.gov

USS Hornet Sea, Air, & Space Museum. Moored at a former naval air station, this ship has been transformed into a state-of-the-art museum environment. Explore exhibits from the NASA Apollo moon missions. uss-hornet.org

APTOS

The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park. Enjoy hiking, jogging, and biking on more than 30 miles of trails, rising from sea level to steep coastal mountains of more than 2,600 feet. Picnic tables and barbecue pits are available. parks.ca.gov

Seacliff State Beach. Known for its fishing pier, this beach also has a long stretch of sand backed by bluffs and is a popular swimming spot. The weather can be changeable; layered clothing is recommended. parks.ca.gov

BENICIA

Benicia Capitol State Historic Park. Bring a picnic and enjoy the grounds or take a guided tour (advance reservations required) to learn about an important time in California's history. parks.ca.gov

BERKELEY

University of California Botanical Garden. The 34-acre garden has more than 10,000 different kinds of plants from around the world, cultivated by region. botanicalgarden.berkeley.edu

University of California, Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive. One of the largest university art museums in the United States, with a gallery, store, theaters, and a café in downtown Berkeley. bampfa.berkeley.edu

BODEGA BAY

Sonoma Coast State Park. Find sandy beaches below rugged headlands, a craggy coastline, and secluded coves. Foggy mornings usually shift to cool ocean breezes in the afternoon. parks.ca.gov

BOLINAS

Bolinas Museum. Five galleries preserve and exhibit the art and history of coastal Marin at this free museum.

Dance performances, gallery talks, historical photos, plus contemporary sculpture, photography, and graphic arts. bolinasmuseum.org

Point Blue Conservation Science. Formerly known as the Point Reyes Bird Observatory, this research center offers bird-banding and mist-netting demonstrations, a visitor center, and a short nature trail at its Palomarin Field Station. pointblue.org

BOULDER CREEK

Big Basin Redwoods State Park. Established in 1902, the state's oldest park is home to the largest continuous stand of coast redwoods south of San Francisco. parks.ca.gov

CALISTOGA

Bothe-Napa Valley State Park. Discover shady redwood groves, creeks, and well-maintained trails, along with a family-friendly campground and unique yurt accommodations at this 1,900-acre state park. parks.ca.gov

Robert Louis Stevenson State Park. Climb to the top of Mt. Saint Helena, the tallest peak in California's wine country, for 360-degree views of Napa, Sonoma, and Lake Counties. parks.ca.gov

CAPITOLA

New Brighton State Beach. Located just south of Santa Cruz, this beach features picnic areas, swimming, fishing, and a nearby forest. The camping area is on a bluff and overlooks northern Monterey Bay. parks.ca.gov

CLOVERDALE

Cloverdale History Center and Museum. Sign up for a docent-led tour of the 19th-century Gould-Shaw House, one of town's oldest documented dwellings, as well as a vintage mud wagon and cannonball safe. cloverdalehistoricalsociety.org

CONCORD

Concord Pavilion. Each spring through fall, this premiere venue is where music and comedy fans can see their favorite performers take center stage. concordamp.com

Markham Nature Park and Arboretum. Gardens, a bee farm, and 45 plant species from California, South Africa, Australia, and South America with the Galindo Creek running through. markhamarboretum.org

Mount Diablo. Towering 3,849 ft., Mount Diablo brings hikers, cyclists, and campers to its 20,000-acre park with over 400 plant and animal species and amazing views. parks.ca.gov

Pixieland. An amusement park just for children with colorful and fun rides like Red Baron Airplanes, Dragon Roller Coaster, and the Pixieland Express. pixieland.com

Six Flags Hurricane Harbor. Northern California's biggest and most thrilling water park, home to more than 35 world-class water attractions. sixflags.com/hurricaneharborconcord

DANVILLE

Blackhawk Museum. This Danville museum is a must-visit for car lovers and history buffs. Experience all five of the museum's distinct galleries: The Classic Car Collection, The Spirit of the Old West, Into China, Art of Africa, and World of Nature. blackhawkmuseum.org

Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site. Visit the home where this first American playwright to win the Nobel Prize for Literature penned the play *Long Day's Journey Into Night*. nps.gov/euon

Sycamore Valley Regional Open Space Preserve. This 696-acre natural area offers visitors a mix of grasslands, oak woodlands, and hiking trails with views of the surrounding valleys and Mount Diablo. ebparks.org/parks/sycamore-valley

DUBLIN

Dublin Camp Parks Military History Center. Visit the military base that transformed Dublin into a thriving city. See fascinating exhibits, take a virtual tour, or peruse the free Military Book Library. dublin.ca.gov

The Wave. Bring your bathing suit to this Dublin waterpark to experience state-of-the-art aquatics facilities including an expansive indoor pool, water slide tower, and splash zone with water-play features. thedublinwave.com

EMERYVILLE

Rotten City—Emeryville Cultural Arts District. This arts colony first emerged when guerilla art began to appear on the shoreline. The former industrial area is now home to film studios, galleries, and theaters. caculturaldistricts.org/emeryville

FREMONT

Mission San José. Learn about the history of this 1797 mission at the Mission Museum before taking a self-guided tour of the cemetery and peaceful church, home to a rare Spanish pipe organ. missionsanjose.org

GLEN ELLEN

Jack London State Historic Park. A National Historic Landmark, this park has more than 26 miles of trails and buildings from the time when the famous writer and adventurer called it his home. jacklondonpark.com

Sonoma Botanical Garden. Tour one of North America's largest collections of temperate-climate Asian plants and California natives, set across 25 acres of waterfalls, ponds, and stunning valley views. sonomabg.org

GUERNEVILLE

Armstrong Redwoods State Natural Reserve. Magnificent sequoia trees stand together as a testament to the wonders of the natural world. The reserve includes a visitor center, outdoor amphitheater, nature trails, and picnic facilities. parks.ca.gov

Russian River Visitor Center. Find friendly greeters who can help you explore the majestic redwoods, find a winery that suits your taste, book spa experiences, and enjoy river activities. Open daily. russianriver.com

HALF MOON BAY

Gray Whale Cove State Beach. This rugged beach gets its name from the whales that can often be spotted close to shore. Access the sheltered cove via a trail leading down from cliffs. parks.ca.gov

Half Moon Bay State Beach. Camp, hike, run, sunbathe, or swim along four miles of broad, sandy beach. Camp overnight at one of 52 sites, both for tents and recreational vehicles. parks.ca.gov

HEALDSBURG

Healdsburg Museum. Learn about the history of Sonoma County through permanent displays and changing exhibitions. Located in the former Carnegie Library, listed in the National Register of Historic Places. healdsburgmuseum.org

Sonoma County Wine Library. With a collection of 5,000 books, this is one of the most comprehensive collections of wine information in the world. Housed within the Healdsburg Regional Library. sonomalibrary.org/locations

Wine Road Northern Sonoma County. Your connection to over 130 wineries and 40 lodgings in beautiful northern Sonoma County, CA. Just an hour north of the Golden Gate. Tune in to wineroadpodcast.com for winemaker interviews and itinerary ideas. wineroad.com

INVERNESS

Tombes Bay State Park. This park comprises three distinct areas: Millerton Point, Shell Beach, and Heart's Desire. Hike a mile-long trail to Jepson Memorial Grove, one of the finest remaining groves of Bishop pine. parks.ca.gov

JENNER

Fort Ross State Historic Park. Venture into the past at this former settlement from the early 1800s. Stop by the visitor center and bring lunch to enjoy one of three picnic areas. fortross.org

Kruse Rhododendron State Natural Reserve. This pristine 317-acre reserve contains second-growth redwood, Douglas fir, grand firs, tanoaks, and a plethora

of rhododendrons. Visit in May to see these spectacular flowers burst into bloom. parks.ca.gov

Salt Point State Park. Discover panoramic views, kelp-dotted coves, and open grasslands along 20 miles of hiking trails and six miles of rugged coastline. Camping available. parks.ca.gov

KENWOOD

Sugarloaf Ridge State Park. Walk the self-guided nature trail along the headwaters of Sonoma Creek and view scenic rock outcroppings, redwoods, and ferns. A 25-foot waterfall flows after winter rains. sugarloafpark.org

LAGUNITAS

Samuel P. Taylor State Park. Camp among redwoods, bike along the creek, explore easy-to-moderate hiking trails, watch salmon spawn, relax in the shady picnic area, and learn the story of this state park's namesake pioneer. parks.ca.gov

LIVERMORE

Discovery Center at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. Experience a broad-based display of science and technology, as well as highlights of the laboratory's history. Free admission. lnl.gov

Livermore Valley Wine Country. Oenophiles, head east of San Francisco to the scenic Livermore Valley, where you'll find 50 family-owned wineries. Enjoy intimate tastings, award-winning wines, and plenty of vineyard tours at affordable prices. lvwine.org See ad, p. 15

LOS ALTOS

Los Altos History Museum. Learn about the area's transformation from an agricultural paradise to the high-tech hub of Silicon Valley. Housed in a turn-of-the-century Craftsman-style house. Free admission. losaltoshistory.org

LOS GATOS

Castle Rock State Park. Located along the crest of the Santa Cruz Mountains, this park is popular for hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, and climbing on the area's caverns and rocks. parks.ca.gov

MARSHALL

Marconi Conference Center State Historic Park. This sprawling park overlooking Tomales Bay preserves the site of early-20th-century wireless communication experiments, offering scenic views, hiking trails, and a glimpse into the history of radio technology. parks.ca.gov

MARTINEZ

John Muir National Historic Site. Begin your exploration of John Muir's life and legacy at the visitor center, then hike Mount Wanda and explore the grounds on your own. nps.gov/jomu

Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial.

This seaside memorial is dedicated to the deadliest home-front disaster in WWII. Learn about the explosion that occurred when two ships loaded with munitions met a tragic end. nps.gov/poch

MILL VALLEY

Mount Tamalpais State Park. Enjoy redwood groves, oak woodlands, and spectacular views. More than 50 miles of hiking trails within the park connect to a larger, 200-mile-long trail system. parks.ca.gov

Muir Woods National Monument. Surround yourself in a primeval redwood forest. Explore trails, points of interest, or attend a ranger-led program. Reservations

san francisco bay area

Muir Woods National Monument. Surround yourself in a primeval redwood forest. Explore trails, points of interest, or attend a ranger-led program. Reservations are required for all vehicles and shuttle riders. nps.gov/muwo

MONTARA

Montara State Beach. Explore tide pools, go surf fishing, and find a sea cave that's exposed at low tide. This mile-long sandy beach is protected by sculpted sandstone cliffs and features a historic lighthouse. parks.ca.gov

MOSS BEACH

Fitzgerald Marine Reserve. During low tides, discover colorful sea creatures that are revealed by the departing waves on this three-mile-long reef running from Point Montara to Pillar Point, one of California's largest intertidal reefs. fitzgeraldreserve.org

MOUNT HAMILTON

Lick Observatory. View exhibits in the main observatory, built in 1888, and enjoy an informal educational talk. Gift shop and visitor center are open Thursday through Sunday. lickobservatory.org

MOUNTAIN VIEW

Computer History Museum. In the heart of California's technology hub, learn about Silicon Valley icons and the 2,000-year history of computers at the largest computer history exhibition in the world. computerhistory.org

NASA-Ames Exploration Center. Stop by the visitor center at Moffett Field for a free self-guided tour and to learn more about this facility. Find official gear and collectibles in the gift shop. nasa.gov/ames

NAPA

Chuck Williams Culinary Arts Museum. Located at The CIA at Copia in Downtown Napa, this museum houses more than 4,000 culinary artifacts from the Williams Sonoma founder's personal collection. ciaatopia.com/chuck-williams-culinary-arts-museum

di Rosa Center for Contemporary Art. Take in this center's permanent collection of Bay Area art, multiple galleries, sculpture park, and a 35-acre lake, all located on 217 scenic acres. dirosart.org

Napa Art Walk. Biennial rotating art exhibit throughout downtown Napa. In the squares all around the town, you'll see large marvels of imagination and craft created by artists. napaartwalk.org

NOVATO

Olmopali State Historic Park. This historic park was once home to the Miwok Tribe. Enjoy views of the Petaluma River and San Pablo Bay or hike the nine-mile loop up Mount Burdell. parks.ca.gov

OAKLAND

African American Museum & Library at Oakland. Dedicated to the discovery, preservation, interpretation, and sharing of historical and cultural experiences of African Americans in California and the West. oaklandlibrary.org/locations

Camron-Stanford House. Set on the shores of Lake Merritt, this Victorian mansion was once home to five influential families before becoming the first museum in Oakland. Step back in time with a self-guided tour to learn more about California life during the 19th century. cshouse.org

Chabot Space and Science Center. In the Oakland hills' Redwood Regional Park, this state-of-the-art museum has interactive displays on the wonders of the

galaxies, visitor-accessible telescopes, and a first-rate planetarium. chabotspace.org

Oakland Museum of California. View collections dedicated to state history, art, and the natural world. Exhibits are animated by innovative interpretive tools and interactive features. Don't miss the terraced roof gardens and koi pond. museumca.org

USS Potomac. Take a tour of Franklin D. Roosevelt's presidential yacht, the "floating White House." The 165-foot vessel is open for dockside tours and two-hour cruises from June through November, and on weekends in December. usspotomac.org

PACIFICA

Pacifica State Beach. Also known as Linda Mar, this crescent-shaped beach is located at the mouth of San Pedro Valley. Take a stroll along the oceanside trail or surf the break. parks.ca.gov

PALO ALTO

Museum of American Heritage. Discover inventions that shaped America, displayed in a century-old home and garden. Learn about domestic technologies that shaped the 20th century. Permanent and rotating exhibits. moah.org

Palo Alto Junior Museum and Zoo. Explore interactive exhibits focused on science and natural history, along with a small zoo that houses flamingos, macaws, meerkats, and more. paloaltozoo.org

PESCADERO

Año Nuevo State Park. Take a three to four mile hike to view elephant seals; obtain a free visitor's permit daily from the entrance station. Explore the natural history exhibit within the Marine Education Center. parks.ca.gov

Pescadero State Beach. Hike the mile-long shoreline to discover sandy coves, rocky cliffs, and tide pools. Across the highway, find a marshlands preserve, popular with birders. parks.ca.gov

Pigeon Point Light Station State Historic Park. The 115-foot-tall lighthouse, dating back to 1872, is one of the tallest in the U.S. Hike along the coastal areas to spot seals in the surf. parks.ca.gov

PETALUMA

Marin French Cheese Co. - The Country's Oldest Cheese Company. Enjoy the historic creamery founded in 1865. Visit the cheese shop to taste award-winning cheeses and pick up supplies for a picnic by the pond. Open daily. 707/762-6001; marinfrenchcheese.com See ad, p. 89

Petaluma Adobe State Historic Park. This 41.4-acre park features the main residence and center of activity for the Rancho Petaluma, the sprawling 66,000-acre ranch owned by General Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo. parks.ca.gov

Petaluma Historical Library and Museum. Located in a 1904 Carnegie Library, this museum showcases the rich history of Petaluma with exhibits on the town's agriculture, railroad heritage, and the poultry industry that once earned it the nickname "Egg Basket of the World." petalumamuseum.com

Petaluma Visitors Program. A wine country gem with river recreation, visual art, theater, craft breweries, and wine tasting. Its historic downtown boasts award-winning dining, boutiques, antiques, and vibrates with live music. visitchabot.com See ad, p. 89

PLEASANTON

Alameda County Fairgrounds. These sprawling fairgrounds host more than 300 events each year in Pleasanton, including food festivals, drive-in movies,

car shows, and the annual Alameda County Fair. alamedacountyfair.com

Visit Tri-Valley. Local California - walkable downtowns, alfresco dining, and trails from craft beer to hiking to ice cream. For California's oldest wine country and NorCal's largest premium outlets. visittrivalley.com See ad, p. 15

POINT REYES STATION

Point Reyes National Seashore. More than 100 square miles of pristine ocean beaches with excellent hiking and backpacking opportunities, plus 1,500 species of animals and plants to discover, including a large herd of tule elk. nps.gov/pore

RICHMOND

Rosie the Riveter WWII Home Front National Historical Park. Learn about the sacrifices made by civilians on the home front during WWII. The museum's collection includes written narratives, photographs, personal belongings, and defense industry equipment. nps.gov/fori

SAN CARLOS

Hiller Aviation Museum. Celebrate the spirit of discovery and the innovation of aviation pioneers at this museum, located, appropriately, at the San Carlos Airport. Open daily. hiller.org

SAN FRANCISCO

Alcatraz Island. Located 1.25 miles offshore from San Francisco Bay, Alcatraz has served as a fort, a military prison, and a maximum-security federal penitentiary. Sign up for a behind-the-scenes tour. nps.gov/alca

Asian Art Museum. Take a free guided tour of this museum's collection, a veritable panorama of Asian art and culture. Special exhibitions and self-guided tours are available daily. asianart.org

Cable Car Museum. Learn about the inventor, technologies, builders, and expansion of the cable cars of San Francisco. Admission is free. Located in San Francisco's Washington-Mason powerhouse and carbarn. cablecarmuseum.org

California Academy of Sciences. This scientific and educational institution located in Golden Gate Park is among the largest museums of natural history in the world, featuring a planetarium, aquarium, rainforest and housing nearly 46 million specimens. calacademy.org

Candlestick Point State Recreation Area. Visitors here can revel in panoramic views of the San Francisco Bay, the East Bay Hills, and San Bruno Mountain. The park also offers hiking, jogging, bicycling, bird-watching, windsurfing, and picnicking. parks.ca.gov

Chinatown. Discover shops filled with food, herbs, porcelains, furniture, fabrics, and curios from China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan in this historic area, one of the country's oldest and most established Chinatowns. sanfranciscochinatown.com

Exploratorium. The Exploratorium is more than an iconic museum—it's an all-ages gateway to joyful exploration of science, art, and human perception. Uncover your wonder at TripAdvisor's #1 rated museum in SF. Pier 15 on the Embarcadero. exploratorium.edu See ad, p. 88

Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. Comprised of the de Young Museum and the Legion of Honor, this expansive museum showcases an extensive collection of art spanning from ancient civilizations to contemporary works. famsf.org

PIER 39. The Embarcadero at Beach St. Two levels of dining, entertainment, shopping, and attractions, surrounded by unbeatable views of the city and the

THE SAN FRANCISCO PENINSULA

The San Francisco Peninsula. South of San Francisco, north of expectations. Parks, hiking trails, bay and Pacific coast beaches, farm-to-table cuisine, easy access to San Francisco, dog-friendly. Explore The Peninsula. thesanfranciscopeninsula.com See ad, p. 88

SAN GREGORIO

Pomponio State Beach. Wide, sweeping sand stretches and roaring surf make this beach a popular destination. Picnic tables, barbecues, and plentiful parking for day-use; open 8 a.m. to sunset. parks.ca.gov

SAN JOSE

Children's Discovery Museum of San Jose. Kids learn about science—from fossil-digging to bubble-blowing and gardening—at this hands-on museum with more than 150 exhibits. cdm.org

Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum and Planetarium.

The most extensive collection of ancient Egyptian artifacts west of the Mississippi. Galleries display mummies, burial tombs, children's toys, and a replica of the Rosetta Stone. egyptianmuseum.org

The Tech Interactive. Experience hands-on exhibits, creative activities, and inspiring displays designed to engage visitors in the wonders of technology, robotics, and engineering. thetech.org

Visit San Jose—San Jose Convention and Visitors Bureau. 408 Almaden Boulevard. In the heart of Silicon Valley. You know San Jose for innovation. What may surprise you are the diverse neighborhoods and natural beauty. Three hundred days of sunshine make dining al fresco a year-round event. 800/SAN-JOSE; sanjose.org See ad, pgs. 32–33

Winchester Mystery House. Tour the historic mansion to discover a labyrinth of eccentric architecture, with winding hallways, secret doors, and staircases that lead to nowhere. winchestermysteryhouse.com

SAN RAFAEL

Downtown San Rafael Arts District. Enjoy galleries, open studios, art exhibits, and more within this district, founded with the goal of promoting socioeconomic and ethnic diversity through local arts and culture. caculturaldistricts.org/san-rafael

Marin Islands National Wildlife Refuge. Home to pelicans, diving ducks, grebes, and terns, this 339-acre refuge is also the largest heron and egret rookery of the San Francisco Bay Area. fws.gov

SANTA CLARA

Mission Santa Clara de Asís. Dating back to 1777, this mission remains an active church today. In addition to regular services, the mission hosts choral, orchestra, and other Santa Clara University musical events. scu.edu/missionchurch

SANTA CRUZ

Lighthouse Field State Beach. Surfers, beach lovers, birds, and monarch butterflies (during winter months) are all drawn to this sandy stretch. After a day in the sun, take a tour of the Santa Cruz Surfing Museum. parks.ca.gov

Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park. Learn about the legacy of the Spanish mission system from the Native American perspective at this historical site; the remaining early 1800s adobe structure used to house Indian residents. parks.ca.gov

UC Santa Cruz Arboretum and Botanic Garden. This 115-acre arboretum is home to more than 300 rare plant species, including California natives, King Proteas, and the largest collection of Erica flowers outside

of Africa, all thriving in diverse microclimates and landscapes. arboretum.ucsc.edu

Wilder Ranch State Park. Explore an 1897 Victorian home, 1859 Gothic Revival farmhouse, 1896 water-powered machine shop, rodeo arena, barns, and other historic buildings at this historic park set on the Santa Cruz coast. parks.ca.gov

SANTA ROSA

Charles M. Schulz Museum. Step into the world of Snoopy and the *Peanuts* gang. Explore engaging exhibitions, enjoy photo ops and hands-on fun, and create lasting memories. 2301 Hardies Lane, 707/579-4452; schulzmuseum.org See ad, p. 89

Trione-Annadel State Park. Located in the Valley of the Moon, Trione-Annadel offers miles of trails for hiking, mountain biking, and trail riding. parks.ca.gov

SARATOGA

Hakone Gardens. Enjoy the serenity and beauty of a historic (built in 1917) Japanese garden estate as you stroll through the authentic hill-and-pond style strolling garden featuring a waterfall, colorful koi, and beautiful colors. hakone.com

SAUSALITO

Bay Area Discovery Museum. At the foot of the Golden Gate Bridge, this museum encourages kids to awaken curiosity at every turn. bayareadiscoverymuseum.org

Marine Mammal Center. In the Marin Headlands, learn about Pacific harbor seals and enjoy educational programs and tours or explore exhibits on your own. marinemammalcenter.org

SEBASTOPOL

The Barlow. This 12-acre outdoor mercantile center showcases offerings from Sonoma County makers, including brewers, distillers, vintners, chefs, designers, and artists. Dog-friendly. thebarlow.net

SONOMA

Mission San Francisco de Solano. This mission was the last to be established in Alta California and the site of the Bear Flag Revolt. californiamissionsfoundation.org

Sonoma County Tourism. Life opens up in Sonoma County. Just 30 miles north of San Francisco, experience our laid-back sophistication at 425+ wineries, organic farms, towering redwoods, and miles of Pacific Coast. 800/576-6662; Order a free visitors guide at sonomacounty.com See ad, p. 89

ST. HELENA

Napa Valley Wine Library Association. Learn about wine-producing areas from around the world as well as Napa through images, labels, periodicals, and rare books. napawinelibrary.com

Robert Louis Stevenson Museum. This museum showcases the life and works of the famous author, featuring exhibits on his time in Napa Valley and his inspirations for novels like *Treasure Island* and *The Silverado Squatters*. stevensonmuseum.org

STANFORD

Cantor Arts Center at Stanford University. Collections in 24 galleries that span continents, cultures, and 5,000 years of art history, including an outdoor Rodin Sculpture Garden. Admission is free. museum.stanford.edu

TIBURON

Angel Island State Park. Hiking and great views can be found at the largest natural island in the San Francisco Bay. Accessible only via private boat or public ferry from Tiburon or San Francisco. parks.ca.gov

Old St. Hilary's Open Space Preserve. This 122-acre space offers panoramic views of the Tiburon peninsula from its serpentine ridgetop. A historic church graces the southern slope. parks.marincounty.org

Richardson Bay Audubon Center & Sanctuary. Picnic or hike, then learn about water and waterbird conservation and native plants found at the demonstration gardens. richardsonbay.audubon.org

VALLEJO

San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge. This 19,000-acre refuge supports migratory birds, wetland habitats, and endangered species, and offers wildlife viewing, fishing, and boating. fws.gov

Vallejo Naval & Historical Museum. Walk amongst this museum's five galleries and explore the rich history of Vallejo and the U.S. naval base at Mare Island. vallejomuseum.net

WALNUT CREEK

The Ruth Bancroft Garden. Stroll the meandering pathways of this stunning 3.5-acre garden, renowned for its diverse collection of drought-tolerant plants, including cacti, succulents, agaves, aloes, yuccas, and more. ruthbancroftgarden.org

WATSONVILLE

Elkhorn Slough. Watch otters and seals play in the estuary and spot birds traveling the Pacific Flyway. elkhornslough.org

Sunset State Beach. Take in this picturesque stretch of coastline featuring pine trees, mountainous sand dunes, and oceanside picnic spots, perfect for beachcombing, and watching sunsets over the Pacific. parks.ca.gov

YOUNTVILLE

Napa River Ecological Reserve. Hike, bird-watch, swim, and fish at this 73-acre reserve. A half-mile trail winds through oaks and a thriving riparian habitat. Admission is free. wildlife.ca.gov

Napa Valley Museum Yountville. Explore the connection between the valley's environment, culture, history, and creative expression. Check in advance for current exhibitions. napavalleymuseum.org

stay

HOTELS AND RESORTS

PETALUMA

San Francisco North/Petaluma KOA Campground, Lodging & RV Park. 20 Rainsville Rd. Spacious camping resort located between Sonoma wine country, San Francisco, and coastal beaches. Large RV sites, cabins, and lodging. Come enjoy country camping near the city. petalumakoa.com \$–\$\$ See ad, p. 88



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HANDICAP
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HOT TUB



PETS
WELCOME




UNDER
\$100/NIGHT



\$100-\$200/
NIGHT



OVER \$200/
NIGHT



Located in Auburn, PaZa Estate Winery is one of 23 boutique wineries on the Placer Wine Trail

Grapes at PaZa are planted in well-draining soil called Andregg, which thrives on rolling hillsides

PaZa's open-air tasting shed features views of the Sutter Buttes, a lava-dome complex active during the Pleistocene



GOLD COUNTRY

Explore the captivating, sun-drenched expanse where California's pioneering spirit was born

The vineyard grows a selection of varietals, including Albariño, Petite Sirah, and Barbera

The winery is located within the Sierra Foothills AVA, one of California's oldest wine regions



Rail Explorers Amador



PEDAL ON
A RAILBIKE
BETWEEN
FORMER
GOLD-MINING
TOWNS

with 200 chocolates from 25 countries. Find a different selection of beverages with a tour of **Rancho Cordova's** Barrel District. The under-the-radar neighborhood is home to breweries, wineries, distilleries, and the area's first meadery.

OUTDOORS

The Del Rio Trail in Sacramento offers a new way to cruise around town. Running along an abandoned railroad line, the 4.8-mile route, which opened in 2024, runs from one bend of the Sacramento River to another, ending at the Sacramento Zoo. In Amador County, pedal in prospectors' tracks with an 8-mile railbike experience with Rail Explorers, which connects the former gold-mining communities of **Ione** and **Martell**.

New & Noteworthy

RESTAURANTS

Mexican culture runs deep in Gold Country, as reflected in some of the area's most exciting new restaurants. Two esteemed Sacramento chefs partnered to open Cantina Pedregal in **Folsom**, a display of Monterrey-style dishes and sharply crafted cocktails fueled by house-made spirits. At Omakase Por Favor in **Lincoln**, chef Jeana Marie Pecha fuses coastal Mexican flavors into a Japanese raw bar experience—the chicharrones, for

example, are made with deep-fried fish skin. In **Elk Grove**, Rosa Madera delivers Michoacán cuisine built for a party. The Molcajete—a symphony of meat, seafood, and grilled cactus served in hot lava rock—is a must.

SHOPPING

Artistic shops with deep community ties are blossoming across the region. In **Nevada City**, have a former roller derby competitor create custom skates at Crush. The psychedelic shop also hosts classes on everything from ceramics to butterfly pinning. In **Sonoma**, you can create your own custom charm bracelet or personalize a cowboy hat with feathers and other flair at Wild Fox Hat Bar & Shoppe. Head to **Angels Camp** to find breezy summer

dresses, trucker hats with playful sayings, and local gifts at Jonnie the Label.

BEVERAGES

Discover exceptional coffee with a twist at recently opened roasteries pouring out-of-this-world drinks. Don't let the concept scare you: The surprisingly tasty, salty-sweet fish sauce caramel coffee is one of Sweet Oven Wholesale's most popular lattes. Find them at farmers' markets in the **Sacramento** area and beyond. At Cafe Brat Co. in **Elk Grove**, the activated charcoal coffee is topped with black sesame cream. Café Xocolatl in Sacramento serves concoctions like a red-velvet mushroom cacao latte along



Sweet Oven Wholesale

EXPLORE YOSEMITE IN STYLE

LODGING • DINING • RECREATION • TOURS • MEETINGS & EVENTS



EVERGREEN LODGE

A classic Yosemite experience at a newly expanded historic resort with 88 cabins and 20 Custom Camping sites spread throughout 20 acres of woods near Yosemite's western border and Hetch Hetchy entrance.



RUSH CREEK LODGE & SPA

A relaxed yet sophisticated experience inspired by its 20-acre hillside setting near Yosemite's Highway 120 West entrance, the lodge features a tastefully appointed mix of 143 rooms, suites and villas, plus an award-winning Spa.



FIREFALL RANCH

New to the Yosemite landscape in Spring 2024, this luxurious resort features 55 standalone Cottages and Villas situated among 300 serene acres of sprawling meadows and Sierra foothills along Yosemite's Highway 120 West corridor.

YosemiteHotels.com

See our enhanced listings in the High Sierra section

DEFY EXPECTATIONS

visitsacramento.com



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KRU



Pizzasaurus Rex

Splurge vs Save

DISCOVER A RANGE OF OPTIONS IN CALIFORNIA'S CAPITAL CITY

DINE

Dinner at KRU comes with a show. Saddle up to the sleek sushi bar, order the omakase (\$200 per person), and watch knife-wielding chefs do their thing. Revel in bite-sized sturgeon sprinkled with caviar.

Housed in a former diner, Pizzasaurus Rex serves grandma-style pies with natural wines. Go for the rotating special Dino Slice (\$6.75), piled with creative toppings like pepperoni, pineapple, jalapeño, and garlic oil.

STAY

Named one of *Travel + Leisure's* 500 best hotels, the Kimpton Sawyer offers luxurious fun. Lean into luxury with the sprawling penthouse suite, complete with private balcony, for \$2,750 per night (on average).

Sleep in an Italianate Stick-style mansion built in 1885 by a local flour magnate. The lavish H Street residence is now the HI Sacramento Hostel where travelers can stay in private or communal dorm-style rooms for \$60 a night.

RIDE

Indulge in turn-of-the-century romance on the Old Vine Express (\$174-plus). The two-hour train excursion takes riders along a stretch of track built in 1911. Along the way, enjoy a flight of five wines paired with canapés.

Board a yacht on the Sacramento River for just over \$30. City Cruises goes past the Delta King and Tower Bridge as the captain shares fun facts on a one-hour trip.

SIP

Is there any better way to celebrate than a big bottle of bubbly? At Fizz you can choose from more than 150 sparkling wines, including a 1990 Louis Roederer Cristal that pops for a cool \$14,000.

At McConnell Estates Winery in Elk Grove, taste award-winning wines in a 100-year-old home. The \$10 fee is waived with a bottle purchase (most under \$30).

SHOP

One hundred years after Julius Anapolsky opened his K Street haberdashery, Julius Clothing continues to offer menswear for the well-heeled. Choose your fabric and lining for a made-to-measure look, starting at \$1,500.

A wonderland for retro lovers, Stardust Vintage Emporium is 13,000 square feet of throwback bliss. Find pieces like a 1960s hot-pink raincoat (\$35 or less).





Small Town Scoop



The Grove House

“We love the pace of the place. I don’t miss city life.”

- MELISSA TAKAHASHI, OWNER OF LITTLE SHOP OF RAMEN

Located at the junction of Highway 140 and Highway 49, Mariposa is best known as a gateway to Yosemite National Park. However, the little blink-and-you-miss-it town in the Western Sierra foothills (population 1,060) is more than worth a stop. From waterfall hikes to off-the-beaten-path wineries, there’s plenty to explore whether you spend an afternoon, a long weekend, or make like local Melissa Takahashi and stay for going on 20 years.

“We love the pace of the place,” says Takahashi, who relocated from San Francisco. “I don’t miss city life.” Founded in 1849, Mariposa was one of the southernmost Gold Rush towns. Take a stroll through downtown, and from the boomtown-style architecture to the 19th-century courthouse (still in use), that history is hard to miss.

To get a sense of the place on your way into town, Takahashi says a good first stop is the Mariposa Museum. “You can spend a couple hours learning all about the Gold Rush,” she says. From there, head down Highway 140 to Chocolate

California-grown spirits. At Sticks Coffee, she orders the Campfire Latte (“like s’mores in a cup”) with toasted marshmallows and in-house roasted beans. The Happy Goat Diner, which sources ingredients from its own regenerative farm, is a go-to for breakfast classics. To taste more local goods, Takahashi recommends the Mariposa Farmers’ Market (May through October). “They have fun Kids Days where children can get market bucks to spend at the stands,” she says.

If you have flexibility in your travel, Takahashi recommends checking the calendar for special events like the monthly Sierra Cider Market. “Local makers, bakers, and farmers come onto the property,” she says. “In October, they make a haunted orchard.” One of Takahashi’s favorite times of year is the Butterfly Festival (May). “The whole town gets involved. Local kids and shop owners raise butterflies from pupa—we display them in our restaurant,” she says. “The butterflies are then taken to the festival where people line up to get one placed in their hand to release into the wild.” 🌸



Little Shop of Ramen

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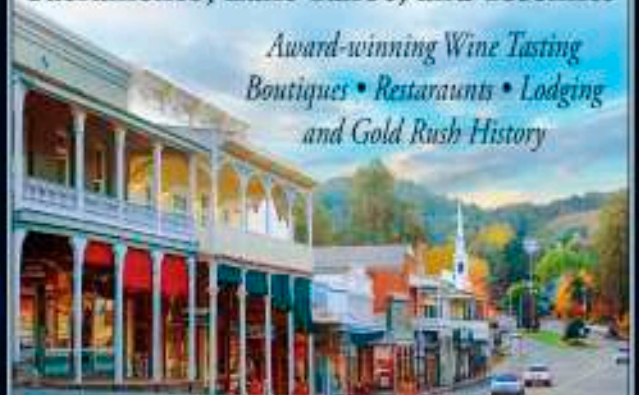


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visit

ALLEGHANY

Underground Gold Miners Museum. Learn about the stories and history of Alleghany through the eyes of California's underground miners, and the evolution of hard-rock mining through photos and artifacts. undergroundgold.com

ANGELS CAMP

Angels Camp Museum. Located on the three-acre site of the Angels Quartz Mine, this museum is home to one of the largest collections of carriages and wagons in the nation. Wander through the historic park to see indoor and outdoor exhibits about the Gold Rush and Mark Twain. gocalaveras.com/business

OARS California Rafting. OARS California Rafting offers splashy family fun and exhilarating Class IV+ whitewater experiences near Sacramento, Lake Tahoe, and Yosemite. Find your next greatest adventure at oars.com/california-rafting See ad, p. 99

AUBURN

Auburn State Recreation Area. Go hiking, fishing, camping, mountain biking, gold panning, and off-highway motorcycle riding. California's highest bridge,

the 730-foot Foresthill Bridge, is within the park. parks.ca.gov

Placer County Museum. Within this courthouse built in 1894, you'll find Native American artifacts, a gold collection, Thomas Kinkade's *Auburn Centennial*, a historic women's jail, and more. Admission is free. placer.ca.gov

Visit Placer. There is never an off-season in Placer County with easy access to experience a year-round mix of activities, outdoor adventure, wineries, breweries, world-class shopping, dining, history, arts and culture, and more. 530/887-2111; visitplacer.com See ad, p. 101

BROWNS VALLEY

Collins Lake Recreation Area. At the base of the Gold Country foothills, our family-friendly campground and 1,600-acre lake is famous for trout and bass fishing, water activities, and huge ice cream cones. collinslake.com

CAMINO

Apple Hill. Visit a beautiful foothill community of more than 50 family farms, where you can pick your own apples, taste local wine, stay at a Gold Rush-era bed-and-breakfast, and more. applehill.com

Eldorado National Forest. Find more than 80 developed campgrounds and picnic areas, hundreds

of miles of roads, trails, rivers, and streams, and great scenery within the central Sierra Nevada mountain range. fs.usda.gov

COLFAX

Rollins Lake. Rent a boat for a day, set up a tent at one of four privately run campgrounds, or find a perfect lounging and reading spot along the conifer-dotted shoreline. Fish for spotted bass, crappie, and bluegill. visitplacer.com/rollins-lake

COLOMA

Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park. Try panning for gold in the American River, enjoy hikes and picnics, see a replica of the original sawmill, and learn what life was like in an 1850s tent town. parks.ca.gov

COLUMBIA

Columbia State Historic Park. Time-travel to the 1850s, when gold miners rubbed shoulders with businessmen. Watch proprietors in period clothing ply their trades, ride a 100-year-old stagecoach, and pan for gold. parks.ca.gov

COULTEVILLE

Northern Mariposa County History Center. Learn about the life and times of early California, from the dawn of the 1800s through the boom days of the 1849 California Gold Rush and the post-Gold Rush era. coultervillehistorycenter.org

DOWNIEVILLE

Downieville Museum. Located in a stone building with original iron doors and window shutters that date back to 1852. Artifacts depict the life of this community from its Gold Rush origins to the present day. sierranevadageotourism.org

ELK GROVE

Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge. Hike through grasslands, along a riparian zone, and on a platform above managed wetlands at this urban refuge. Sign up for a docent-led kayak tour. fws.gov

FOLSOM

Folsom History Museum. In downtown's Folsom Historic District, find this museum that showcases the area's gold mining history, railroad, agriculture, and Native American past. folsomhistory.org

Folsom Lake State Recreation Area. Located at the base of the Sierra foothills, this area offers hiking, camping, horseback riding, and boating, with 75 miles of shoreline, campgrounds and picnic areas along the water. A 32-mile-long bicycle path stretches all the way to Old Sacramento. parks.ca.gov

Folsom Powerhouse State Historic Park. Tour this 1895 generating facility, which looks much as it did more than 100 years ago, overlooking Lake Natoma from atop a bluff. See the massive transformers and the system that brought water from the dam. parks.ca.gov

Visit Folsom. Discover rich history, outdoor adventures, scenic trails, and a lively historic district. Enjoy Lake Natoma, Folsom Lake, historical sites, cycling, shopping, and dining. visitfolsom.com See ad, p. 99

Johnny Cash Trail. Honoring the legendary musician who once performed in Folsom's notorious penitentiary (as a guest, not an inmate), this three-mile trail goes from the Folsom Historic District toward the Folsom Lake Crossing Trail. You'll see artwork, architecture, and bridges along the way. folsomcashtrail.com

GRASS VALLEY

Empire Mine State Historic Park. Learn about the history of one of the oldest, deepest, and richest gold

mines in California. Guided tours of the mine yard, restored gardens, and owner's estate are offered throughout the day. The park also offers 856 acres with more than 14 miles of trails for easy hiking and mountain biking. parks.ca.gov

JAMESTOWN

Railtown 1897 State Historic Park. Home to the famous Sierra No. 3, newly restored No. 28 steam locomotive, historic Roundhouse and more, Railtown 1897 offers weekend excursion train rides (April–Oct). railtown1897.org

MARIPOSA

Yosemite Mariposa County Tourism Bureau. Mariposa County, home to Yosemite National Park: a year-round destination! Outdoor recreation, Gold Rush history and natural beauty are all here. Visit the #1 Yosemite planning site yosemite.com. See ad, pgs. 101, 113

MOUNTAIN RANCH

California Cavern State Historic Landmark. Find a Trail of Lights and the Trail of Lakes cave-walking tour through this limestone cavern. Groups learn about the history and geology of the cavern as well as the surrounding countryside. Take a professionally guided cavern spelunking trip. cavetouring.com

MURPHYS

Mercer Caverns. Descend 160 vertical feet to see this subterranean wonderland discovered by Walter J. Mercer in 1885. Take a 45-minute walking tour and learn about the history and geology of the caverns. mercercaverns.net

NEVADA CITY

Grass Valley-Nevada City Cultural District. These twin cities, famous for their Gold Rush pasts, have transformed into cultural hubs with more than 100 arts-related organizations. caculturaldistricts.org/grassvalley-nevadacity

Malakoff Diggins State Historic Park. Site of California's largest hydraulic mine. View cliffs carved by mighty streams of water, the result of the gold-mining technique of washing away entire mountains to find the precious metal. parks.ca.gov

Miners Foundry Cultural Center. Discover a California Historical Landmark at this cultural arts and community events center, the first manufacturing site of the Pelton wheel. Check website for events. minersfoundry.org

Nevada County Narrow Gauge Railroad Museum. Learn about local transportation history and view artifacts from the narrow-gauge railroad era. Visit on Saturdays to take a ride on the railbus. ncngrrmuseum.org

Tahoe National Forest. Located northeast of Sacramento in the Sierra Nevada, this national forest offers rivers, snowcapped peaks, and dense forests that make for outstanding recreation year-round. fs.usda.gov

Yuba-Donner Scenic Byway. Winding through the Tahoe National Forest, follow this stunning 160-mile loop through the Sierra foothills and mountains, along the North Yuba River, into pine forests, and across the valley north of Lake Tahoe. sierranevadageotourism.org

PENN VALLEY

South Yuba River State Park. Swim, bird-watch, and pan for gold along 20 miles of the South Yuba River's rugged canyon. Throughout the park, look for various bridges dating back to the Gold Rush era through the mid-20th century. parks.ca.gov

PINECREST

Dodge Ridge Mountain Resort. Operating since 1950, Dodge Ridge offers 67 trails, 11 lifts, and 862 skiable acres. Located in California's Central Sierra, it boasts 1,600 vertical feet and 350 inches of annual snowfall. 209/965-3474; dodgeridge.com See ad, p. 109

PINE GROVE

Indian Grinding Rock State Historic Park. This park gets its name from 1,185 mortar holes ground into the marbleized limestone by early Native Americans. Don't miss the Chaw'se Regional Indian Museum. parks.ca.gov

PLACERVILLE

Downtown Placerville. Historic Main Street features unique shops, antiques, fine art galleries, and restaurants. Enjoy small-town charm with a backdrop of Gold Rush history. visitdorado.com/downtown-placerville

Gold Bug Park. Step back in time and pan for gems at this gold mine and museum, which also features a historic stamp mill and working blacksmith shop. goldbugpark.org

RANCHO CORDOVA

Prairie City State Vehicular Recreation Area. At the base of the Sierra Nevada foothills, this area offers flat, open grasslands and trails with rolling hills for motorcycles, all-terrain vehicles, and four-wheel drive vehicles. ohv.parks.ca.gov

Sacramento Children's Museum. With hands-on exhibits designed for children from infants to age 8, SCM engages youngsters in meaningful discovery. Bring the kids for a few hours of imaginative play. sackids.org

Visit Rancho Cordova. International eats, award-winning libations, and quirky outdoor attractions await you in Rancho Cordova, where adventure always chooses you back and every trip becomes a story. visitranchocordova.com See ad, p. 99

SACRAMENTO

Aerospace Museum of California. Find a world-class opportunity to learn about and celebrate aviation's past, present, and future. Discover more than 40 historic aircraft and get hands-on by piloting your own STEM adventure. aerospacemuseum.org

California State Capitol Museum. Explore the history of the State Capitol building, home to the California state legislature since 1869. Visit restored offices of the governor and enjoy a picnic in Capitol Park. capitolmuseum.ca.gov

California State Railroad Museum—Old Sacramento Waterfront. A Smithsonian affiliate, the Railroad Museum is a "museum without walls" that offers weekend excursion train rides (April–Sept.), full-scale vintage locomotives, toy trains, interactive exhibits, and more. californiarailroad.museum

Crocker Art Museum. The first public art museum founded in the western United States, the Crocker Art Museum is still one of the leading museums in California today. The collection includes international ceramics, sculpture, and works by contemporary California artists. crockerart.org

Leland Stanford Mansion State Historic Park. Tour the opulent 19,000-square-foot mansion, built in 1856 for Gold Rush merchant Sheldon Fogus and later purchased by the soon-to-be governor of California, Leland Stanford. parks.ca.gov

Old Sacramento State Historic Park. View a cluster of noteworthy, early Gold Rush-era structures and

historic buildings, including the 1849 Eagle Theater and the onetime home to the California Supreme Court. parks.ca.gov

River Fox Train. The River Fox Train, sister of the world-famous Skunk Train, traverses the countryside of Yolo County west of Sacramento with multiple experiences offered weekly, including railbikes. 800/866-1690; riverfoxtrain.com See ad, p. 97

Sutter's Fort State Historic Park. Take a self-guided tour through a trade colony established in 1839 by Swiss immigrant John Sutter. After prospectors overran the colony during the Gold Rush, only the fort remained. parks.ca.gov

Visit Sacramento. In America's Farm-to-Fork Capital, enjoy Michelin-rated restaurants, a vibrant downtown, and great family fun along the Old Sacramento Waterfront for an authentic Sacramento experience. visitsacramento.com See ad, p. 97

SONORA

Visit California's Gold Country. An amazing American road trip filled with spectacular beauty. Gold Rush history, abundant outdoor adventures, and year-round fairs and festivals along historic Highway 49. Just two hours from San Francisco. visitgoldcountry.com See ad, p. 99

Stanislaus National Forest. Marked by more than 800 miles of rivers and streams, this nearly 900,000-acre forest is a popular spot to fish, swim, canoe, and whitewater raft. fs.usda.gov

Visit Sonora. Known as the Queen of the Southern Mines, Sonora, California, is a charming small town in Northern California's Gold Country. With dining, shopping, tasting rooms, and lodging options, Sonora makes a great base for visiting Yosemite. sonoraca.com See ad, p. 109

SUTTER CREEK

Sutter Creek Visitor Center. Rich in Gold Rush history, and located between San Francisco, Lake Tahoe, and Yosemite. Beautiful historic buildings with Boutiques, Art Galleries, Restaurants, and Wine Tasting. suttercreek.org See ad, p. 101

Knight Foundry. Dating to 1873, this National Historic Landmark showcases the legacy of the Mother Lode. Visit on the second Saturday of every month to see the blacksmithing forge fired up. knightfoundry.com

stay

HOTELS AND RESORTS

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The Pines Resort. The Only Lakeside Resort Near Yosemite. The Pines Village has Cabins w/ Full Kitchens, Lakeside Suites, 2 Restaurants, Boat Rental, Market and Gas, Bar, Indoor and Outdoor Event Spaces. Weddings & Groups. basslake.com \$\$\$ See ad, p. 101



LA GRANGE

Don Pedro Recreation Agency. Nestled in the Sierra Nevada Foothills, Don Pedro Lake offers watersports, 3 dog-friendly campgrounds, a 2-acre swimming lagoon, biking, and hiking. For more info: donpedrolake.com. \$ See ad, p. 109



KEY



UNDER \$100/NIGHT

\$100-\$200/NIGHT

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HIGH SIERRA

Embrace your adventurous side amid the grandeur of the Sierra Nevada mountains

Lake Tahoe is the largest alpine lake in North America

Lake Tahoe's greatest depth is 1,645 feet, making it the second-deepest lake in the U.S.

The lake typically holds 37 trillion gallons of water



An estimated 15 million people travel to the Lake Tahoe area each year

Valhalla Pier is located on the southern shore of Lake Tahoe at Valhalla Tahoe



Wildhaven Yosemite, Mariposa

two years, new owners Mike and Gwen Niccoli completely renovated the resort's eight cabins, six lodge rooms, and lake-view restaurant. Reserve a table for New York steak or a charcuterie board, then drink up the lake-and-mountain views. Yosemite National Park has completed \$32 million in renovations to make the Yosemite Valley more visitor-friendly than ever. After a five-year closure, the Bridalveil Fall Trail is open with new, elevated boardwalks, upgraded restrooms, and an enlarged viewing platform for the 620-foot waterfall. Two new information centers also opened in 2024: The Yosemite Valley Welcome Center, where visitors can learn about trails and activities, chat with rangers, and purchase trail guidebooks; and the Yosemite Exploration Center featuring science and history exhibits.

New & Noteworthy

ACCOMMODATIONS

Yosemite visitors have multiple new lodging choices in gateway towns near the park. Wildhaven's 36-acre site in **Mariposa** has 12 studio and one-bedroom cabins and 30 glamping tents, plus gorgeous sunset views of the undulating foothills. Firefall Ranch, set on 300 acres east of **Groveland**, offers one- and two-bedroom cottages and three-bedroom villas, plus a mountain lodge-style restaurant. Also slated to open in Groveland in 2025: Under Canvas, a glamping spot with

safari-style tents, en suite bathrooms, and private decks, and Outbound Yosemite, which will feature 135 cabins, a bar and restaurant, and a pool near the southern entrance of the park.

RESTAURANTS

In **South Lake Tahoe**, Maggie's serves contemporary cuisine in an indoor-outdoor space on the third floor of the Desolation Hotel. The rustic-chic dining room has a vaulted ceiling, backlit wine wall, and a Jeffrey pine growing through the deck. Show up for dinner or brunch, and be sure to try the fried stuffed olives. In **Kings Beach**, the upscale Japanese-inspired Smoke Door Lake Tahoe Saryo uses wildfire cooking methods that highlight seasonal ingredients from Japan and the Tahoe region. Try the six- or 10-course tasting menu to sample things such as golden osetra caviar,

a sophisticated take on avocado toast, and hand-picked fish from the Toyosu market in Tokyo. Celebrity chefs Bryan and Michael Voltaggio, brothers and *Top Chef* stars, have opened Vulcania in **Mammoth Lakes**. Located near the gondola in The Village at Mammoth, the modern Italian menu focuses on wood-fired pizzas and homemade pastas. In the winter, nab a spot in a patio "igloo" and you can dine outside in your ski clothes.

REVAMPED, RENOVATED

Beautiful Caples Lake, near Kirkwood Ski Area on Highway 88, is known for outstanding trout fishing and Caples Lake Resort, a lakefront gathering place that has welcomed visitors since the 1940s. In the last



Voltaggio brothers at Vulcania

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Splurge vs Save

CHOOSE HOW YOU ADVENTURE AROUND THIS HIGH SIERRA HAVEN

FLY

Gaze at Lake Tahoe's blue expanse and a pink-orange alpine sunset on a Champagne Sunset helicopter flight. Tahoe Helicopters takes off from South Lake Tahoe airport. (\$1,000 for two passengers)

Connect water and sky while soaring high above Lake Tahoe suspended by a parachute and tethered by rope to a boat. California Parasail in Kings Beach takes you up and away. (\$190 for two passengers)

RIDE

Drive around the lake in head-turning style—rent a Range Rover or Porsche from Go Rentals at Truckee Tahoe Airport. (\$500 per day)

Rent an e-bike at Anderson's Bicycle Rental and pedal to three beaches—Pope, Kiva, and Baldwin—on a mostly level paved trail. (\$36 for a half-day)

DINE

At Woldale's in Tahoe City, start with hamachi and ahi sashimi (\$26), then move on to grilled lobster tail and filet mignon (\$88) paired with a 2008 Heitz Cellar Cabernet (\$300).

Feed your entire family modern, healthy Cal-Mex fare at Verde Mexican Rotisserie. Get the locals' favorite: whole rotisserie chicken, three large side dishes, tortillas, and salsa for \$45 (feeds 3–4).

STAY

In peak-season summer or winter, the spacious four-bedroom penthouse residence at The Ritz-Carlton, Lake Tahoe in Truckee runs \$3,800/night.

In the autumn off-season, sleep in a 1940s studio cabin at South Lake Tahoe's Camp Richardson Resort. The vintage cabins (\$150/night) are steps from the lake.

TOUR

Gather your friends for a private cruise aboard the Tahoe Star, a 54-foot yacht that once hosted Frank Sinatra, Liza Minnelli, and other luminaries. (\$3,700 for two hours)

Rent a kayak or SUP from North Tahoe Paddle in Kings Beach to tour the lake. Personal flotation device and safety tips included. (\$50 for two hours)



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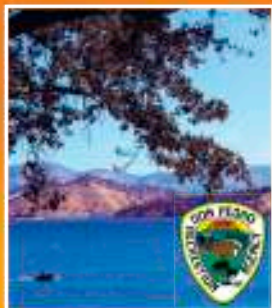


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The towering beauty of Yosemite, authentic history of California Gold Country and endless adventure of the High Sierra, all beckon you to lose your to-do list and let nature lead the way. So lace 'em up explorers and set your compass to Tuolumne County, good times are calling and you must go.

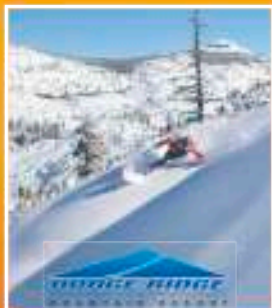
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Don Pedro Lake offers 160-miles of shoreline with 13,000-acres of water to enjoy boating, fishing, swimming, sailing, houseboating, dog-friendly and group camping, hiking, biking, a marina and a swimming lagoon!

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Located in the heart of California's Central Sierra off Highway 108, Dodge Ridge Mountain Resort is a year-round resort that's been in operation since 1950. Access to 1600 vertical feet, 67 trails and 11 lifts across 862 skiable acres with an average snowfall of 350" each season.

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DODGE RIDGE MOUNTAIN RESORT



The historic small-town charm of Sonora, California will surprise you with modern amenities and golden discoveries. With dining, boutique shops, tasting and tap rooms, a brewery, and cozy accommodations, Sonora is sure to keep you wandering.

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Hope Valley: 530-694-2203
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Live like a local and follow
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Small Town Scoop



Mammoth Museum

Mammoth Lakes, population 7,000, is the Eastern Sierra's alpine playground. Winter brings 1.3 million snow lovers to the small town each year, and summer lures hikers, bikers, paddlers, and anglers to dozens of lakes and trails.

The outdoor fun is self-evident, but dig a little deeper to discover Mammoth's intriguing history. Just ask Frankie DeVine, who manages the Mammoth Museum at the Hayden Cabin.

"In the 1800s, Mammoth lived the typical Wild West gold mining story, where the only people who made real money from mining were the ones who took it from the investors," DeVine says. "It's a crooked story, but also really cool."

At the log-built Hayden Cabin, constructed by hand in the 1920s, visitors can

"The Minarets are my favorite mountains in the Sierra. They're totally unique and especially beautiful at sunset."

- FRANKIE DEVINE, MANAGER OF
MAMMOTH MUSEUM AT THE HAYDEN CABIN

view a hodgepodge of relics from Mammoth's past. Four rooms are decorated with original furnishings and artifacts, including a 1940s stove and 1950s ski boots.

"Emmett Hayden was a civil engineer, so his cabin was built to last. You step inside and you're transported back in time," DeVine says. "Outside is an amazing, quiet spot by Mammoth Creek. You can tour the museum, watch the birds, have a picnic, or let the kids run around."

Mammoth has modern attractions too, like the Mammoth Mountain Gondola that climbs to 11,053 feet for dazzling views of the Sierra crest. But DeVine says great vistas are almost everywhere in Mammoth, and as an amateur rock climber, a favorite is from the summit of Crystal Crag overlooking the Mammoth Lakes Basin. Non-climbers can score amazing views by hiking the Duck Pass Trail or taking an easy drive to Minaret Vista, where jagged pinnacles form a serrated skyline to the west.

"The Minarets are my favorite mountains in the Sierra. They're totally unique and especially beautiful at sunset," DeVine says.

In summer, the Mammoth Lakes Basin is where the action is. "The entire Lakes Basin is gorgeous. All of the lakes are beautiful and unique in their own way," DeVine says. See them by pedaling the 5.3-mile Lakes Basin bike path, which skirts past five sapphire-blue gems.

As a much-loved mountain town, Mammoth has dozens of eateries. DeVine's top picks: For morning caffeine, Stellar Brew has great espresso drinks and homemade cookies, and Black Velvet Coffee has a modern space with plenty of room to hang out. For a big breakfast, cozy up with a savory omelet at The Warming Hut. At dinner, order a bison burger from Dish Bistro. Special occasion? DeVine recommends dressing up for French fare at The Brasserie, where chef Frederic Pierrel serves escargot and duck confit in a quirky location inside Mammoth's bowling alley. 🌟



Minarets



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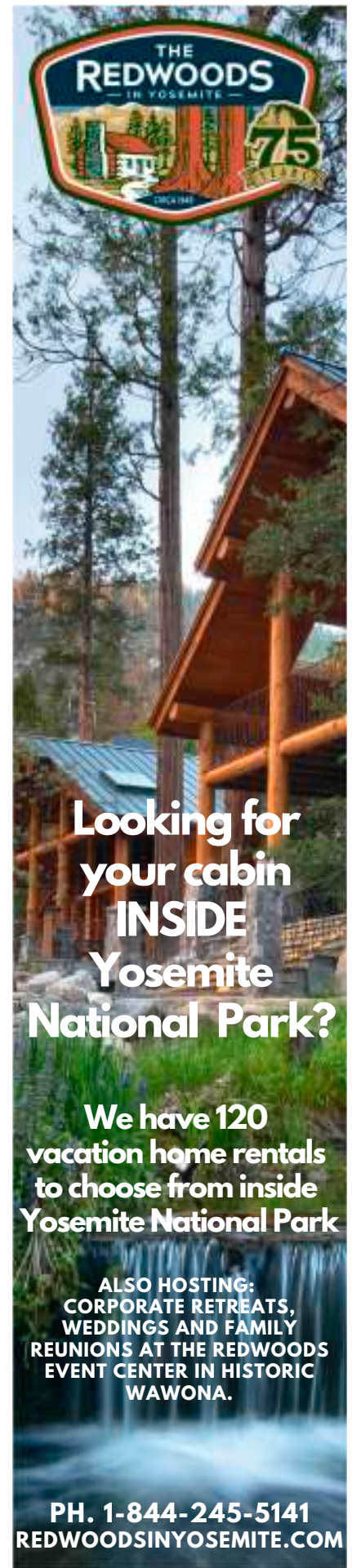


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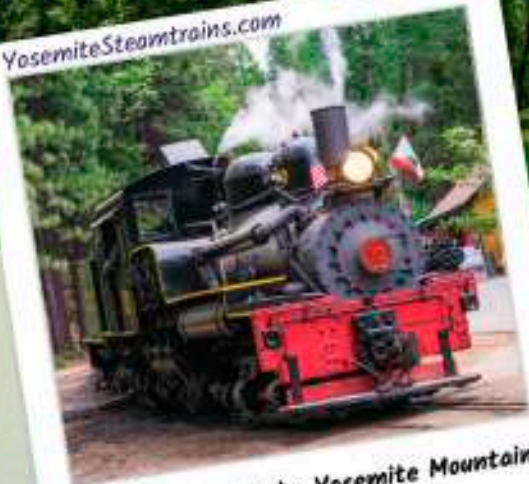
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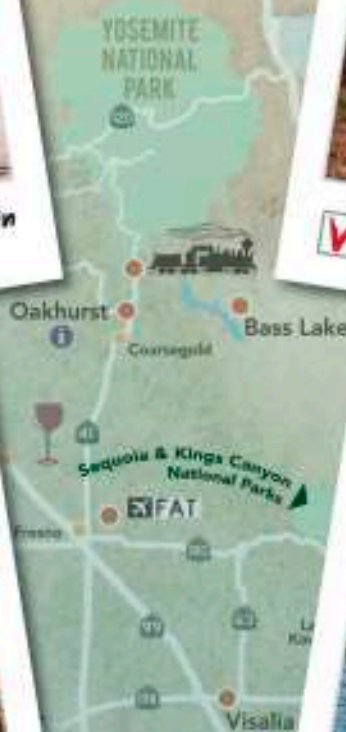


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Bass Lake Chamber of Commerce. Nestled among the tall pines and only 14 miles to Yosemite National Park, this alpine mountain lake is the perfect warm water recreation lake, and was named one of the "West's Best Lakes" by *Sunset* magazine. 559/642-3676; basslakechamber.com See ad, p. 115

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Yosemite Mountain Sugar Pine Railroad. Highway 41, north of Oakhurst. An exciting steam train ride at Yosemite's south gate. Groups welcome. April–October. Info at ymsprrr.com or call 559/683-7273. See ad, p. 115

FRESNO

Fresno Yosemite International Airport. 5175 E. Clinton Way. Central California's premier airport. Your gateway to adventure and three majestic national parks. 559/621-4500; flyfresno.com See ad, p. 115

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JUNE LAKE

June Mountain Ski Resort. Visit in the winter for 1,500 acres of skiable slopes, beginner-friendly terrain, and views of the Eastern Sierra Nevada range. Family atmosphere with free skiing for children under 12. junemountain.com

KINGS CANYON NATIONAL PARK

Kings Canyon Scenic Byway. Take a scenic drive and traverse 50 spectacular miles. Explore sights including Roaring River Falls, General Grant Grove, Hume Lake, and Boyden Cavern. nps.gov

KIRKWOOD

Kirkwood Mountain Resort. Rock climb, bike, and fish in summer; ski, snowboard, and snowshoe in winter. The base elevation of 7,800 feet makes snowfall plentiful and consistent. kirkwood.com

LAKESHORE

China Peak Mountain Resort. Skiers will find a variety of terrain via seven lifts. Visit in summer for the mountain-bike park, scenic chair rides, and disc golf. skichinapeak.com

LEE VINING

Mono Lake Tufa State Natural Reserve. See the "tufa towers," unique geological features that were formed by the interaction of freshwater springs and the ancient, alkaline lake. parks.ca.gov

MAMMOTH LAKES

Mammoth Mountain Ski Resort. Covering more than 3,500 acres, this large four-season resort boasts dramatic views of the Eastern Sierra Nevada range. Take a gondola ride up to the 11,053-foot summit. mammothmountain.com

Mammoth Lakes Tourism. 2510 Main St. Official visitor information. Welcome to nature at its most unreal—Mammoth Mountain, Rainbow Falls, and Devils Postpile National Monument. It's the real UNREAL. 888/466-2666; visitmammoth.com See ad, p. 117

Mono County Tourism. Bridgeport. Explore California's Eastern Sierra along Scenic Byway U.S. 395. Visit Yosemite's east entrance, Bodie ghost town, Mono Lake's tufa towers. Hiking, fishing, skiing, brilliant fall colors. Free visitors guide. 800/845-7922; monocounty.org See ad, p. 113

MARIPOSA

Yosemite Mariposa County Tourism Bureau. Mariposa County, home to Yosemite National Park—a year-round destination! Outdoor recreation, adventure, history and natural beauty are all here. Visit yosemite.com, the #1 Yosemite planning site. See ad, pgs. 101, 113

NORDEN

Donner Ski Ranch. A family-owned resort that has operated since 1937, Donner Ski Ranch has provided affordable adventures and instruction to generations of California skiers. donnerskiranch.com

Sugar Bowl Resort. Steeped in history as well as a high annual snowfall, this resort dates back to 1939 and is one of the closest places to hit the slopes from the San Francisco Bay Area. sugarbowl.com

NORTH LAKE TAHOE

North Lake Tahoe. A destination that inspires year-round human connectivity with nature, set amongst 12 unique towns, majestic mountains, and one of the purest lakes in the world. The region offers a variety of activities from athletic to relaxing. gotahoenorth.com See ad, p. 107



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Visit Yosemite | Madera County. 40343 Highway 41. Oakhurst, Madera County: California's Gateway to Yosemite. Affordable lodging, wine trail, Bass Lake, historic railroad, casino, arts, and more. 559/683-4636; yosemitethisyear.com See ad, p. 115

OLYMPIC VALLEY

Palisades Tahoe. Skiers and snowboarders have 43 lifts at their service and 270 trails to choose from. Visitors can also shop, ice-skate, and snowshoe. palisadestahoe.com

SEQUOIA & KINGS CANYON

Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks. Home of 14,495-foot Mount Whitney and the world's largest sequoia, the General Sherman Tree. Visit Crystal Cave or climb to the top of Moro Rock. nps.gov/seki

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Clearly Tahoe Bikes. Explore forest trails, beaches, and lakes with a guided bike tour or rental. Choose from a variety of bikes, including premium pedal-assist cruisers and mountain bikes. 530/544-4664; clearlytahoe.com See ad, p. 111

Clearly Tahoe Clear Kayaks. Choose from a variety of unique tours in completely transparent kayaks. Explore depths of up to 65 feet on a day tour, relax under the night sky on an LED tour, or enjoy wildlife on our eco-adventure. 530/544-4664; clearlytahoe.com See ad, p. 111

Heavenly Ski Resort. One of the biggest ski resorts in the country. Heavenly boasts 97 runs, four base camps, and the highest elevation of any of the Lake Tahoe-area resorts. skiheavenly.com

Lake Tahoe Adventures. We offer tours year-round. Soak up the summer sun and experience the backcountry on our ATV and RZR tours. Take advantage of our free shuttle and enjoy the winter scenery on our snowmobile tours. 800/490-3995; laketahoeadventures.com See ad, p. 111

Lake Tahoe Balloons. Revel in magnificent views of Lake Tahoe and Sierra Nevada mountains from a hot air balloon! Lake Tahoe Balloons offers daily balloon rides at sunrise, weather permitting. 530/544-1221; laketahoeballoons.com See ad, p. 117

Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority. Experience awe and then some. Catch a world-class entertainer, or see the lake at its clearest point in decades. There are millions of reasons to visit South Lake Tahoe. 530/542-4637; visitlaketahoe.com See ad, pgs. 110-111

South Tahoe Restaurant Association. The South Tahoe Restaurant Association vision is to be recognized as a destination of exceptional culinary and hospitality experience. Visit tahoechamber.org for a list of participating restaurants. See ad, p. 117

Tahoe Helicopters. Tahoe Helicopters offers scenic helicopter tours with peak-to-peak views as you fly over pristine wilderness and the unparalleled beauty of Lake Tahoe from the air. Visit tahoehelicopters.us to book! 530/544-2211; See ad, p. 111

TRUCKEE

Boreal Mountain Resort. Sister resort to Soda Springs, the skiing and boarding slopes here are joined by all-terrain parks and tubing runs to offer something for everyone. rideboreal.com

Northstar California Ski Resort. Visitors to North Lake Tahoe's Northstar enjoy the services of 20 ski lifts, ski runs that are 60 percent intermediate, and a cross-country center. northstarcalifornia.com

Soda Springs Mountain Resort. About 30 miles northeast of Lake Tahoe, Soda Springs has wide-open slopes on all sorts of terrain, plus Planet Kids and Tube Town for little ones. skisodasprings.com

Tahoe Donner Downhill Ski Resort. Located in the charming High Sierra town of Truckee, this ski resort offers instructional services and family-friendly slopes at affordable prices. tahoedonner.com

TWIN BRIDGES

Sierra-at-Tahoe Ski Resort. 12 miles south of South Lake Tahoe, this resort in the El Dorado National Forest is known for its heavy annual snowfall and family-friendly slopes. sierraattahoe.com

YOSEMITE

Yosemite National Park. One of the most celebrated national parks, Yosemite's 1,200 square miles of High Sierra wilderness is home to ancient sequoia trees, waterfalls, and rock faces. 209/372-0200; nps.gov/yose

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Tenaya at Yosemite. This Sierra resort makes an impact as big as the giant sequoias. Relax in the shadow of Half Dome—by the pool and on the trails. 1122 Highway 41 Fish Camp, CA 93623, 888/514-2167; visitenaya.com \$\$-\$\$\$ See ad, p. 119

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GROVELAND

Evergreen Lodge at Yosemite. 33160 Evergreen Rd. 88 cabins. Frommer's Favorite; Fodor's Highly Recommended. Idyllic mountain resort bordering Yosemite. Restaurant/tavern, activities, guided trips. 209/379-2606; info@evergreenlodge.com; evergreenlodge.com \$\$-\$\$\$ See ad, p. 97

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Firefall Ranch at Yosemite. 24025 Hwy 120. Luxurious new 300-acre resort near Yosemite's northwest entrance. 55 cottages/villas, heated pool/hot tubs, restaurant, tavern, general store, daily activities, no hidden resort fees. 209/379-6820; firefallranch.com \$\$\$ See ad, p. 97

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Rush Creek Lodge & Spa at Yosemite. 34001 Highway 120. 143 rooms. New spa open now! Restaurant, tavern, pool, hot tubs, recreation guide service, daily activities, and general store, at Yosemite's Hwy 120 West entrance. 209/379-2373; info@rushcreeklodge.com; rushcreeklodge.com \$\$-\$\$\$ See ad, p. 97

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HOPE VALLEY

Desolation Hotel Hope Valley. Find tranquility, relaxation, and luxury at the base of the Sierras. Escape to Desolation Hotel Hope Valley and explore your wilderness. HV-14255 Hwy 88 Hope Valley, CA 96120 530/694-2203; desolationhotel.com/hope-valley \$\$\$ See ad, p. 111

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SOUTH LAKE TAHOE

Coachman Hotel. Situated between Heavenly Mountain and Lake Tahoe, the reimagined Coachman combines personable hospitality and modern design, perfect for family gatherings, adventures with friends, or company retreats. 530/545-6460; coachmantahoe.com \$\$\$-\$\$\$ See ad, p. 111

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Tahoe Lakeshore Lodge & Spa. Lake Tahoe's only all lakefront rustic lodge and condo property, where every room has full lake views. Enjoy the private beach, outdoor heated swimming pool and hot tub. The property is minutes away from Heavenly Mountain. 800/448-4577; tahoelakeshorelodge.com \$\$\$ See ad, p. 111

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The Landing Lake Tahoe Resort & Spa. Lakeside seclusion & easy access to adventure. Exceptional amenities and experiences, with a relaxed atmosphere that lets you be you. The Landing Resort & Spa is about living the luxe life your way. thelandingtahoe.com \$\$\$ See ad, p. 111

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Zephyr Cove Resort, Marina & RV/Campground. Stay in cabins, campsites, and airstream campers. Enjoy beach access, boat rentals, and lake cruises aboard the MS Dixie II. Seasonal activities include parasailing, powerboats, snowmobiling, and more. 800/238-2463; zephyrcove.com \$-\$\$\$ See ad, p. 111

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Yosemite's Scenic Wonders. Established in 1988, mountain homes, cabins, and condos located inside the gates of Yosemite. 145 properties. Closest to Yosemite Valley, Badger Pass Ski Area, and the Mariposa Grove of Sequoias. scenicwonders.com \$-\$\$\$ See ad, p. 119

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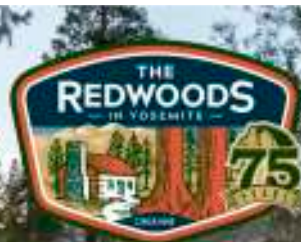
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The scientific name for this species is *Athene cunicularia*, which translates to "wise burrower"

Burrowing owls nest in holes created by other animals, such as ground squirrels or prairie dogs

The Central Valley is home to roughly 1,500 breeding pairs of burrowing owls



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According to the Yolo Bird Alliance, 370 species of birds have been documented in Yolo County

In the Sacramento Valley, burrowing owls are found in patches of grassland habitat

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River Park Art Groove Event Center, Fresno

New & Noteworthy

OUTDOORS

At the confluence of the Tuolumne and San Joaquin Rivers near **Modesto**, Dos Rios State Park is California's first new state park since 2014. Dos Rios protects 1,600 acres of rare Central Valley natural habitat and also creates new outdoor recreation opportunities. A short trail has opened along a pond with outstanding birdwatching, or you can reserve a spot on guided hikes and stargazing events.

ACCOMMODATIONS

In **Three Rivers**, Sequoia National Park has two new glamping resorts: Off-the-grid

Paradise Ranch has four Scandinavian-designed tiny houses and five glamping tents, each with a kitchenette and a redwood deck. Guests can splash in the Kaweah River, gather around firepits, and detox in the sauna. Closer to town, AutoCamp Sequoia is a cluster of Airstream trailers, cabins, and tents located near the Foothills entrance. After a day spent hiking and admiring big trees, guests can relax by the heated outdoor pool.

CULTURE

Discover the vibrant world of Indigenous cultures at the expanded Gorman Museum of Native American Art on the UC **Davis** campus. Established in 1973, the Gorman recently moved into a beautifully renovated building. Its permanent collection includes works by Cahuilla tribal leader and sculptor Gerald Clarke Jr. and Nisenan-Maidu

painter Harry Fonseca.

Explore **Fresno's** art scene at downtown's newly designated Gallery Row, a collection of studios and exhibit spaces near the city's happening Brewery District. Clay Hand Studios is a community of ceramicists and has a gallery and gift shop featuring works by its members, while Fig Tree Gallery bills itself as California's "longest-running artist collective." Experience Gallery Row during the Fresno Art Council's ArtHop events, when area artists normally closed to the public open their studios. For a fun time in

downtown **Merced**, check the robust calendar at The Mainzer for classic movie screenings, drag bingo, and hip-hop brunch. The 1938 theater also features a retro game room, self-serve beer wall, and full restaurant.

FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Famous for its country music scene, **Bakersfield** might seem like more of a shot-and-beer kind of town than a wine destination. But follow the Bakersfield Kern County Wine Trail and you'll discover spots such as BottleShock Wine & Brew, where you choose from a big selection of California wines while enjoying live music on a patio. The trail also leads to wineries around **Tehachapi**, including acclaimed Triassic Vineyards.

After an extensive renovation, a 1912 building in **Visalia** has reopened as the dining destination The Mix. While incorporating historic features such as wood-beam ceilings and brickwork, The Mix definitely has a contemporary vibe.



Gorman Museum of Native American Art



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Small Town Scoop



Last Call Brewing

Oakdale is a small Central Valley city that boasts a big reputation as the “Cowboy Capital of the World.” With displays of rodeo memorabilia and ranching artifacts, Oakdale’s Cowboy Museum in the historic Southern Pacific railroad station celebrates the town’s Western heritage. Oakdale’s long line of rodeo champions includes ProRodeo Hall of Famers John Bowman and Harley May, and the city has held the Oakdale Rodeo since 1957.

Jake Stephens, the taproom manager and social media director at Last Call Brewing Company, says the rodeo is Oakdale’s biggest event of the year. “There are things going on the whole week and people who have moved away come back to town,” he says. “So it’s definitely a local reunion too.”

Stephens has lived in Oakdale since he was 4 years old and even while Oakdale has grown, it has held onto

what he characterizes as a down-home vibe. “It’s a very inviting, friendly community.”

Yosemite National Park is 70 miles away, but you don’t have to travel all the way there for outdoor adventure. Less than 20 minutes from Oakdale, Knights Ferry Recreation Area (home to the longest covered bridge west of the Mississippi River) is the staging area for Stanislaus River float trips. “My friends and I used to go rafting just about every weekend,” says Stephens. “There’s a lot of beautiful scenery and the river’s very mild. Nothing too treacherous, and you could safely bring your kid under the right supervision.”

For dining, Stephens is a fan of Backwoods Burgers and recommends breakfast at Cahoots Corner Café. “It’s hard to beat Cahoots on Saturday morning. Whether you’re getting the pancakes or a breakfast burrito, you

really can’t go wrong,” he says.

Stephens says the new Bistro 120, with its New American menu and casual sophistication, is a great addition to the local dining scene. And he adds that Oakdale’s big selection of Mexican dining means that you could eat at a different restaurant every night, including his personal favorite Suzey Belen’s.

Founded by a pair of local firefighters and best known for its Karate in the Garage Hazy Double IPA, Last Call Brewing is part of a local craft beer scene that includes Grains of Virtue Brewing Company and

Dying Breed Brewing. With live music most Fridays and food trucks, Stephens says Last Call draws people from far beyond Oakdale. “Especially on summer weekends, you’d be surprised at how many people from other states stop in and have a beer,” he says. “Or grab a four-pack and then head on up to Yosemite.” 🌻



Oakdale Cowboy Museum

Pistachios

The pistachio, believe it or not, isn't technically a nut. Instead, it's classified as a drupe, meaning it is a kind of stone fruit related to cherries, plums, and peaches. What you're actually eating is the seed—the shell is the dried remnant of the fruit. Of the 11 pistachio species, only one is edible.

Pistachios are native to hot, dry areas of the Middle East and Central Asia, and they've been cultivated for thousands of years. Pistachios originally arrived in the United States in 1854 and were first planted in California around 1881. Large-scale planting began in the 1960s, with California's first commercial crop debuting in 1976.

With its fertile soils, hot, dry climate, and moderately cold winters to create enough chilling hours for proper blooming and pollinating, the Central Valley has ideal growing conditions. California grows about 98 percent of the country's (and 25 percent of the world's) pistachios on an estimated 583,000 acres. The southern San Joaquin Valley is the state's pistachio heartland, with Kern County alone producing 42 percent of California's pistachios.



PISTACHIO TREES NEED AS LONG AS 10 YEARS TO MATURE AND CAN FRUIT FOR MORE THAN 100 YEARS.



Bravo Farms has three Central Valley locations (Kettleman City, Traver, and the Tulare Outlets) and produces its own line of flavored pistachios, including habañero and dark chocolate.



Fresno's Enzo's Table bakes a delectable biscotti made with freshly roasted California pistachios and tangy cranberries, stemming from a family recipe.



Chefs love to use pistachios as an ingredient on everything from wood-fired pizzas to such delicacies as the pistachio-crusted halibut at Santa Nella's The Kitchen at the Mission.



today it's a bike-friendly historic site with restored and reconstructed early-20th-century buildings.
parks.ca.gov

FAIRFIELD

Jelly Belly Candy Company. 1 Jelly Belly Lane, Fairfield. Store open 9 a.m.–5 p.m., Factory Tours 9:15 a.m.–4 p.m., Café 9 a.m.–3 p.m. Visit jellybelly.com under Visit Us, or call 707/399-2286 for current information. See ad, p. 129

Visit Fairfield. Situated between San Francisco and Sacramento, Fairfield is home to the Jelly Belly Candy Factory, the Suisun Valley wine region, and just minutes from Napa and Sonoma. visitfairfieldca.com
See ad, pgs. 122–123

FRESNO

The Discovery Center. Hands-on, interactive science museum, featuring kid-friendly exhibits, including a fossil discovery center. Head outside to enjoy the cactus garden, tortoise habitat, and open meadows. fresnodiscoverycenter.org

Visit Fresno County. Fresno County—no frills, just fun. Explore an underground garden and world-class zoo. Center of ag means the best dining. Easy access to Yosemite, Sequoia, and Kings Canyon. 1180 E Shaw Ave., STE 201 See ad, pgs. 122–123

GUSTINE

Great Valley Grasslands State Park. View one of the remaining patches of native grasslands within the Central Valley, as well as the largest contiguous wetlands in California. parks.ca.gov

KEENE

César E. Chávez National Monument. This park marks the final home of the American labor leader and community organizer, César Chávez. Visit the memorial garden and burial site, walled by Italian cypress. nps.gov/cech

LEBEC

Fort Tejon State Historic Park. Located in the Grapevine Canyon, view 400-year-old valley oak trees and restored adobes from the original fort, originally a U.S. Army outpost from 1854–1864. parks.ca.gov

LOCKE

Chinese School Museum. Constructed in 1915, this schoolhouse has been a center of Chinese education and culture, in various incarnations, for more than 100 years. Open Tuesday–Sunday. Free admission. locke-foundation.org

LODI

Visit Lodi. Visit Lodi and explore 125 wine varietals, 86 wineries and award-winning Zinfandels. Embrace the small-town charm set amongst some of the oldest vineyards in the country. Explore more at visitolodi.com. See ad, pgs. 122–123

LOS BANOS

San Luis National Wildlife Refuge. Wetlands beckon thousands of ducks as they travel along the Pacific Flyway. The refuge is also home to songbirds, hawks, owls, and a herd of tule elk. fws.gov

MERCED

Merced National Wildlife Refuge. Visit in the winter and drive the five-mile tour to see ducks, geese, and cranes who call the wetlands home for a few months each year. Nature trails are also available for wildlife spotting and photography. fws.gov

visit

ANTIOCH

Antioch Dunes National Wildlife Refuge. Explore a sand-dune habitat on the south shore of the San Joaquin River via monthly guided tours. Visit in spring to see bright white Antioch Dunes evening primrose in bloom. fws.gov

BAKERSFIELD

Bakersfield Museum of Art. Permanent exhibits feature works by contemporary California artists from the 20th century to present. bmoa.org

Visit Bakersfield. Experience the streets of Bakersfield! Sip locally-crafted beers on the Bakersfield Brewery Trail. Try one of Bakersfield's historic Basque restaurants. Save when you visit our Bakersfield Museum Trail. 866/425-7353; visitbakersfield.com
See ad, pgs. 122–123

BUTTONWILLOW

Tule Elk State Natural Reserve. Enjoy nature, bird-watching, and a picnic area at this reserve, where a

small herd of tule elk, once in danger of extinction, are protected. parks.ca.gov

CLOVIS

Sierra Heritage Scenic Byway. This 70-mile, vista-filled byway starts in Old Town Clovis, then snakes through Huntington Lake and Kaiser Pass Meadow before ending at the Kaiser Wilderness in Sierra Canyon. fs.usda.gov

DAVIS

UC Davis Arboretum and Public Garden. Walk, run, or cycle the 3.5-mile paved loop to explore 22,000 trees, plants, and water features. Free to visit; open 24 hours a day. arboretum.ucdavis.edu

DELANO

Kern National Wildlife Refuge. See diverse wildlife and habitats; take a six-mile auto tour through the wetlands to spot herons, turkey vultures, ospreys, falcons, and more. Keep your eyes peeled for the endangered Tipton kangaroo rat. fws.gov

EARLMART

Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park. Allensworth was a town founded by African Americans in 1908;

MODESTO

Visit Modesto. Modesto shines in early spring when almond orchards bloom and Firefall glows. Just 90 miles from Yosemite. Voted #1 "America's Hidden Gem Live Music Scene." With mural art tours in a charming downtown, Modesto is a natural NorCal basecamp. visitmodesto.com See ad, pgs. 122–123

PORTERVILLE

Sequoia National Forest. Named for the massive sequoia trees that populate the area, this forest comprises more than 1.1 million acres. Camp, hike, horseback ride, mountain bike, canoe, and more. fs.usda.gov

RIPON

Caswell Memorial State Park. Home to a riparian oak woodland and endangered animal species, including the riparian brush rabbit, this park along the Stanislaus River offers camping and hiking. Fishing, junior ranger programs, and nature walks are also available. parks.ca.gov

STOCKTON

Central Valley Tourism Association. Food and wine are abundant in this region filled with orchards, vineyards, and farms. Find museums, galleries, live entertainment, and events! visitcentralvalley.com See ad, pgs. 122–123

Visit Stockton. 146 W. Weber. Free visitor information, guides, and maps. Info on attractions, dining, hotels, events, and farms. Email visitorinfo@visitstockton.org; 877/778-6258; visitstockton.org See ad, pgs. 122–123

TEHACHAPI

Tehachapi Museum. Visit this 1930s Art Deco–style former library building to find artifacts and exhibits on the Kawaiisu tribe, Gold Rush miners, and railroad history. tehachapimuseum.org

VACAVILLE

Vacaville History Museum. Learn about the value of community heritage at this institution focused on the history of Solano County. Exhibits highlight the Berryessa Valley and the original Nut Tree. vacavillemuseum.org

VISALIA

Sequoia Tourism Council. Home to Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks, Tulare County invites you to explore the biggest trees, tallest mountains, and charming downtowns offering restaurants, festivals, events, and lodging. Start your adventure at discoverthesequoias.com See ad, pgs. 122–123

Visit Visalia. Gateway to Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks and year-round destination for outdoor adventure. Just three hours from Los Angeles or San Francisco. Enjoy restaurants, festivals, entertainment, and family-friendly adventure! 559/334-0141; visitvisalia.com See ad, pgs. 122–123

WILLOWS

Mendocino National Forest. Camp, hike, boat, watch for wildlife, and explore nearly 1 million acres. Don't miss the Cedar Roughs Wildlife Area, home to rare Sargent cypress trees. fs.usda.gov

WINTERS

Visit Yolo. Yolo County offers a wide range of experiences that are rooted in authenticity. Come savor the seasons and gather year-round to discover where good times grow. visityolo.com See ad, pgs. 122–123

WOODLAND

Woodland Opera House State Historic Park. The first opera house in the Sacramento Valley, dating back to 1885, remains a functioning theater today. Enjoy a show at this California National Historic Landmark. parks.ca.gov

stay

HOTELS AND RESORTS

Choice Hotels. Visit and explore the West! Choice Hotels has the perfect hotel for you, offering affordable accommodations with friendly hospitality and all the amenities you enjoy to meet your travel needs. choicehotels.com/gowest \$–\$\$\$ See ad inside back cover

MERCED

El Capitan Hotel. Historic El Capitan Hotel features 114 guest rooms, a historic theater, and farm to table dining experiences, all reflective of California's Central Valley. 609 W Main Street, 209/383-1234; elcapitanhotel.com \$\$\$ See ad, pgs. 122–123



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CENTRAL COAST

Unwind along this sapphire stretch of coastline adorned with beach towns, unbeatable views, and a tucked-away wine county

Windswept Monterey cypress trees dot the coastline around Cayucos

Cayucos Beach sits along the Whale Trail, a series of destinations for prime whale watching on the Pacific Coast

The beach is a popular surf spot, with high swells from November through April

The name Cayucos comes from the Native American word for “kayak” or “canoe”

There are many tide pools along the beach, particularly on the bluffs north of town



grained sycamore. For more private experiences, Hope on Park's three "creative spaces" each have their own distinctive ambiances and offer guided tastings. If your tastes run more toward craft cocktails, the Speakeasy at Plow & Angel, a new destination for premium whiskeys, absinthe, and such classics as Sazeracs and Sidecars, is open at **Montecito's** San Ysidro Ranch. Plush button-tufted banquettes and tiger-print chairs give the bar a hint of forbidden Prohibition-era glamour.

RESTAURANTS

Along the shores of **Morro Bay**, a vibrant food scene has evolved in Baywood Park. Baywood's branch of San Luis Obispo's landmark High Street Deli serves a range of sandwiches, including several made with its beloved Italian-style fried chicken. Beerwood is the place to savor cool bay breezes, local beers on tap, and charcuterie plates. The farm-to-table Mirazur Restaurant has added a refined yet relaxed option to the dining scene.

New & Noteworthy

ACCOMMODATIONS

At **Ventura's** Hotel San Buena, a 1928 Spanish Revival landmark has become a contemporary boutique hotel. The 32-room hotel's historic building was once Ventura's Elks Lodge and is rich with vintage architectural details: stained-glass windows, painted wood-beam ceilings, and soaring arched windows. The **Monterey** Beach Hotel is now the only beachfront property on the Monterey Peninsula, with 600 feet of shoreline. The property's dramatic renovation resulted in

a modern, nautical-inspired space, with cozy firepits, complimentary e-bikes, and a top-floor farm-to-table restaurant.

OUTDOORS

With the opening of the six-mile Arroyo Quemado Trail, hikers have a new way to explore **Santa Barbara County's** spectacular Gaviota Coast. The trail at the 1,083-acre Baron Ranch leads through the canyon of Arroyo Quemado, climbing more than 1,000 feet to the high ridge of the Santa Ynez Mountains, where views extend to the Channel Islands. Nearby, the Santa Barbara Channel is a significant environment for whales, dolphins, and porpoises. Its abundance recently earned its designation as the Santa Barbara Channel Whale Heritage Area—one of only 11 of these areas worldwide. Head out from Santa

Barbara on a whale-watching cruise and you might spot one of more than 25 different cetacean species.

BEVERAGES

Honored by *Wine Enthusiast* as the 2022 American Winery of the Year, Hope Family Wines has opened a new tasting room in the heart of **Paso Robles**. Sample the acclaimed Rhône varietals while taking in the downtown scene from a walk-up tasting bar made of intricately



Hotel San Buena


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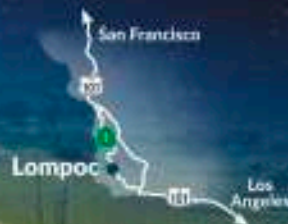
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Small Town Scoop



Fiscalini Ranch Preserve

Set along the ocean in a Monterey pine forest, the San Luis Obispo County village of Cambria blends unspoiled coastal beauty with historic charm. After visiting for more than 20 years, Rebecca Belsanti and her wife Lisa finally moved to Cambria (pop. 5,825) a few years ago. They've never looked back. "Now that we're here, we love it even more," says Belsanti, a onetime professional dancer (including with Prince!) who opened Metta Pilates studio after arriving in town.

The chance to connect with nature was a big draw for the Belsantis, and today they live near the 437-acre Fiscalini Ranch Preserve, a onetime dairy ranch the community saved from development. Fiscalini's must-do hike is a roughly two-mile oceanfront loop known to generate sightings of sea otters, harbor seals, and both humpback and gray whales. Trails also lead into Cambria's rare Monterey pine forest. "The trail through the forest is one of the most beautiful anywhere," she

says. "It's just so serene."

Belsanti also loves Moonstone Beach, where a rebuilt boardwalk runs for a mile atop the bluffs. "I'm a big rock collector, and there are sections of the beach that aren't sand, just small pebbles in a kaleidoscope of colors." Across from Moonstone Beach, with its rustic interior and ocean views, the no-reservation, all-cash Sea Chest Oyster Bar is everything you'd want in a classic seafood house.

Belsanti also frequents the landmark Cambria Nursery and The Garden Shed, a warren of shops in an 1892 creamery building. "The Garden Shed isn't just about gardening," she says. "There are soaps and candles and home decor too. I really like Ocean Heir for their great

variety of women's clothing and gifts."

Adjacent to the shops, Lily's Coffeehouse is a locals' go-to spot for casual breakfasts on its covered deck. Belsanti is also a devotee of Brydge Restaurant, located in a lovingly renovated 1877 residence. "We were so excited when Brydge opened," she says. "Chef Elaine [Rivera-Glen] brings it every time. My favorite is the olive oil potatoes and I also love the gochujang butter noodles with shrimp and scallops."

Boni's Tacos, a Main Street food truck, is another favorite. "The burritos are killer, the al pastor is the best, and the owner, Cesar Viveros, is absolutely awesome." Awesome too is the olallieberry pie at Linn's Restaurant and the setting at Stolo Vineyards just outside Cambria, where Belsanti's classes are open to the public. Rajat Parr, one of the wine industry's leading figures, now owns Stolo. "Raj is world-renowned, so every time I taste at Stolo I'm excited to see what they're pouring," says Belsanti. "He's just doing amazing things." ✨



The Garden Shed

 Monterey Plaza Hotel & Spa



 Spindrift Inn



Enjoy


the best of Monterey on

Cannery Row

Natural wonders abound in Monterey, and there simply is no better place to experience it all than with a stay on Cannery Row. Known for its picturesque charm and colorful history, guests to this fabled street can enjoy a unique combination of luxurious waterfront hotels, enticing restaurants and captivating boutiques. Come, slow down and enjoy the best of Monterey on Cannery Row.



CANNERYROW.COM

 InterContinental The Clement Monterey





La Playa Hotel



Carmel River Inn

Splurge vs Save

INDULGE OR ECONOMIZE IN THIS CHARMING CENTRAL COAST TOWN

STAY

La Playa Hotel completed a \$20 million renovation in fall 2023, touching all 75 guest rooms at this historic Carmel property. The spacious Carmel Suite (\$1,379 per night) will delight the most discerning traveler.

The studio cottages with kitchenettes and fireplaces at the Carmel River Inn (\$179/night) let you play house in a forested setting near downtown. Don't need a kitchen? Then go for a motel-style room (from \$135/night).

DINE

Turn yourself over to the creativity of Executive Chef-Director Justin Cogley and savor the changing tasting menu (\$265 per person) at the Michelin-starred Aubergine. Add a reserve wine pairing for \$250.

Line up with the locals for an oakwood-grilled tri-tip sandwich (\$13.99) at no-frills Bruno's Market & Deli, a Carmel favorite since 1953. Build your own sandwich on a choice of seven breads or take your pick of grab-and-go salads and wraps.

PHOTOS

Check out fine-art masterpieces at the Weston Gallery and Photography West. An original 1945 Ansel Adams portrait of Edward Weston taken at Carmel Highlands will set you back \$15,000 at Photography West.

Test your own photography skills at the local locations where Adams and Weston worked, including Point Lobos State Natural Reserve (\$10 per car), white-sand Carmel Beach (free), and the Carmel Mission (\$13).

SOOTHE

Pamper yourself at Carmel Valley Ranch's Spa Aiyana with the 80-minute Organic Fruit Enzyme facial (\$348), the 80-minute Shea Butter Body Wrap (\$354), and the 80-minute Mind Wellness mental detox (\$505).

Get recentered by forest bathing beneath the Monterey pines and coast live oaks at Carmel's free Mission Trail Nature Preserve. The Japanese tradition known as shinrin-yoku encourages an immersion in nature to reduce stress.

MUSIC

The Sunset Cultural Center's renovated Gothic-style auditorium draws a diverse lineup of top musicians. Performers have included Jackson Browne and Melissa Etheridge, whose prime seats go for \$125.

Sip a cocktail while listening to talented vocalists and jazz groups in the intimate setting of Terry's Lounge at the Cypress Inn. The lounge (no cover charge) honors Terry Melcher, a celebrated record producer and son of onetime inn owner Doris Day.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: CHRIS MOTTALINI; COURTESY CARMEL RIVER INN; EYEEM MOBILE GMBH/GETTY IMAGES

SIMI VALLEY

SMALL TOWN CHARM
BIG TIME HISTORY

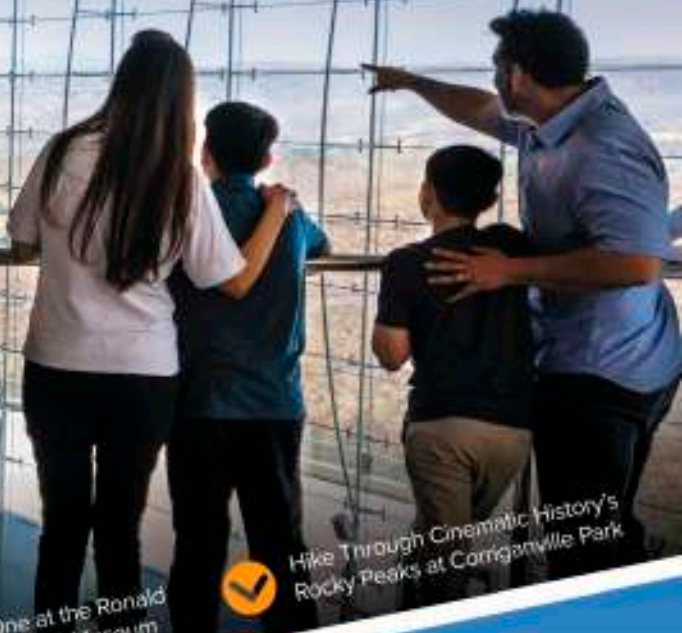
SANTA
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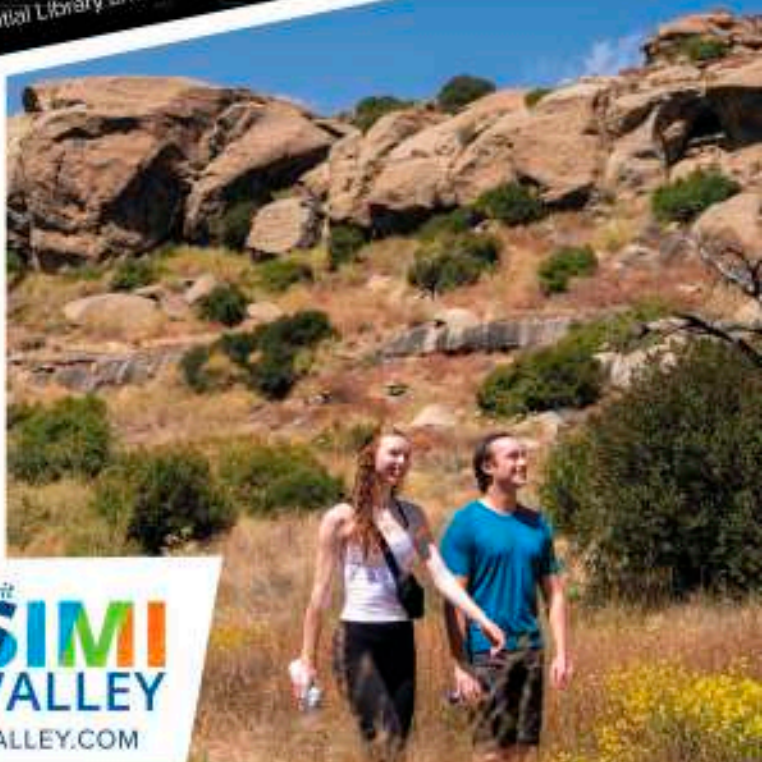
AMERICA



Walk Through Air Force One at the Ronald
Reagan Presidential Library and Museum

Hike Through Cinematic History's
Rocky Peaks at Corriganville Park

Enjoy Gourmet Dining and Cocktails
Al Fresco at Bluefin Grill and Sushi



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EATS & TREATS**

**HIKING, BIKING
& WILDFLOWERS**

Artichokes

While you probably wouldn't give your loved one a bouquet of artichokes, these perennial thistles actually belong to the sunflower family. Long considered a delicacy, artichokes are Mediterranean natives that have been cultivated for more than 2,000 years in Italy and Sicily. The Green Globe is the dominant artichoke cultivar grown in California, but it's only one of 50 globe varieties.

It's estimated that California grows 99 percent (or more) of U.S. artichokes, with the bulk harvested in Monterey County. In the early 1900s, Italian farmers began growing artichokes near San Francisco and Half Moon Bay. California's commercial industry took off in 1920 when Castroville sugar beet farmer Andrew Molera planted his first artichokes. The crop boomed, and soon 12,000 acres were in production.

Artichokes thrive in mild coastal climates where temperatures stay between 45 and 85 degrees. They prefer well-drained soils, love fog, and can tolerate salt in soils. The Central Coast is ideal for artichoke production, and the crop is primarily grown near the ocean from San Mateo County south.



CASTROVILLE, THE "ARTICHOKE CAPITAL OF THE WORLD," LAUNCHED ITS ARTICHOKE FESTIVAL IN 1959.



Castroville is home to nearly two-thirds of California's artichoke production and Ocean Mist Farms, the country's largest artichoke grower. The family farm was founded in 1924.



Follow Monterey County's 40-stop Artichoke Trail to farm stands, including Pezzini Farms, which carries heirloom versions and offers walking tours through Ag Venture Tours.



Bear + Flag Roadside in Carmel Valley serves a Castroville Artichoke Burger with dill havarti, pickled red onions, and sprouts on a potato bun.

CENTRAL COAST
California

CENTRAL COAST CALIFORNIA

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and worth every second
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San Juan Bautista – alive with early California history. Tour the Old Mission, the State Historic Park, Shop, Eat, and Drink in the Shopping District, checkout San Andreas Faultline, hike the Juan deAnza Trail, attend a Festival, Stargaze, and Birdwatch. All within a leisurely walk.

sanjuanbautistaca.com

MONTEREY COUNTY

Monterey County is made up of endless paths, from the majestic redwoods to the verdant valleys and pristine coastline. Discover wellness retreats, world-class dining, renowned golf courses and outdoor adventure — the spirit of exploration awaits. No matter which path you take, it's sure to lead to inspiration.

Find your way here at seemonterey.com/yourway



PORTOLA HOTEL & SPA

Portola Hotel & Spa at Monterey Bay is California's premier family-friendly, AAA Four Diamond hotel. Reflecting unparalleled modern coastal luxury in the heart of Monterey, Portola features 379 coastal-inspired guest rooms and several on-site, award-winning amenities, including, Spa on the Plaza, exceptional dining, a craft brewery, pet-friendly accommodations, and much more!

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SLO your stroll. Be the first to say hi. Have your best day ever. When you're in San Luis Obispo, you're a local – so do what the locals do! Sip coffee in cozy cafes or wine in sun-drenched vineyards, shop our Thursday night Farmers' Market and wander lush green parks and endless trails.

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Discover Pismo Beach, the epitome of classic California! With sun-kissed shores, iconic piers, and stunning sunsets, it's a paradise for beach lovers and adventure seekers alike. Surf, stroll the boardwalk, or savor fresh seafood. From dune buggies to wine tasting, Pismo Beach captures the true spirit of the Golden State.

experiencepismo beach.com



SANTA YNEZ VALLEY

Two hours north of Los Angeles and four hours south of San Francisco, travelers will find more than 100 wineries, over 30 lodging options for a variety of budgets and tastes, a thriving culinary scene, outdoor adventure, and wide-open spaces to relax, rejuvenate and explore in the Santa Ynez Valley.

visitsyv.com



SOLVANG

Visit Solvang, California, the Danish Capital of America! Experience charming European-style streets, authentic Danish bakeries, windmills, and unique boutiques. Enjoy world-class wineries, cultural festivals, and explore fascinating Danish history. Solvang offers a perfect mix of old-world charm and modern-day adventure, making it an unforgettable destination for every traveler.

solvangusa.com



SANTA PAULA • FILLMORE • PIRU

Discover the Santa Clara River Valley, where adventure meets relaxation. Cruise Piru Lake, delve into history at local museums, and explore scenic trails. Enjoy quaint downtowns in Santa Paula and Fillmore with unique shops and dining. Unwind with boating, camping, railbiking, flying and more. Your perfect Southern California escape awaits!

heritagevalleyca.org



VENTURA

Ventura is a backdrop of stunning mountains, golden beaches, and beckoning islands for experiences that are truly lived. Adventure and spontaneity run through our DNA: stroll through our Downtown just blocks from the ocean and find your fun or travel to the Channel Islands National Park to wave hello to cute island foxes.

visitventuraca.com

VENTURA HARBOR VILLAGE

Catch seaside playground vibes all year-round at Ventura Harbor Village to vacay, relax & unwind! Fresh seafood, waterfront dining, beachy boutiques, sweat treats, live music, entertainment, events, self-care, boat, kayak & character boat rentals and sandy beaches. Plus, whale watching, Channel Islands National Park boat trips & Visitor Center. Open daily!

venturaharborvillage.com



CAMARILLO

Hit the road for Camarillo, where sunshine reigns supreme, families come to play and farm-fresh flavors are everywhere! Find relaxing retreats and fill up on outdoor adventures. Shop miles of styles, from our quaint Old Town district to the Camarillo Premium Outlets. Sunny days are here.

visitcamarillo.com



visit

BIG SUR

Andrew Molera State Park. Admire majestic views of the Pacific coast as you wander through miles of meadow, beach, bluff, and hilltop trails in this relatively undeveloped park. parks.ca.gov

Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park. Explore rugged coastline and ancient redwoods. Don't miss McWay Falls, a picturesque waterfall that drops 80 feet over granite cliffs onto the beach below. parks.ca.gov

CAMARILLO

Camarillo Premium Outlets. Shop more than 150 stores, ranging from designer brands such as Coach and Tory Burch to Converse and Bose. premiumoutlets.com

Visit Camarillo. Hit the road for Camarillo, where sunshine reigns supreme, families come to play, and farm-fresh flavors are everywhere! Find relaxing retreats and fill up on outdoor adventures. Shop miles of styles, from our quaint Old Town district to the Camarillo Premium Outlets. Sunny days are here. 805/201-0506; visitcamarillo.com See ad, pgs. 139-141

CAMBRIA

Hearst San Simeon State Park. View marine mammals in their natural habitat at the Elephant Seal Boardwalk. Explore the Pa-nu Cultural Preserve, an archeological site dating back 5,850 years. parks.ca.gov

CARMEL-BY-THE-SEA

Point Lobos State Natural Reserve. Hike through headlands and meadows to explore fields of wildflowers, diverse wildlife, hidden ocean coves, and a turn-of-the-century whaler's cabin. parks.ca.gov

CARPINTERIA

Carpinteria State Beach. Swim, fish, picnic, and camp on 62 acres of family-friendly beachfront. Kids will love exploring tide pools filled with starfish, crabs, sea urchins, and octopi. parks.ca.gov

CAYUCOS

Cayucos State Beach. This tranquil beach is popular for surfing and swimming. Fishermen flock to the long wooden pier, which is lit after sundown and does not require a fishing license. parks.ca.gov

Harmony Headlands State Park. Located just south of the tiny town of Harmony (pop. 18), this park is marked

by a 1.5-mile coastal trail that offers steep climbs and stunning ocean views. parks.ca.gov

CENTRAL COAST

Central Coast California. It's About Time. Time to ditch your feed. Time to explore 350 miles of the world's most vibrant and stunning coastline. If you take the time, it will give you all the time you need. And it's worth every second. theoriginalroadtrip.com See ad, pgs. 139-141.

GILROY

Gilroy Gardens Family Theme Park. Discover this charming amusement park with over 40 rides and attractions, water slides, majestic gardens, and over 10,000 trees, including the world-famous Circus Trees. gilroygardens.org

GOLETA

El Capitán State Beach. Enjoy more than 100 campsites with tables, fire rings, and coin-operated showers 20 miles away from Santa Barbara. A wooden stairway connects bluffs to the beach, a popular spot for surf-fishing. parks.ca.gov

Refugio State Beach. Crystal waters are lined by large palm trees, lending the beach a tropical look. Rent a

kayak and paddle offshore for views of Channel Islands National Park. [parks.ca.gov](#)

GUADALUPE

Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes National Wildlife Refuge. Sweeping sand dunes serve as protected breeding grounds for the endangered California least tern and the Western snowy plover. [fws.gov](#)

Point Sal State Beach. Accessible only by a 9.8-mile hike, this remote beach includes 1.5 miles of coastline. Look for seals sunning offshore on Lion Rock. [parks.ca.gov](#)

HOLLISTER

Casa de Fruta. What started as a humble cherry stand in 1908 is now a popular roadside attraction. With a massive market, restaurant, sweetshop, RV park, 14-room inn, and playground, there's something at Fruta for the whole family. [casadefruta.com](#)

LOMPOC

Space to Explore in Lompoc. Located on scenic Highway 1 along the Central Coast, Lompoc is the best vantage point for rocket launches on the West Coast. La Purísima Mission, dozens of boutique wineries and outdoor murals, Jalama Beach, skydiving, and championship golf. [explorelompoc.com](#) See ad, p. 133

LOS OSOS

Montaña de Oro State Park. Walk or mountain bike on trails that lead to wildflowers, coastal plains, and the 1,347-foot Valencia Peak. Visit in spring to see fields of golden flowers in full bloom. [parks.ca.gov](#)

MARINA

Marina State Beach. Winding through Marina Dunes Preserve, this is a popular spot for hang gliding, paragliding, and kite flying. Hike along a sandy boardwalk on the Dune Nature Trail. [parks.ca.gov](#)

MONTEREY

Cannery Row. The Central Coast's premier visitor destination with ocean-view hotels, award-winning restaurants, boutiques, wine tasting, attractions, and exciting nightlife. Plan your visit at [canneryrow.com](#). See ad, p. 135

See Monterey. Monterey County is made up of endless paths, from the majestic redwoods to the verdant valleys and pristine coastline. No matter which path you take, it's sure to lead to inspiration. [seemonterey.com](#) See ad, pgs. 37, 139–141

MORRO BAY

Morro Bay State Park. Camp, hike, and explore the lagoon and natural bay habitat. Enjoy views of Morro Rock, a registered historical landmark and bird sanctuary for the peregrine falcon. [parks.ca.gov](#)

Morro Strand State Beach. Three miles of sand stretch between the north and south entrance of this coastal frontage park on Estero Bay. Spend the night at one of 85 campsites. [parks.ca.gov](#)

MOSS LANDING

Moss Landing State Beach. This long sandy beach, protected by dunes and popular with surfers, is known for its world-class waves. View western snowy plovers nesting right on the sand. [parks.ca.gov](#)

OCEANO

Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area. Over five miles of beach and sand dunes offer a unique spot for recreational off-road vehicle use and only-here sand activities, including beach camping, horseback riding, and Hummer rides. [parks.ca.gov](#)

PACIFIC GROVE

Monarch Grove Sanctuary. View the colorful monarch butterfly migration, arriving in November and departing in late February. Admission is free. [pgmuseum.org](#)

PAICINES

Pinnacles National Park. Pinnacles offers great rock climbing, hiking, wildlife, camping, and wildflower blooms. Visiting during the cooler months is recommended. [nps.gov/pinn](#)

PASO ROBLES

Paso Robles Visitors Center. Located in the heart of downtown. Pick up a visitor guide and a wine map to explore this small town, rich in history and dotted by vineyards. [pasorobleschamber.com](#)

PISMO BEACH

Experience Pismo Beach. Classic California, famous for its world-famous pier, miles of beautiful white sand beaches, outstanding accommodations, and a rich wine region minutes away. Check out lodging specials at [experiencepismo.com](#). Join us on Facebook, X, YouTube, Instagram, and Pinterest. See ad, pgs. 139–141

SALINAS

National Steinbeck Center. This center celebrates the creativity of the Salinas-born literary master John Steinbeck. Learn about his work through theatrical sets and interactive exhibits. [steinbeck.org](#)

SAN JUAN BAUTISTA

Spirit of San Juan Bautista, CA. Alive with California History. Old Mission, State Historic Park, San Andreas Faultline, Juan de Anza Trail., Eat, drink, shop, or attend a festival. All within a leisurely walk. [sanjuanbautistaca.com](#) See ad, pgs. 139–141

SAN LUIS OBISPO

City of San Luis Obispo. We're small-town California with big-time charm, ready to welcome you. Enjoy wine tasting, hiking, biking, boutique shopping and more at your home base for Central Coast adventure. 877/SLO-TOWN; [visitslo.com](#) See ad, pgs. 139–141

Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa. This 1772 mission offers a museum with artifacts, a tranquil garden, and docent-led tours of the mission and its grounds. [missionsanluisobispo.org](#)

SAN SIMEON

Piedras Blancas Elephant Seal Rookery. In winter, see (and hear) bellowing elephant seals as they bring their little ones into the world. [elephantseal.org](#)

SANTA BARBARA

Santa Barbara Botanic Garden. Hike 5.5 miles of trails through this 78-acre garden filled with native plants. View colorful wildflowers and groves of sky-high redwood trees. [sbbg.org](#)

Visit Santa Barbara. A culturally radiant coastal city that elevates the spirit, refreshes the soul, and awakens the senses. Plan your getaway and get a free Visitor Magazine at [santabarbaraca.com](#). 800/676-1266; See ad, back cover

SANTA PAULA

Heritage Valley. Adventure and relaxation await! Cruise Piru Lake, explore scenic trails, and enjoy charming downtowns in Santa Paula and Fillmore. Boating, camping, railbiking, and more for your perfect SoCal escape. [heritagevalleyca.org](#) See ad, pgs. 139–141

SANTA YNEZ VALLEY

Visit the Santa Ynez Valley. Two hours north of L.A., discover 100+ wineries, incredible food, and an authentic, relaxed vibe. For a complete listing of properties, restaurants, wineries, tasting rooms, and events, go to [visitsyv.com](#). See ad, pgs. 139–141

SIMI VALLEY

Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum. This Ventura County complex celebrates the 40th U.S. president, and sits on 100 hilltop acres with sweeping views of the ocean. [reaganfoundation.org](#)

Visit Simi Valley. Minutes from Los Angeles, Simi Valley offers small-town charm alongside historical landmarks and rolling hills. Unique Hollywood-famous rock formations create breathtaking sunsets and the perfect landscape for exploring. [visitsimivalley.com](#) See ad, p. 137

SOLVANG

City of Solvang. Just 45 minutes from Santa Barbara Airport, Solvang's Denmark-inspired architecture frames Danish pastry-filled itineraries. Experience Europe-in-America. "Hygge," history, and heritage fill Solvang stories at: [solvangusa.com](#) See ad, pgs. 139–141

VENTURA

Channel Islands National Park. Known as "the American Galapagos," these islands offer stunning scenery and biological diversity, plus sea-cave kayaking, snorkeling, diving, camping, and whale watching. [nps.gov/chis](#)

Ventura Harbor Village. A vibrant seaside attraction with 35+ waterfront restaurants, coastal boutiques, wine tasting, live music, entertainment, artisans, fresh seafood, pamper services, boat and kayak rentals, oceanfront hotels, Channel Islands NP Visitor Center and excursions. Open daily. [venturaharborvillage.com](#) See ad, pgs. 139–141

Visit Ventura. Ventura's backdrop is stunning mountains, golden beaches, and beckoning islands. Stroll through Downtown, blocks from the ocean, or explore the Channel Islands National Park. [visitventuraca.com](#) See ad, pgs. 139–141

stay

HOTELS AND RESORTS

CARMEL

Tickle Pink Inn at Carmel Highlands. 155 Highland Drive. 35 rooms. Our enchanting coastal hideaway overlooks the Big Sur coastline, and a host of luxurious complimentary amenities pamper you from morning to night. 800/614-7437; [ticklepinkinn.com](#) \$\$\$ See ad, pgs. 133, 139–141



MONTEREY

Portola Hotel & Spa at Monterey Bay. 2 Portola Plaza. California's premier family-friendly destination with unparalleled modern coastal luxury, in the heart of downtown Monterey with 379 guest rooms, onsite dining, a spa, and access to the destination's most popular attractions. 831/649-4511; [portolahotel.com](#) \$\$\$–\$\$\$ See ad, pgs. 139–141



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CENTER



SWIMMING
POOL



HANDICAP
ACCESSIBLE



SPA/SAUNA/
HOT TUB



PETS
WELCOME



UNDER
\$100/NIGHT



\$100-\$200/
NIGHT



OVER \$200/
NIGHT



LOS ANGELES COUNTY

This vibrant hub for arts and culture offers endless opportunities for sun-soaked exploration

Many of the lamps in the installation once lit the streets of Southern California

The hashtag #urbanlight has been posted more than 64,000 times

Robert Irwin's *Primal Palm Garden* can be seen from the sculpture's steps

The Los Angeles County Museum of Art is the largest museum in the Western U.S.

Created by artist Chris Burden, *Urban Light* uses a total of 202 restored street lamps

Urban Light is situated at the entrance to the LACMA along L.A.'s Miracle Mile





Terrace Theater, Long Beach



CATCH A
BROADWAY
SHOW ON ITS
NATIONAL
TOUR AT LONG
BEACH'S
TERRACE
THEATER

for William Wrigley's two boats that brought guests to **Catalina Island**. Today, Pier 24 is the island's newest waterfront restaurant, serving seafood, salads, burgers, and specialty cocktails. The airy dining room features vintage photographs that pay homage to the pier's storied history; outside there are two harbor-view patios.

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Make it dinner and a show at **Long Beach's** Terrace Theater, which raised the curtain for the first time on a Broadway at the Beach series for the 2024–25 season. Touring productions from the Great White Way like *The Book of Mormon* (Feb. 4–5) and *Champions of Magic* (May 1–2) bring music, dance, and entertaining illusions to the coastal stage.

New & Noteworthy

ACCOMMODATIONS

The only thing you can count on to stay the same in California's biggest city is its constant state of reinvention. Just blink, and a nearly 100-year-old building that once housed **Los Angeles** Fire Department's Engine Co. No. 17 will be transformed into a striking boutique hotel. Opened above a buzzy izakaya restaurant in the Arts District in 2024, Kodō Hotel features eight Japanese ryokan-inspired rooms with futon-style beds and minimalist decor. In **Venice**, a

historic former boarding house a block from the boardwalk reemerged in 2024 as the 27-room Vitorrja. Owned by the same group behind the farm-to-table restaurant Gjelina, the boutique hotel offers a cozy spot to retreat from city life with clawfoot tubs and an overall vintage vibe. Guests receive priority reservations at Gjelina, and you can also order ahead to have your fridge stocked with staples from Gjusta Grocer.

FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Meals by Genet, a Little Ethiopia restaurant that was a favorite of the late Pulitzer Prize-winning food critic Jonathan Gold, reopened after a multiple-year hiatus to serve the owner's signature dorowat—a traditional Ethiopian stew—in the intimate dining room.

More excellent eats can be found in the historic West Adams neighborhood, where chef Rose Previte opened an L.A. branch of her Michelin-starred Washington, D.C., restaurant, Maydan. It's part of the expansive Maydan Market, a 10,000-square-foot culinary complex that houses restaurants and food businesses celebrating global influences. In the South Bay, **Redondo Beach's** seafood-centric Salt & Pearl is a must-visit. It features moody interiors and a menu of elevated land and sea dishes, along with handcrafted cocktails. Starting in the 1920s, Steamer Pier (aka Pier 24) served as the docking spot



Rose Previte of
Maydan Market

FROM TOP: COURTESY TERRACE THEATER; COURTESY MAYDAN MARKET

MUSEUMS



San Bernardino County Museum



EXPLORE SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

ZOO



Big Bear Alpine Zoo

HISTORIC SITES



Calico Ghost Town

MOUNTAIN RETREATS



Lake Gregory

Small Town Scoop



Busto and Sun

“Topanga is surreal and quiet, perfect for creative expression.”

- ENRICO BUSTO, ITALIAN HAT MAKER

Company to reclaimed jewelry at Alkemie Road. There’s also an “insane vintage selection” at both Hidden Treasures and Melet Mercantile, according to the hatter.

Get to know the locals with breakfast at Cafe Mimosa, known for its crepes and quiche. “It’s so cozy that it feels like being in a friend’s living room,” Busto says. On Sundays, head to The Canyon Bakery inside the Will Geer Theatrical Botanicum. Shaded tables along the creek are a quiet place to enjoy fresh whole-grain bread and pastries with the family.

Find more family-friendly fare—and Busto’s favorite tortillas—at Froggy’s Cantina, a watering hole that teamed up with La Chingona Tacos to serve Mexican cuisine. As an Italian, Busto also never turns down pizza from Endless Color: “I’m a pizza snob! I adore the squash blossom one and the great selection of organic wine.”

Date night is best spent at the Inn of the Seventh Ray, “one of the most romantic spots you can imagine,” Busto says. “The very intimate table setup along

the creek—it’s just magic.”

A visit to Topanga wouldn’t be complete without some creative immersion. A funky mishmash of public art installations known as the Great Wall of Topanga is free to view, as is locals’ work at galleries including Space Art + Supply, Artists Matter, and Artemis Studio. Busto also recommends catching a show or class like Hawaiian hula at Corazon Performing Arts.

For fresh air, bike the Summit to Summit Trail or the Dirt Mulholland path, which Busto suggests for advanced riders. You can also explore colorful formations on foot at Red Rock Canyon Park or hike the Trippet Ranch trailhead to Eagle Rock to reach a cave with ocean views. As a special way to end your trip, visit Owl Falls at Jalan Jalan Imports—it’s a natural waterfall where Indigenous people once gathered, and, according to Busto, is “one of the most incredible locations in the canyon.” 🌸

Perched in the Santa Monica Mountains northeast of Malibu with views from the canyons to the coast, Topanga is an artists’ sanctuary. While many residents have lived along the town’s winding roads for generations, others, like Italian hatmaker Enrico Busto, came for a short stay and never left.

“I was on vacation in Los Angeles and I ended up by mistake in Topanga,” he says. “It is surreal and quiet, perfect for creative expression.”

Busto sold bespoke hats in the canyon for more than 20 years until he had a chance in 2020 to open his own shop, Busto and Sun, which offers ready-to-wear in addition to custom designs crafted with Venetian techniques. His atelier is just one of many storefronts along Topanga Canyon Road. It’s a great walkable stretch to find one-of-a-kind souvenirs, from pour-your-own creations at Topanga Candle



Endless Color



Splurge vs Save

YOU'LL FIND MORE THAN JUST LUXURY IN THIS STYLISH L.A. COUNTY CITY

DINE

Savor all the best bites at the Michelin-starred Gucci Osteria da Massimo Bottura with a seasonal nine-course chef's experience plus premium Cantina Privata wine pairing for \$500 per person.

Dig into traditional deli fare at Nate'n Al's, a Beverly Hills institution that's been serving generous portions of its signature stuffed cabbage (\$15 for two) and patty melt with fries (\$17.95) since 1945.

STAY

Live the luxe life at the Beverly Wilshire with a top-floor buyout, which includes room for 22 adults, after-hours spa access, and a private Saks Fifth Avenue shopping appointment. (\$50,000/night, five-night minimum)

The Maison 140 Beverly Hills offers rooms starting at \$159 per night in a charming Parisian-style inn with an onsite bar with live music. Guests have access to the amenities at a sister hotel next door, including the pool, fitness center, and restaurant.

SHOP

Shop like an A-lister at Dior on Rodeo Drive, where you can get the VIP treatment during a private appointment on the mezzanine while trying on a satin embroidered Mini Lady Dior handbag (\$8,500) from the latest collection.

Get the look for up to 80 percent less at 260 Sample Sale, a family-run shop on Canon Drive where you can score final-sale items including specialty leather bags for under \$100 from designers like Staud and Rag & Bone.

RELAX

Unwind in a private suite for two at Tomoko Spa with a detoxifying foot soak and signature couple's massage (\$1,000–\$1,320). After a relaxing Japanese ofuro bath experience, finish your treatment with sushi, tea, and sweets.

The no-frills Bao Foot Spa will feel like five-star luxury after a long day of sightseeing. Sink into a massage chair for 30 minutes of Chinese reflexology that includes a foot bath with your service. (\$40)

SIP

Mixology is an art form at Spago Beverly Hills, where logo-stamped ice, garnishes, and elegant glassware elevate sips like the Haiku, a \$69 premium cocktail made with 12-year Suntory Hakushu Japanese whisky.

At Dante Beverly Hills, a rooftop restaurant at the five-star Maybourne hotel, \$10 "martini hour" means you can sip like a VIP every day from 3–5 p.m.





SANTA MONICA:
Shore Hotel

Many of the sustainability initiatives of this LEED Gold–certified property are hidden in plain sight, from upcycled materials repurposed from the original building site to a solar-heated pool and drought-resistant landscaping. Even the footprint and orientation are intentional, with the property built in the shape of a U facing out to maximize solar energy. Energy conservation extends to the 164 rooms and suites, where lighting and climate controls adjust as guests enter and exit. Private balconies promote natural ventilation and also provide views of the shore or the hotel’s native plant garden. Dining is also earth-friendly: Ingredients for the California-inspired dishes are sourced off the coast when possible, along with organic produce from the farmers’ market. The bar offers ocean views and craft cocktails made with locally grown herbs—a quintessentially California way to end a stay.





Delightfully unexpected

MORE THAN A COLLEGE TOWN

Escape the city and get away for a long weekend in Claremont. Just 30 miles from downtown L.A., Claremont is a cultural hub where the arts, international dining, boutique shopping, and outdoor adventures await. Walk the California Botanic Garden, explore a museum or contemporary gallery, sip local ales and spirits, and sample gourmet bakeries and epicurean shops.

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Los Angeles Tourism & Convention Board
discoverlosangeles.com



visit

ARCADIA

Angeles National Forest. Enjoy spectacular scenery and the solitude of quiet wilderness areas in the San Gabriel Mountains and Sierra Pelona Mountains. fs.usda.gov/angeles

Los Angeles County Arboretum & Botanic Garden. Wander along paths that feature 127 acres of plants, natural landscapes, wildlife, and historic buildings nestled near the San Gabriel Mountains. arboretum.org

BEVERLY HILLS

Mr. Brainwash Art Museum. Experience the interactive, all-ages art playground at this unique museum, showcasing the vibrant, multimedia works of street artist Thierry Guetta. mrbrainwashartmuseum.com

Greystone Mansion. Built in 1928 for the son of an oil tycoon, this elaborate mansion and estate is now a public park. Stroll through manicured gardens with man-made waterfalls. beverlyhills.org

Virginia Robinson Gardens. This 1911 estate is home to one of Beverly Hills' first mansions. The opulent six-acre grounds feature period gardens where Hollywood

elite enjoyed garden parties. Tours by reservation only. robinsongardens.org

BURBANK

Burbank Aviation Museum. This museum highlights the rich history of aviation in Southern California, with a focus on the city's pivotal role in aircraft manufacturing. See vintage aircraft models, artifacts, and exhibits that highlight the contributions of local aviation pioneers. burbankaviationmuseum.org

CASTAIC

Castaic Lake State Recreation Area. Enjoy boating, fishing, hiking, and picnicking amid stunning scenic views. The Lower Lake offers boating, canoeing, and seasonal swimming, while the Upper Lake is perfect for sailing, fishing, and jet skiing. parks.ca.gov

CATALINA ISLAND

Catalina Island Museum. Located in the Ada Blanche Wrigley Schreiner Building, rotating exhibits tell the history of Catalina Island and cover a wide range of topics through art, artifacts, and documents. catalinamuseum.org

CHATSWORTH

Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park. Where the Simi Hills meet the Santa Susana Mountains, find this

680-acre park. Native American village sites belonging to Tongva, Chumash, and Tataviam people remain. parks.ca.gov

CITY OF INDUSTRY

Homestead Museum. Visit the homes and private cemeteries of the pioneer Workman-Temple families, located in the heart of a former Mexican rancho. Free guided tours available Wednesday through Sunday. homesteadmuseum.org

CLAREMONT

Benton Museum of Art at Pomona College. This spacious museum houses more than 18,000 objects, including Italian Renaissance paintings, works by Francisco Goya, and 20th-century Southern California art. pomona.edu/museum

California Botanic Garden. Home to the largest botanic garden dedicated to California flora, this 86-acre property is home to 2,000 different native varieties, including endangered and threatened plants. calbg.org

Claremont Lewis Museum of Art. Located inside a Spanish-style building and former train depot, this museum celebrates the community's cultural legacy

through rotating art and architecture exhibitions.
clmoa.org

Discover Claremont. Escape the city in L.A.'s college and arts town. Explore over 20 museums, galleries, and gardens, enjoy our dynamic culinary scene, sip local ales and spirits, shop owner-curated boutiques, and more. discoverclaremont.com See ad, p. 151

CULVER CITY

Sony Pictures Museum. Take a guided walking tour and get a behind-the-scenes look at a working studio and a museum filled with Hollywood memorabilia. sonypicturesstudiotours.com

ENCINO

Los Encinos State Historic Park. A popular spot along a 19th-century travel route, this rancho includes the original eight-room adobe home, blacksmith shop, and a natural spring. parks.ca.gov

HOLLYWOOD

Hollywood Museum. Explore four floors of show-business treasures, from one-of-a-kind costumes to film scripts, props, and vintage posters. Housed in the historic Max Factor Building designed by Simeon Charles Lee. thehollywoodmuseum.com

INGLEWOOD

SoFi Stadium Tours. Go behind-the-scenes at SoFi Stadium, home to the Los Angeles Rams and Los Angeles Chargers. Experience our most exclusive spaces including suites, locker rooms, field access, and more! sofistadium.com/tours See ad, p. 155

LANCASTER

Antelope Valley California Poppy Reserve. After a good winter rain, spring wildflowers (mostly the famous golden California poppy) blanket the park's 1,700 acres. Stay on paths and don't pick the flowers. parks.ca.gov

Antelope Valley Indian Museum State Historic Park. Exhibits and interpretive displays focus on the Great Basin Indian Cultures. The unique chalet-style structure was originally built in 1928. parks.ca.gov

Saddleback Butte State Park. On the western edge of the Mojave Desert sits this granite mountain top, towering more than 3,000 feet over the valley floor. Reach the peak through the two-mile trail. parks.ca.gov

LONG BEACH

Long Beach Museum of Art. The permanent collection includes more than 3,000 paintings, drawings, sculptures, and decorative arts objects with a focus on California modernism and 20th-century European art. lbma.org

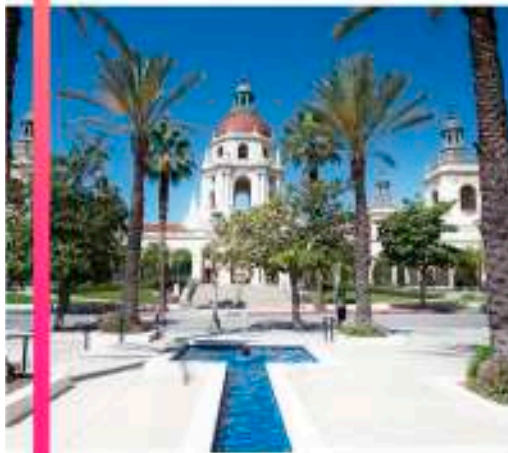
The Museum of Latin American Art. Dedicated to modern and contemporary Latin American and Latino Art, MOLAA houses a collection of more than 1,600 works, including painting, sculptures, and multimedia. molaa.org

Visit Long Beach. From the Aquarium of the Pacific to the historic Queen Mary, Museum of Latin American Art, and a foodie and brewery scene, Long Beach is the waterfront playground with city vibes. visitlongbeach.com See ad, p. 2

LOS ANGELES

Academy Museum of Motion Pictures. Film buffs celebrate the history, artistry, and impact of cinema at this L.A. museum. See immersive exhibits, iconic film collections, and interactive displays. academymuseum.org

WHAT'S SO GREAT ABOUT PASADENA?



Known for its historic landmarks, famous Rose Parade, arts & crafts architecture, museums, and shops lining Colorado Blvd., Pasadena embodies the lifestyle that travelers who venture off the beaten path will experience.



VISIT
PASADENA

Autry Museum of the American West. This Griffith Park museum showcases the captivating history, culture, and art of the American West, with exhibits ranging from Native American artifacts to cowboy memorabilia and contemporary Western art. theautry.org

California African American Museum. Located in Exposition Park, this museum focuses on the arts, culture, and history of African Americans. Explore important works of art, artifacts, and a serene sculpture court. caamuseum.org

Griffith Observatory. Look through telescopes, explore exhibits, and see live shows in the Samuel Oschin Planetarium. Located on Mount Hollywood in Griffith Park. griffithobservatory.org

Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area. Explore this park's native coastal sage scrub habitat, picnic sites, tot lots, fishing lake, lotus pond, community center and five miles of trails. parks.ca.gov

La Brea Tar Pits and Museum. See the bubbling pits and explore the mysteries of the Ice Age revealed at the world's only active, urban Ice Age excavation site. tarpits.org

Los Angeles County Museum of Art. The largest art museum in the western U.S. The collection includes over 142,000 objects spanning history, from ancient times to present day. lacma.org

The Getty Center. European and American art is complemented by modern design, open spaces, and breathtaking views. Take the tram up to the campus designed by Richard Meier. getty.edu

Watts Towers of Simon Rodia State Historic Park. This architectural landmark features a collection of 17 interconnected spires made from steel, cement, and mosaics. The tallest of the towers is 99.5 feet tall. parks.ca.gov

MALIBU

Leo Carrillo State Park. Find tide pools, coastal caves, and reefs for exploring. The park also features backcountry hiking and a beach for surfing, windsurfing, and beachcombing. parks.ca.gov

Malibu Creek State Park. Explore more than 8,000 acres of sycamore woodlands and tallgrass plains. Follow streamside trails, perfect for hiking, fishing, birdwatching, mountain biking, and more. parks.ca.gov

Malibu Lagoon State Beach. Experience one of the first places where modern surfing culture developed. Take the Adamson House tour to enjoy balcony views of the historic Surfrider Beach and famous Malibu Pier. parks.ca.gov

Point Dume State Beach. Follow trails up coastal dunes to watch gray whales during their migration (December through April). Popular with surfers, swimmers, and divers. parks.ca.gov

Point Mugu State Park. Located in the far western Santa Monica Mountains, this park features five miles of shoreline with rocky bluffs, sandy beaches, two major river canyons, and wide grassy valleys. There are more than 70 miles of hiking trails. parks.ca.gov

MARINA DEL REY

Marina "Mother's" Beach. Visit this peaceful 12-acre lagoon with seasonal lifeguards and summer food-truck events. visitmarinadelrey.com

MISSION HILLS

Mission San Fernando Rey de España. Founded in 1797, this mission is marked by a Spanish-style colonnade with 19 arches and a simple adobe church. californiamissionsfoundation.org

NEWHALL

Placerita Canyon Natural Area. Explore shady oak groves and a sycamore- and willow-lined stream on a network of hiking trails. placerita.org

PACIFIC PALISADES

Will Rogers State Historic Park. The former estate of 1930s movie star Will Rogers. Explore Western memorabilia and paintings. Horseback riding lessons and guided trail rides are available at the stables. parks.ca.gov

PALOS VERDES ESTATES

South Coast Botanic Garden. See plants native to California, the desert garden, and a banyan grove of Moreton Bay Fig trees, along with many other blooming flowers. southcoastbotanicgarden.org

PASADENA

Norton Simon Museum. Admire world-class art at this Pasadena museum, home to an impressive collection of European paintings, Asian sculptures, and works by masters like Rembrandt, Picasso, and Goya. nortonsimon.org

Visit Pasadena. Known for its historic landmarks, famous Rose Parade, Arts & Crafts architecture, museums, and shops lining Colorado Blvd., Pasadena embodies the lifestyle that travelers who venture off the beaten path will experience. 800/307-7977; visitpasadena.com See ad, p. 153

PLAYA DEL REY

Dockweiler State Beach. Enjoy this three-mile-long stretch of scenic shoreline. Popular for hang gliding, picnicking, and oceanfront relaxation. parks.ca.gov

SAN GABRIEL

San Gabriel Arcángel Mission. Take a self-guided tour of one of the state's best-preserved missions. View the painted stations of the cross as well as historical artifacts. californiamissionsfoundation.org

SAN MARINO

The Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Garden. It's easy to spend a full day at this property, which features art exhibits, 120 acres of botanical gardens, and five dining establishments. huntington.org

SAN PEDRO

Cabrillo Marine Aquarium. Go tide pooling, watch sea otters play, take a whale-watching tour, and discover the underwater world of SoCal in the natural setting of San Pedro's Cabrillo Beach Coastal Park. cma.recreation.parks.lacity.gov

Los Angeles Maritime Museum. Learn the history of the Los Angeles harbor, including the legacy of the fishing industry. See the SS Poseidon, featured in the 1972 film *The Poseidon Adventure*. lamaritimemuseum.org

San Pedro Arts & Cultural District. This peninsula has been home to artists at work since the 1940s. Browse studios housed in former army barracks to find art, clothing, and home decor. caculturaldistricts.org

SANTA CLARITA

Vasquez Rocks Natural Area. Hike to this iconic rock formation, which has served as a backdrop for films and TV shows like *Star Trek*, *Blazing Saddles*, and *Bill & Ted's Bogus Journey*. parks.lacounty.gov

Visit Santa Clarita. The gateway to L.A., with year-round fun and abundant sunshine! Come experience roller coaster thrills at Six Flags Magic Mountain, scrumptious local eats, great shopping and outdoor adventure! 661/286-4084; visitsantaclearita.com See ad, p. 151

SANTA MONICA

California Heritage Museum. Housed in the 19th-century home of a senator's son, this museum showcases artifacts connected to state and local history. Get an enriched experience with a docent-led tour. californiaheritagemuseum.org

Santa Monica Art Museum. Explore contemporary art at this museum, featuring cutting-edge exhibitions and dynamic installations by both local and international artists. santamonicaartmuseum.com

Santa Monica State Beach. This wide, sandy beach is marked by the Santa Monica Pier, which includes an amusement park, arcade, aquarium, and iconic solar-powered Ferris wheel. parks.ca.gov

Visit Santa Monica. Flow against the grain where beach vibes meet urban vibrations: 8.3 walkable square miles of Pacific Coast dining, shopping, and shoreside lodging. 800/544-5319; santamonica.com See ad, inside cover

SUN VALLEY

Verdugo Mountains. Hike through this lushly vegetated urban mountain range under the shade of coast live oaks, sycamores, bay laurels, and bigleaf maples. Enjoy dramatic vistas from the upper slopes. parks.ca.gov

TOPANGA

Topanga State Park. Find 36 miles of trails through open grassland and live oaks in the Santa Monica Mountains. Head to Eagle Rock for a panoramic view of the Pacific. parks.ca.gov

TORRANCE

Western Museum of Flight. Dive into Southern California's rich aviation history. Get up close to historic aircrafts, aviation artifacts, and interactive exhibits that highlight the technological advancements in flight. wmof.com

VALENCIA

Six Flags Magic Mountain & Hurricane Harbor. Experience thrills for all ages at Six Flags Magic Mountain, the Thrill Capital of the World, featuring a world-record 20 roller coasters, a season of entertainment and delicious food, plus splashing water adventures at Hurricane Harbor. sixflags.com/magicmountain and sixflags.com/hurricaneharborla See ad, p. 155

WEST HOLLYWOOD

MAK Center for Art and Architecture at the Schindler House. Visit architect Rudolph M. Schindler's former house and studio, now a multidisciplinary center. makcenter.org

Wattles Mansion and Garden. Architects Myron Hunt and Elmer Grey designed this Mission Revival-style estate in 1907. Get a sense of Old Hollywood in the manicured gardens dotted with succulents. laparks.org

Visit West Hollywood. Come celebrate 40 years of West Hollywood. Four decades of setting trends, breaking barriers, and redefining luxury. The heart of L.A. West Hollywood: Iconic. Forever. visitwesthollywood.com See ad, p. 5

WHITTIER

Pio Pico State Historic Park. Explore historic gardens and the restored adobe home of Pio Pico, the last governor of Alta California under Mexican rule. parks.ca.gov



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ORANGE COUNTY

Whether you lean toward theme park thrills or beach lounging, this oceanfront region offers fun for everyone

The Dana Point Harbor protects the beach from big waves, making it ideal for beginner surfers

Surf fishing is popular among visitors due to the beach's gentle waves

Doheny State Beach was donated to the public in 1931 by oil tycoon Edward L. Doheny, making it California's first state beach

A variety of animals, including the rare snowy plover, nest in the dunes

Bruce Brown, a Dana Point resident, filmed the 1966 surf documentary *Endless Summer* at Doheny State Beach



Pendry Newport Beach

New & Noteworthy

ACCOMMODATIONS

Two award-winning hotels have arrived in Orange County, bringing luxe amenities and dining outposts to their respective seaside towns. Named one of *Travel + Leisure's* best new hotels of 2024, Pendry **Newport Beach** has a buzzworthy social scene thanks to several bars, live music, and a private members' club. Every room boasts floor-to-ceiling windows, plus there's a steak and sushi restaurant and a spa offering upgrades like cryotherapy. Down the coast in **Laguna Beach**, Casa Loma Beach Hotel has been racking up accolades for its

Mediterranean-inspired interiors and a coveted locale atop a rocky cliff. The rooftop bar is ideal for ocean views, but if you venture outside you'll be steps from the Main Beach boardwalk and downtown's art galleries, shops, and restaurants.

OUTDOORS

If you prefer trails to the tides, head to Silverado Canyon to traverse sandstone and bluffs at Red Rock Wilderness. The 1,500-acre park offers eight miles of hiking, biking, and horseback riding paths with views of the colorful rock formations and seasonal wildflowers. A worthy detour for nature lovers is about 30 minutes north in **Brea's** Carbon Canyon Regional Park, home to Orange County's only grove of redwoods.

CULTURE

Prefer the indoors? Check out the Hilbert Museum of California

Art's expansive renovation in **Orange**. The 22,000-square-foot Chapman University museum houses one of the largest collections of California narrative art, allowing visitors to experience urban scenery, coastline, and farmland in a modern gallery space.

RESTAURANTS

O.C.'s culinary scene is always evolving. In the Downtown Disney District alone, you can now slurp soup dumplings from Din Tai Fung and savor authentic Mexican cuisine at the

new Paseo, Céntrico, and Tiendita restaurants. Elsewhere in **Anaheim**, Stone Groove Stillhouse joined other artisans like Unsung Brewing Company and Pali Wine Co. at the historic MAKE Building as its first grain-to-glass micro-distiller. More south of the border fare can be found at **Santa Ana's** Les Brisket Hut, a taco and wine bar from the owners of the Michelin-noted Heritage Barbecue in **San Juan Capistrano**, and Brea's Julep Cast Iron Kitchen + Drink, named one of O.C.'s best new restaurants for its fried chicken and whiskey flights. The tasting tour continues with creative coffee concepts like **Huntington Beach's** plants and coffee shop Houseplant Nation and INC Coffee Roasters, which employs individuals with disabilities to make specialty drinks like a white miso latte. You'll need the boost to keep the party going at Bella Terra, where Mark Wahlberg's Flecha Cantina serves Mexican-American classics and his own brand of tequila.



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Splurge vs Save

DINE, DRINK, AND CATCH A SHOW IN ORANGE COUNTY'S CITY OF THE ARTS

SHOP

A new 17,500-square-foot Gucci flagship is among the 250-plus boutiques at South Coast Plaza. You'll be runway-chic with pieces like a leather-trimmed monogram coat with crystal embellishments. (\$16,000)

Visit buzzy 17th Street to find laid-back looks for less. At independent boutiques such as Common Thread, on-trend outerwear in the capsule collection can be found for under \$100.

DRINK

Sip on boozy cocktails with hand-cut ice at The Guild Club, a moody speakeasy that offers an extensive list of slow-drinking libations like aged bourbon (\$75) and special-occasion reds (\$235).

Raise a glass to Green Cheek Beer Co., the two-time Firestone Walker Invitational Beer Festival People's Choice winner for best brewery. Award-winning lagers, IPAs, stouts, and more start at \$4 for a 10-ounce pour.

SUSHI

It's omakase-only at the Michelin-starred Hana re, one of only two O.C. restaurants to receive the honor. The chef's selection (\$250) of sashimi, nigiri, and hot dishes are even better with a bottle of daiginjo sake (\$1,300).

Koyi Sushi's all-you-can-eat lunch is an affordable feast for less than \$35. Baked hand rolls, specialty sushi, sashimi, and appetizers ranging from tempura to takoyaki will fill you up, plus kids 5 and under eat free.

TASTINGS

Order caviar tastings for the table at Petrossian at Tiffany. Options include an imperial trio presentation (\$995) or kaluga special reserve served with blinis and crème fraîche (market price, around \$4,000).

Enjoy a flight at the Wine Lab, where two-ounce pours are delivered to your table in test tubes (\$16 and up). If you can guess all three in the bartender's blind flight, you'll drink for free.

GOLF

Nearby in Newport Coast, Pelican Hill Golf Club has two Tom Fazio-designed courses featuring three holes on the coastline. Non-resort guests can book tee times for \$415, with TaylorMade rental clubs for \$95/set.

Despite the name, Costa Mesa Country Club is a reasonably priced public course with 36 holes of championship golf featuring lakeside greens and rolling fairways. Tee times start at \$21 for the Los Lagos course and \$24 for Mesa Linda.



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MORE HUNTINGTON BEACH

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The Waterfront Beach Resort,
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Paséa Hotel & Spa



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SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO:
The Ecology Center

Fifteen years ago, a one-acre lot in San Juan Capistrano sat vacant save for a farmhouse built in 1878. Here, Evan Marks' vision of a community center took root, and he opened The Ecology Center—which now spans 28 acres—in 2008. The Ecology Center doesn't just grow organic produce—it's implementing practices that make a difference environmentally, ethically, and socially. Visitors can sample the farm's 250 fruits, flowers, vegetables, and herbs at the onsite zero-waste Campesino Cafe. Seasonal produce-picking experiences provide a chance to walk the fields, while farm tours take a deeper dive into regenerative practices. Chefs from across the country flock to the farm for events like the Community Table dinner series. Ingredients served at the family-style meal are grown where you're dining and prepared by a collaborator known for their eco-conscious techniques.



Top 5 Reasons to Visit *The Land of Yes* Buena Park, California

Famous Attractions, Award-Winning Dining and Affordable Accommodations Make Buena Park, SoCAL's Fun City.
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1 YES TO CORKSCREW COASTERS & WATERSLIDE WEDGIES

Start your adventure at Knott's Berry Farm theme park filled with over 40 exhilarating rides like GhostRider – the tallest, fastest and longest wooden roller coaster on the West Coast. In the summer, cool off at Knott's Soak City, a 15-acre water park packed with 23 slides, a lazy river and wave pool. **Local Tip: Skip the lines at Knott's with a Fast Lane Pass.**



2 YES TO KNIGHTS IN TIGHTS & PILLAGING PIRATES

At Pirate's Dinner Adventure, watch pirates swoop from the rigging of an 18th century galleon while eating a four-course meal. Experience the Middle Ages at Medieval Times and enjoy a royal feast while epic battles of steel and steed ensue. And visit the Beach Boulevard Club, a speakeasy cocktail lounge featuring

dueling pianos. **Local Tip: At Pirates, kids get to come on stage and get sworn in as a Pirate!**



3 YES TO COTTON CANDY COSMOS & PEANUT BUTTER PIZZA

Grab a Beef Dip at Portillo's, famous fried chicken at Mrs. Knott's, unique cocktail concoctions at The Cauldron, one-of-a-kind pizzas at John's Incredible Pizza, delicious Korean BBQ in Buena Park's Koreatown, Cuban potato balls from Porto's Bakery, or try mouth-watering soufflé pancakes at Basilur Tea. **Local Tip: Choose from over 60 craft beers at Rock & Brews.**

4 YES TO SEASONS OF FUN

Each season offers a new experience including Knott's Scary Farm, Vampire's Halloween Show,

Boysenberry Festival, Knott's Merry Farm, Silverado Days Festival and Summer Concert Series to name a few! **Local Tip: Check out all the seasonal offerings at VisitBuenaPark.com/Events**

5 YES TO AFFORDABLE HOTELS

After a long day of excitement, relax at one of Buena Park's comfortable hotels offering great values and amenities. **Local Tip: Save big with bundled attraction and hotel packages, free parking, breakfast, hotel shuttles and no resort fees!**

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visitanahaim.org

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ANAHEIM

Muzeo Museum and Cultural Center. Explore diverse heritages, cultures, and arts through the museum's creative programs. Exhibits include fossil findings, ancient Native American wares, and 19th-century winery and citrus-farming tools. museo.org

Oak Canyon Nature Center. A 58-acre natural park nestled in the Anaheim Hills. Follow a stream by oak woodlands and coastal sage scrub through three adjoining canyons. anaheim.net

BUENA PARK

Visit Buena Park. SoCal's Fun City is home to Knott's Berry Farm theme park, water park, interactive dinner shows, dueling piano bar, award-winning dining and affordable hotels. Get your free guide at visitbuenapark.com See ad, p. 163

CORONA DEL MAR

Corona del Mar State Beach. Popular with swimmers, surfers, divers, and sunbathers, this half-mile-long sandy beach is framed by cliffs at the east entrance to Newport Harbor. parks.ca.gov

Sherman Library and Gardens. Botanical collections span the globe with gardens focused on bromeliads,

ferns, orchids, and succulents. The charming adobe house library covers Pacific Southwest history. thesherman.org

COSTA MESA

OC Fair & Event Center. Find your happy at the OC Fair July 18–Aug 17, 2025. Experience the thrills of summer with live music, furry animal friends, carnival rides, games, and endless shopping. Tickets at ocfair.com See ad, p. 165

Orange County Museum of Art. This stunning 53,000-square-foot contemporary art museum sits on the campus of Segerstrom Center for the Arts. ocma.art

Segerstrom Center for the Arts. Four performance halls and an outdoor arts plaza spread over 14 acres. Hear symphonies in the concert hall, and see plays at the Tony Award-winning repertory. scfta.org

South Coast Plaza. "Southern California's Ultimate Shopping Destination" is the luxury shopping experience with 250 extraordinary boutiques, fine dining, personal shopping services, and upscale amenities. 714/435-2000; 800/782-8888; southcoastplaza.com See ad, p. 159

DANA POINT

Doheny State Beach. Find a surfing beach, a five-acre lawn with picnic facilities, volleyball courts, and campgrounds. Get up close to sea life at the rocky tide pools or the visitor center's aquariums. parks.ca.gov

FULLERTON

Fullerton Arboretum. See rare and otherworldly plant collections at this 26-acre botanical garden located on the California State University, Fullerton campus. Take a class on herbalism, composting, bonsai gardening, or forest bathing. fullertonarboretum.org

Fullerton Museum Center. Fascinating rotating exhibits and educational programs in the local historic Carnegie Library. Permanent exhibits focus on regional history, including the life of guitar innovator Leo Fender. fullertonmuseum.com

HUNTINGTON BEACH

Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve. This coastal estuary is a critical habitat for more than 200 avian species. Popular with birders and photographers; animal feeding and tours are available. bolsachica.org

Huntington State Beach. Sprawling over 121 acres, this expansive park extends two miles along the shore. Surf famous breaks, jog or bike along the paved coastal trail, or spread out a towel on the sand. parks.ca.gov

International Surfing Museum. Surfers Walk of Fame, surf films, plus memorabilia and totally rad boards. The collection includes Duke Kahanamoku's original board as well as the world's largest surfboard. huntingtonbeachsurfingmuseum.org

Newland House Museum. Tour the oldest residence in the city, an 1898 farmhouse built for Huntington Beach pioneers William and Mary Newland. Open the first and third weekends of the month. hbhistory.org

Visit Huntington Beach. Ten miles of sand, laid-back luxury resorts, outdoor activities, a historic downtown, and over 100 years of surf history are here in Surf City USA. 800/729-6232; surfcityusa.com See ad, p. 161

IRVINE

Destination Irvine. A leading tech and life-science powerhouse, Irvine surprises with the most open space in OC. 16,500 acres offering miles of hiking and biking trails. Centrally located to beaches and attractions—an ideal SoCal getaway. destinationirvine.com

San Joaquin Marsh & Wildlife Sanctuary. Discover over 300 acres of coastal freshwater wetlands in the heart of busy Orange County. Hike more than 12 miles of trails to see waterfowl. irwd.com/san-joaquin-marsh

LA HABRA

Children's Museum at La Habra. Learn more about science, performing arts, and transportation via hands-on galleries. Don't miss the outdoor dinosaur garden, model train village, mini carousel, and 1940s caboose. lhcm.org

LAGUNA BEACH

Hortense Miller Garden. Formerly a private residence, this 2.5-acre garden located on the upper slopes of Boat Canyon is open for both public and private docent-led tours. hortensemillergarden.org

Laguna Art Museum. View works of art that were created by California artists and represent the life and history of the state. Founded in 1918, it's one of the state's oldest art institutions. lagunaartmuseum.org

LAGUNA NIGUEL

Niguel Botanical Preserve. Stroll through the trails at this 18.2-acre garden featuring flora from five areas of the world with Mediterranean climates similar to Southern California. It features four miles of walking trails. Open 365 days a year. niguelbotanicalpreserve.org

NEWPORT BEACH

Upper Newport Bay Ecological Reserve. Ideal for wildlife viewing, bird-watching, kayaking, canoeing, fishing, and biking, this reserve is also home to the Back Bay Science Center. wildlife.ca.gov

ORANGE

Coastkeeper Natural Play Garden. This nature advocacy group's garden has tree-stump paths, a grass maze, and a hillside tunnel for kids to explore, and offers gardening workshops and a monthly plant share. coastkeeper.org

Hilbert Museum of California Art. This museum, which opened its doors in 2016, showcases an impressive collection of 20th-century California Scene and California representational art. hilbertmuseum.com

SAN CLEMENTE

San Clemente State Beach. Popular among water sports enthusiasts, the beautiful mile-long beach stretches between the curling ocean surf and the foot of a steep bluff. parks.ca.gov

San Onofre State Beach. Swim, sunbathe, kayak, and surf at one of the top-five most visited state parks in California. Three miles of soft sand provide plenty of space for strolling and beachcombing. parks.ca.gov

SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO

Mission San Juan Capistrano. Every March, see the return of swallows that migrated to Argentina for the winter. Take an audio tour to learn more, and see historic artifacts, paintings, and Native American art. missionsjc.com

SANTA ANA

Discovery Cube Orange County. Explore kid-friendly interactive exhibits like the state-of-the-art Boeing Rocket Lab, the animated Planetary Research Station, an eco challenge, and the prehistoric wonders of Dino Quest. discoverycube.org

SEAL BEACH

Seal Beach National Wildlife Refuge. Visitors can go on a monthly docent-led walking tour of this refuge in the Santa Ana Mountains to learn about 85 species of local birds, marsh wildlife, and native plants. fws.gov

TUSTIN

Marconi Automotive Museum. Discover an eye-popping \$30 million collection of historical, exotic, and classic cars, from Lamborghinis to Ford Sheldys to Formula One race cars. marconimuseum.org

YORBA LINDA

Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum. Get a glimpse into the life of America's 37th president at this museum built on the former citrus farm where Nixon was born. Browse more than 60 exhibits, 300 artifacts, and see replicas of the East Room and Nixon's Oval Office. nixonlibrary.gov

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HOTELS AND RESORTS

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Hyatt Regency Huntington Beach. 21500 Pacific Coast Hwy., Huntington Beach, CA 92648. Our resort is directly across from the Pacific Ocean with a private skywalk bridge for easy beach access. With six restaurants, a full-service spa and a robust recreational activity calendar, you don't have to leave the property. 714/698-1234; huntingtonbeach.hyatt.com \$\$\$ See ad, p. 161



Huntington Beach Pasea Hotel & Spa Huntington Beach's newest beachfront resort with 250 rooms and suites with ocean views, new restaurant Lorea, rooftop bar and award-winning spa. 21080 Pacific Coast Hwy, 855/622-2472; paseahotel.com \$\$\$ See ad, p. 161



The Waterfront Beach Resort, a Hilton Hotel. 21100 Pacific Coast Hwy. 437 rooms/suites with private balconies and ocean views. 50,000 square feet of indoor/outdoor event space. Three dining options, including rooftop lounge and Italian deli. Bonfires/firepits with beach butler services. 714/845-8000; waterfrontresort.com \$\$\$ See ad, p. 161



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The Sunset Social pool offers serene lakeside views, with ducks and turtles often swimming nearby

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Built in 1902, Murrieta Hot Springs Resort reopened its doors in 2024 after 30 years



New & Noteworthy

ADVENTURE

Southwest **Riverside County** has long been part of the SoCal adventure landscape, but the new 10Lake Valley designation is helping to put this hidden gem on the map. Spanning more than 214 square miles, with fishing, boating, and biking along lakes and wetlands in communities including **Lake Elsinore**, **Hemet**, and **San Jacinto**, this region is an outdoor playground waiting to be discovered. Up in the mountain towns, you'll find more adrenaline-pumping ways to play.

Mountain High in **Wrightwood** opened a bike park in summer 2024 atop its West Resort with six downhill mountain bike trails.

REOPENING

For a slower-paced excursion, book a stay at the historic **Murrieta** Hot Springs Resort. It recently reopened after a 30-year closure with 50 geothermally heated mineral water pools spanning the 46-acre property. Day visitors and overnight guests can enjoy a cold plunge, steam room, and mud masks at the pools, or book a massage or facial treatment at the spa.

WINERIES AND BREWERIES

The Inland Empire is also home to around 33,000 acres of wine country and nearly 50 wineries. One of the newest tasting experiences can

be found at the themed Europa Village, where the recently opened Vienza winery brings the flavors of old-world Italy to **Temecula**. Sample its award-winning metodo classico brut and grab a fresh, wood-fired pizza from the Italian market to enjoy out in the gardens. If you prefer grains to grapes, hop on over to **Redlands** to try the city's latest craft brewery. Smudgepot Brewing Co. started with a home brew kit but has since evolved into a community taproom pouring a range of stouts, ales, and IPAs.

For cocktails, The Set is an immersive speakeasy hidden inside **Montclair's** That 80's Bar. Its rotating seasonal themes, which have included a tech-inspired neon music room and a Halloween haunted manor, promise each visit will be a new experience.

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Turn your nightlife experience up full blast with a visit to Sammy Hagar's Stage Red theater in **Fontana**, the Van Halen rocker's hometown. It's a 330-seat, 21-and-up venue decked out with pops of red neon lights to accent the historic building's Art Deco architecture. While the floor is standing room only, there are also VIP balcony seats where you can enjoy diverse live entertainment, including artists such as '80s pop singer Tiffany, *American Idol* alums, and classic rock groups like Pat Travers Band. You'll need an outfit for a night on the town, so check out the newest stores to arrive at the **Ontario** Mills outlet mall and score deals on street styles at Outcha and footwear at Shiekh Shoes.



Small Town Scoop



A cozy, quirky mountain village, Idyllwild is small in stature but big in charm. Nestled in the San Jacinto wilderness overlooking Palm Springs, it has a woodsy warmth and a remote location that offers a chance to experience all four seasons—a rarity in SoCal. Home to artists, empty nesters, and nature lovers who enjoy the laid-back vibe, it's also a popular weekend retreat just two hours from the heart of downtown L.A.

Among the town's 3,500 residents are Lori and Frank Ferro, who opened Idyllwild's first coffee shop in the late '80s. They now own the nearly 10-year-old Ferro restaurant, which serves modern Italian cuisine.

Before you dig into their wild boar lasagna, check into one of Lori and Frank's favorite hotels, the Silver Pines Lodge. "The rates are reasonable and they have rooms suitable for solo travelers, couples, or families," Lori says. "They have two locations, the Lodge and [Silver Pines] Village, both on the same street and a very short walk to the town center." They also point visitors to the Idyllwild Inn for its long, interesting history. In 1899 the facility served as the town sanatorium; now it features rustic cabins with stone firepits and full kitchens.

Both are walking distance from some of the Ferros' favorite places for a morning pick-me-up. "For true coffee geeks, Black Mountain Coffee Roasters is a cool place [that] roasts their own beans," Lori says. If you're in the mood for

something sweet, pick up a baked good from The Sunflower, which makes its pastries, bread, pies, and other treats fresh daily. For a sit-down breakfast or lunch, Lori suggests grabbing a bite at the Mile High Cafe. "They offer the classics but also have authentic Korean dishes like bibimbap," she says. "It [also] has an attached coffee shop with grab-and-go food, fun coffee drinks, and boba teas."

There's no shortage of eateries in Idyllwild where

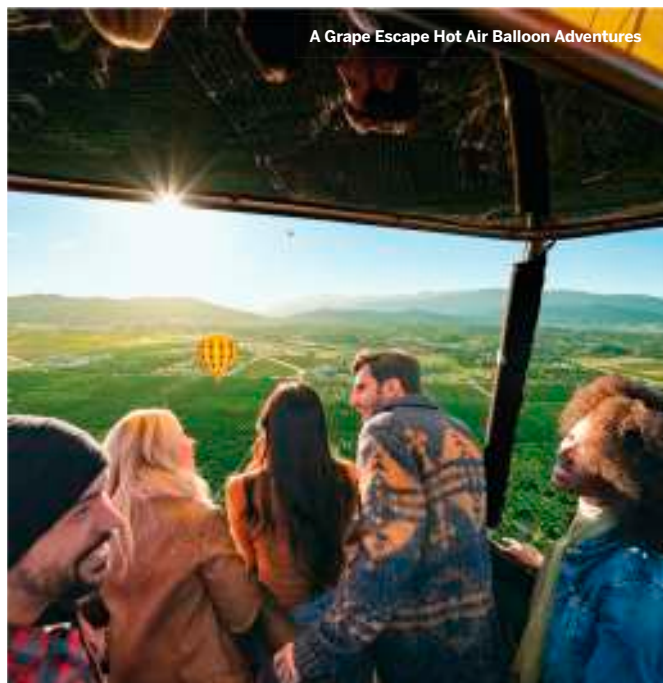
you can dine all day. The Italian-fusion Cafe Aroma is a favorite for a date night with live music, but for a casual bite, the Ferros head to Atomic Cow for burgers, sandwiches, and shakes or the Dick's Dogs food truck for a quick takeout meal. You won't find better Mexican in town than La Casita, where you can dine on a deck below the pine trees. There's even a place to indulge a rainbow roll craving, Lori says: "Although it might seem odd for a mountain town, Idy Sushi has extremely fresh and well-prepared sushi!"

Walk off your meal with an easy hike on the Ernie Maxwell Scenic Trail. For a challenge, Lori suggests the more strenuous Devil's Slide to Saddle Junction loop. Celebrate your successful trek at Taryn's Place, where the Ferros like to join other locals for live music and a beer (or two). For oenophiles, Middle Ridge Winery is a great alternative that features local art in its tasting room.

If you have a free afternoon, the two-story shopping center known as The Fort is a fun way to pass time. In addition to shops, there's a natural wine and craft

beer bar, a paint-your-own-pottery studio, and a family-friendly video arcade. Continue browsing across the street at Merkaba, a tea shop that sells gourmet blends and cultural items. Before you leave the village, stop by Idyllwild Gift Shop or Wild Idy—a must for picking up a special souvenir. 🌻





A Grape Escape Hot Air Balloon Adventures



Booze and Boos Tour

Splurge vs Save

HIGHFLIERS AND BUDGET-SAVVY SIPPERS ALIKE CAN INDULGE IN TEMECULA VALLEY

TOUR

Enjoy a bird's-eye view of the vineyards during a private flight with A Grape Escape Balloon Adventure (\$799–\$1,999 per couple). After a 60-minute scenic sunrise tour, sip a glass of chilled sparkling wine back on terra firma.

Get your steps in with a two-hour Booze and Boos walking tour of Old Town Temecula (from \$29.95). You'll hear spooky ghost stories along the mile-long trail, with the option to purchase your own brews and spirits at each bar stop.

DINE

Winner of *Wine Spectator's* Award of Excellence, Great Oak Steakhouse serves a chef's tasting menu that's crafted for your group (from \$1,440 for the table), with optional sommelier-guided pairings available.

The Swing Inn Cafe & BBQ in Old Town is known for the subtle smokiness of its Texas-style meats. Order an extra-large brisket platter with Texas toast and a side of baked beans for \$24.

WINE

Play winemaker for the day at Bottai Winery, where you'll taste varietals straight from the barrel and create three separate red blends (\$135). Choose your favorite to bottle, cork, and age at home.

With the Priority Wine Pass, enjoy two-for-one wine tastings across the valley. You'll save up to \$25 at spots like Masia de la Vinya, Oak Mountain, and Danza del Sol along the De Portola Wine Trail.

STAY

Book the eight-bedroom, five-acre Vaquero Resort for a private stay, which includes your own infinity pool and swim-up bar, bocce ball court, putting green, and sport court (from \$3,000 per night).

The Embassy Suites puts you within a 15-minute drive to more than a dozen wineries, with rooms as low as \$111. Every stay includes a free hot breakfast, parking, and Wi-Fi.

GOLF

Journey at Pechanga, an Arthur Hills–designed course, offers links-style play with views of wine country (\$210). The 18 holes wind around a grove of ancient oak trees, with challenging water features and elevation changes.

Tee off at Temecula Creek Golf Club for under \$40 for 18 holes. There are three nine-hole courses, each offering different features like oak-lined fairways, open layouts, and dramatic bends.





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## California Welcome Center<sup>SM</sup>

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One Mills Circle,  
Suite 1054,  
909/980-2019

**More information**  
Discover Inland Empire  
[discoverie.com](http://discoverie.com)



## visit

### APPLE VALLEY

**Victor Valley Museum.** Learn about the history, archaeology, and anthropology of the High Desert. See geological and paleontological specimens, Native American artifacts, and historical objects. [museum.sbcounty.gov/victor-valley-museum](http://museum.sbcounty.gov/victor-valley-museum)

### BANNING

**Gilman Historic Ranch & Wagon Museum.** Pan for gold, hike scenic trails, and create traditional Native American crafts at this historic ranch and stagecoach station on the Bradshaw Trail. [rivcoparks.org](http://rivcoparks.org)

**Malki Museum.** View artifacts at the oldest nonprofit museum founded by Native Americans in the U.S. Stroll through the garden, featuring plants used for food and medicine. [malkimuseum.org](http://malkimuseum.org)

### BIG BEAR LAKE

**Big Bear Lake... Your Mountain Lake Escape.** Explore four seasons of adventure. Ski/snowboard, bike, hike, fish, and more while enjoying scenic views, great trails, and a beautiful lake. [bigbear.com](http://bigbear.com) See ad, p. 171

**Big Bear Valley Historical Museum.** Exhibits showcase the history of this high mountain city. See an authentically furnished 1875 log cabin and gold mining artifacts. Exhibits also feature cowboys and cattle ranching, logging, fox farming, and early winter sports. [bigbear.com/directory/bear-valley-historical-museum](http://bigbear.com/directory/bear-valley-historical-museum)

**Bear Mountain Ski Resort.** Comprising two mountains, Snow Summit and Bear Mountain, both accessible from one lift ticket. At 8,805 feet, Bear Peak is Southern California's highest summit accessible by lift. [bigbearmountainresort.com](http://bigbearmountainresort.com)

### CHERRY VALLEY

**Edward-Dean Museum & Gardens.** This historic home on 16 acres of manicured gardens features late 16th- to early 19th-century European and Asian decorative arts. [edward-deanmuseum.org](http://edward-deanmuseum.org)

### CHINO

**Chino Hills State Park.** Explore this serene escape with its rolling hills, scenic trails, and diverse wildlife, making it a popular destination for hiking, biking, and nature exploration. [parks.ca.gov](http://parks.ca.gov)

**Planes of Fame Air Museum.** Rare collections of aircraft are preserved in this living history museum.

See a replica of the 1903 Kitty Hawk Flyer and a flying veteran of WWI. [planesoffame.org](http://planesoffame.org)

**Yanks Air Museum.** Explore one of the world's largest collections of aircraft, many of which remain air worthy. Learn about the restoration of historic planes from graveyard to runway. [yanksair.org](http://yanksair.org)

### CHINO HILLS

**Chino Hills State Park.** Find peace and solitude with 90 miles of trails through green, rolling hills. The multi-use trail system is available to walkers, hikers, runners, bicyclists, and equestrians. [parks.ca.gov](http://parks.ca.gov)

### FAWN SKIN

**Big Bear Discovery Center.** Find information on hiking trails, mountain biking, camping, wildlife, and seasonal activities. Sign up for naturalist-led tours and interpretive programs. [mountainsfoundation.org](http://mountainsfoundation.org)

### HESPERIA

**Silverwood Lake State Recreation Area.** Set against the scenic backdrop of the San Bernardino Mountains, this park offers opportunities for boating, fishing, hiking, and picnicking amidst its sparkling waters and picturesque landscapes. [parks.ca.gov](http://parks.ca.gov)

## IDYLLWILD

**Mount San Jacinto State Park.** Camp and explore among granite peaks, subalpine forests, and fern-bordered meadows. Hike to the 10,834-foot summit via the Pacific Crest Trail. [parks.ca.gov](http://parks.ca.gov)

## LAKE ARROWHEAD

**Rim of the World Scenic Byway.** Enjoy great views along this 110-mile-long byway, with a name inspired by the stunning cliffs of the San Bernardino Mountains from Cajon Pass to San Geronio Pass. [fs.usda.gov](http://fs.usda.gov)

## LAKE ELSINORE

**Lake Elsinore Historical Society Museum.** Located downtown, this little museum celebrates the history of the Lake Elsinore Valley. Explore artifacts including Native American baskets, pottery, and cooking tools. [lakeelsinorehistoricalsociety.org](http://lakeelsinorehistoricalsociety.org)

## MOUNT BALDY

**Mount Baldy Ski Lifts.** Enjoy traditional runs, open bowls, chutes, and tree runs. In summer, take the lifts up to the highest summit of the San Gabriel Mountains to hike or bike back down. [mtbaldyresort.com](http://mtbaldyresort.com)

**Mount Baldy Visitor Center.** Housed in a historic 1920s schoolhouse, this interpretive center features an indoor nature trail, local history exhibits, and reproductions of a gold-mining camp and Native American Tongva-Gabrielino village. [fs.usda.gov](http://fs.usda.gov)

## MOUNTAIN CENTER

**Lake Hemet.** Swim, fish, and boat in this lake bounded by manzanita, pines, and oaks. Each year the lake is stocked with more than 13,000 pounds of rainbow trout. [golakehemet.com](http://golakehemet.com)

## MURRIETA

**Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve.** Discover woodlands, wetlands, and prairies at this hidden gem. Look for more than 200 species of native birds, as well as bobcats and badgers. [rivcoparks.org](http://rivcoparks.org)

## OAK GLEN

**Oak Glen Apple Growers Association.** Pick your own fruit at mile-high apple farms in the San Bernardino Mountain foothills east of Yucaipa. Taste apple butter, apple cider, and apple pie. [oakglen.net](http://oakglen.net)

## ONTARIO

**Chaffey Community Museum of Art.** Discover a rich collection of regional and contemporary art. Experience rotating exhibits, local artist features, and diverse cultural works in a historic building that dates back to the early 20th century. [chaffeymuseum.org](http://chaffeymuseum.org)

**Ontario Museum of History and Art.** Walk through the wrought iron gates of Ontario's historic former city hall to explore exhibits focused on the arts and culture of the Inland Empire. Admission is free. [ontariomuseum.org](http://ontariomuseum.org)

## PERRIS

**Lake Perris State Recreation Area.** Lake Perris has white beaches, blue water, and rocky Alessandro Island, where you can pull up your kayak and have lunch. Hike, bike, or horseback ride on nine miles of trails surrounding the lake, or go rock climbing on 180-foot-high Big Rock. [parks.ca.gov](http://parks.ca.gov)

**Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail.** Get a taste of the 1,200-mile trail that the Spanish expeditionary leader traveled in the 1770s. Download a map and create your own adventure. [nps.gov/juba](http://nps.gov/juba)

**Perris Valley Historical Museum.** Get a glimpse into the rich history of the Perris Valley, featuring exhibits on local Native American cultures, early settler life, and

the development of the region's railroad and agricultural industries. [perrisvalleyhistoricalmuseum.com](http://perrisvalleyhistoricalmuseum.com)

**Southern California Railway Museum.** Take a narrated tour of the museum and tootle along on restored trains that helped shape modern life in Southern California. [socalrailway.org](http://socalrailway.org)

## RANCHO CUCAMONGA

**John Rains House.** Docents greet you at the door of this 1860 house in Rancho Cucamonga, which has been restored and features period furnishings. [sbcounty.gov](http://sbcounty.gov)

**Sam and Alfreda Maloof Foundation for Arts and Crafts.** World's largest collection of Sam Maloof furniture in a California modernist home built by the famous woodworker. Tours, gallery, workshops, garden and gifts. Smithsonian Affiliate. [malooffoundation.org](http://malooffoundation.org)

## REDLANDS

**Kimberly Crest House & Gardens.** View a historic 7,000-square-foot Victorian "petite chateau" that dates to 1897 and an Italian Renaissance-style garden. Group tours available. [kimberlycrest.org](http://kimberlycrest.org)

**San Bernardino County Museum.** Natural history exhibits, a live animal discovery center, and more in Redlands, midway between L.A. and Palm Springs. [museum.sbcounty.gov](http://museum.sbcounty.gov)

## RIVERSIDE

**California Citrus State Historic Park.** This open-air museum tells the story of the citrus industry in California, which dates to 1873 and is sometimes referred to as "the second Gold Rush." [parks.ca.gov](http://parks.ca.gov)

**Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Art & Culture.** This spacious museum celebrates the vibrant contributions of Chicano artists with a dynamic collection of contemporary works that reflect the cultural, political, and social experiences of the Chicano community. [riversideartmuseum.org/visit/the-cheech](http://riversideartmuseum.org/visit/the-cheech)

**Chinese Memorial Pavilion.** A memorial to honor the area's early Chinese settlers and to encourage and support understanding and community in Riverside. [asianamericanriverside.ucr.edu](http://asianamericanriverside.ucr.edu)

**Entomology Research Museum.** Bug enthusiasts will love exploring this UC Riverside museum, which houses more than four million insect specimens and serves as a vital resource for research and education on insect biodiversity and ecology. [entmuseum.ucr.edu](http://entmuseum.ucr.edu)

**Heritage House Museum.** This 1891 house on historic Magnolia Avenue depicts how the Inland Empire's affluent lived at the turn of the century. [riversideca.gov/museum](http://riversideca.gov/museum)

**Jurupa Mountains Discovery Center.** Kids and adults alike can explore archaeology, geology, and more through onsite learning expeditions, or just ogle at the 20 life-size dinosaur sculptures. [jmdc.org](http://jmdc.org)

**March Field Air Museum.** Walk in the footsteps of U.S. war veterans; home to more than 30,000 artifacts and 80 historic aircraft, including a Bell P-59A Airacomet and Vultee BT-13A Valiant. [marchfield.org](http://marchfield.org)

**Riverside Art Museum.** Housed in a 1929 building designed by famed Hearst Castle architect Julia Morgan, RAM features traditional and contemporary art, and also offers art classes for all ages. [riversideartmuseum.org](http://riversideartmuseum.org)

**University of California, Riverside Botanic Gardens.** A 40-acre living plant museum with more than 3,500 plant species from around the world. Explore on your own, or sign up for a guided summer Twilight Tour. [gardens.ucr.edu](http://gardens.ucr.edu)

**UCR California Museum of Photography.** Meander through collections of classic 19th- and 20th-century images at this museum, which also screens independent and foreign films and hosts performances and exhibitions. [ucrarts.ucr.edu](http://ucrarts.ucr.edu)

## RUNNING SPRINGS

**Rim Nordic Ski Area.** Cross-country ski and snowshoe through the San Bernardino National Forest on tree-lined, machined-groomed trails. [rimnordic.com](http://rimnordic.com)

**Snow Valley Mountain Resort.** Started in 1924, Snow Valley is the oldest operating ski resort in Southern California. Now part of Big Bear Mountain Resort, with runs ranging from beginner to black diamonds. [bigbearmountainresort.com](http://bigbearmountainresort.com)

## SAN BERNARDINO

**San Bernardino County.** America's largest county is the only place where you can romp in the snow, frolic in the desert, groove to the rhythm of the city, and visit majestic lakes. [opportunity.sbcounty.gov](http://opportunity.sbcounty.gov) See ad, p. 147

**San Bernardino History and Railroad Museum.** Housed in the historic, Mission-style Santa Fe Depot, this museum features railroad memorabilia; explore it on your own or take a First Wednesdays tour. [sbdepotmuseum.com](http://sbdepotmuseum.com)

**San Bernardino National Forest.** Southern California's go-to forest for recreation offers fishing, hiking, off-highway vehicle areas and trails, with 42 campsites and more. [fs.usda.gov](http://fs.usda.gov)

## SKYFOREST

**Heaps Peak Arboretum.** Experience the demonstration gardens, the "animal tracks trail," and a guided tour of the mile-long Sequoia Trail at this beautiful mountain oasis. [hparboretum.com](http://hparboretum.com)

## TEMECULA

**Rose Haven Heritage Garden.** Two miles from downtown, take a walk amid 1,600 roses, among them hybrid teas, floribundas, and mini-roses. [temeculavalleyrosesociety.org](http://temeculavalleyrosesociety.org)

**Temecula Valley Museum.** Explore the region's history through exhibits on the Luiseno Indians, Mission San Luis Rey, and the establishment of the ranchos, along with a hands-on discovery area for children. [temeculavalleymuseum.org](http://temeculavalleymuseum.org)

## WRIGHTWOOD

**Angeles Crest Scenic Byway.** Start in Wrightwood, where this 66-mile route takes you through the heart of the San Gabriel Mountains, offering stunning views of alpine forests, rugged peaks, and dramatic canyons. [fs.usda.gov](http://fs.usda.gov)

**Mountain High Ski Resort.** A mere 80 miles from Los Angeles, this ski resort in the San Gabriel Mountains is open from mid-November through mid-April. [mthigh.com](http://mthigh.com)

## UPLAND

**Cooper Regional History Museum.** Step back in time at this Upland museum, where exhibits highlight the rich cultural and agricultural history of the Inland Empire. See artifacts, photographs, and displays on local pioneers, Native American heritage, and the region's development. [coopermuseum.org](http://coopermuseum.org)

## YUCAIPA

**Wildwood Canyon State Park.** Enjoy sweeping views of the surrounding valleys in the foothills of the San Bernardino Mountains. See groves of ancient live oaks and possibly a bobcat or coyotes. [parks.ca.gov](http://parks.ca.gov)





# DESERTS

Discover why nature lovers and A-listers flock to this glamorous inland region

The salt flats cover nearly 200 square miles and are composed mostly of sodium chloride, aka table salt

Badwater Basin is the lowest point in North America at 282 feet below sea level



The Black Mountains form  
the eastern margin of the  
central part of Death Valley

The basin is covered in vast  
salt flats, formed from the  
evaporation of ancient lakes

Badwater Basin receives  
very little rainfall, averaging  
just 2 inches annually





MOST OF THE  
REMODELED  
VINTAGE  
TRAILERS AT  
ACRES LAND-  
ING DATE TO  
THE 1960S

## RESTAURANTS

Gabriel Woo of Bar Cecil is the creative force behind Livs, the new café at the Palm Springs Art Museum. The indoor-outdoor eatery is named after Woo's youngest daughter and gives patrons a close-up view of the museum's sculpture garden. Award-winning chefs Susan Feniger and Mary Sue Milliken opened California-Mediterranean restaurant Alice B. inside Living Out, Palm Springs' resort-style LGBTQ+ community. The menu includes small plates of bread salad and goat cheese gratin, classic cocktails, and an extensive wine list. Paintings of Alice B. Toklas and her life partner Gertrude Stein hang in the dining room.



Mary Sue Milliken and  
Susan Feniger of Alice B.

## New & Noteworthy

### THINGS TO DO

Need some cozy kitty time? Frisky Business is **Palm Springs'** new cat café. Enjoy the good company of felines from the Palm Springs Animal Shelter while you sip an espresso or matcha latte. Reserve in advance for a 45-minute snuggle session. Market Market has opened at Palm Springs' Plaza Del Sol Shopping Center. The 40,000-square-foot space is filled with vintage and consignment items from 50 different vendors, including desert-cool fashion,

housewares, accessories, and furniture. The Aluminaire House, designed by midcentury modern masters A. Lawrence Kocher and Albert Frey, is now part of the permanent collection of the Palm Springs Art Museum. The all-metal house is considered one of the most important buildings of the last 125 years.

### ACCOMMODATIONS

Acres Landing is **Desert Hot Springs'** newest glamping destination, with remodeled vintage trailers ranging from Airstreams to Spartans to Avions. Most of these "tin cans" date to the 1960s, but they've been upgraded with comfy beds, spacious bathrooms, and kitchenettes. Guests can lounge in outdoor soaking tubs fed by mineral springs. Field Station **Joshua**

**Tree**, part of the AutoCamp brand, launched in Yucca Valley in 2024. The revamped complex—a former Travelodge—caters to Joshua Tree visitors with a range of room configurations (a king bed for two or bunks for 10), an adventure gear shop, a pool, and Little Station, an espresso café that's open to the public. The Ranch at **Death Valley's** 80 new cottages are a short walk from The Ranch's "town square" with restaurants, shops, an ice cream parlor, and the Last Kind Words Saloon. The cottages have everything you need for a multiday stay, including a washer and dryer.

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# Small Town Scoop



***“Twentynine Palms has been transformed in a very positive way, and it’s been great for everybody.”***

**- BLANCA BRIBIESCA, OWNER OF HABITAT**

Habitat, a home decor shop. Hers is one of many storefronts in the town of 28,000 residents that was long empty but is now filled with customers.

The spiffed-up downtown “is welcoming to neighbors and travelers alike. People don’t just drive through. They shop, eat, and spend the night here,” she says.

Since 1952, the town’s largest landmark has been its 932-square-mile Marine Corps base, one of the country’s largest. Bribiesca, a retired Marine, says she chose to stay in Twentynine Palms because she loves the town’s eclectic community. “There’s a lot of creativity,” she says. “We have so many artists living here.”

At the 29 Palms Art Gallery, works by local painters, sculptors, and fiber artists are on display in a 1936 adobe building. The quirky Glass Outhouse Art Gallery shows off found-object installations like a hand-built chapel and a real glass outhouse.

Bribiesca’s shop sells a mix of locally made housewares and lifestyle goods—artisan vases, clay candleholders, and desert-cool sun hats. Within walking distance are several more boutiques, like White Label Vinyl for that hard-to-find Robert Plant album. Bribiesca also likes

to browse Corner 62, a collection of small retailers. “You can buy locally made items and international goods, and there are walls and walls of books,” she says. One shop, Very Very, sells souvenir-worthy t-shirts and pins in hip desert designs. It’s owned by Rich Good, a graphic designer and local resident who is more famously the Psychedelic Furs’ lead guitarist.

The town has several great food stops, including Campbell Hill Bakery, run by California Culinary Academy bakers Travis and Nancy Poston. “It’s a tiny

space, and there’s always a line out the door,” says Bribiesca. A few blocks away, Kitchen in the Desert serves spicy Caribbean dishes. On weekends, there’s live music on the huge patio. For burgers and beer, people gather at Grnd Sqr, a gastropub lacking vowels but rich in colorful murals. 🌵

**T**wentynine Palms is one of three major gateways to Joshua Tree National Park, but until recently, it saw the fewest number of visitors. The park’s northeastern entrance is an extra 15-minute drive from Los Angeles and the Inland Empire, so most travelers opted for the closer options.

That’s all changed. Twentynine Palms has become a desert destination thanks to an influx of energetic entrepreneurs and a newly constructed Joshua Tree National Park Visitor Center, opened in 2022. New eateries and cool boutiques populate the plaza surrounding the visitor center, where a weekly farmers’ market and music events take place.

“Twentynine Palms has been transformed in a very positive way, and it’s been great for everybody,” says Blanca Bribiesca, who owns

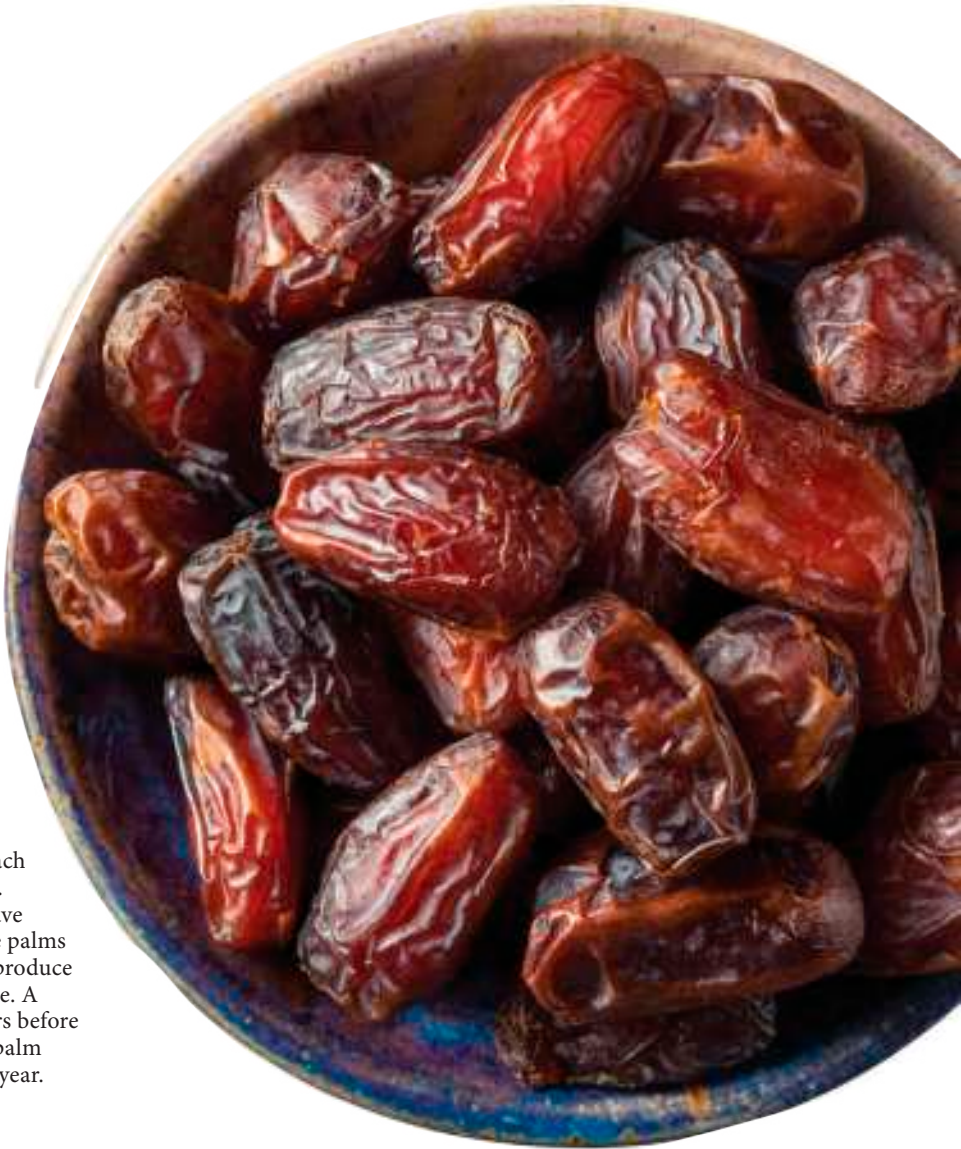


# Dates

The Coachella Valley produces more than 90 percent of the dates grown in the U.S. Of the dozens of varieties grown here, the most common are the prized medjool, coveted for its large size and sweet caramel taste, and the golden deglet noor, a firmer fruit with a nutty finish.

In the late 1800s, the U.S. Department of Agriculture created a task force of plant scientists whose role was to find new crops to grow in the United States. “They traveled the world and brought back palm offshoots from the Middle East and northern Africa, then planted them in the Coachella Valley,” says Sarah Seekatz, a Coachella Valley historian. The transplanted palms thrived, and those early efforts led to an industry that produces nearly 50,000 tons of dates each year, valued at more than \$100 million.

Commercial date farms typically have one male date palm and 50 female date palms planted per acre. Only the female can produce dates, but it must be fertilized by a male. A female palm grows for about eight years before producing its first crop; a 30-year-old palm can produce 200 pounds of dates each year.



**DATE TREES ONLY BEAR FRUIT IN DRY, ARID CONDITIONS AND REQUIRE AMPLE WATER AT THE ROOTS.**



Try the mushroom burrata toast topped with onion date jam at Chula Artisan Eatery, a Mexican restaurant featuring many vegan dishes in La Quinta.



Try the Coachella Valley's signature date shake at Shields Date Garden (Indio). Hadley Fruit Orchards (Cabazon), or Windmill Market (North Palm Springs).



Taste the wide variety of dates at local farms. Sam Cobb Farm in Desert Hot Springs grows dates you won't find anywhere else, like their Black Gold-brand dates.





### California Welcome Centers™

**Ridgecrest:**  
880 N. China Lake Blvd.  
760/375-8202

**Cabazon:** Cabazon  
Outlets, 48750 Seminole  
Dr., #100; 951/922-3000

**Barstow:** 2796 Tanger  
Way, Suite 100;  
760/253-4782

**Yucca Valley:**  
56711 Twentynine Palms  
Highway; 760/365-5464

**More information**  
Greater Palm Springs  
Convention & Visitors  
Bureau  
[visitgreaterpalm  
springs.com](http://visitgreaterpalm<br/>springs.com)



## visit

### AMBOY

**Amboy Crater.** Take a day trip to this volcanic cinder cone, designated a National Natural Landmark. Reach the peak by way of the 4.1-mile Western Cone Trail. [blm.gov/ca](http://blm.gov/ca)

### BARSTOW

**Desert Discovery Center.** See the “Old Woman Meteorite”—second-largest meteorite in the United States—and learn about the Mojave Desert at this nonprofit center that promotes hands-on field education for K-12 students and the general public. [desertdc.com](http://desertdc.com)

**Mojave National Preserve.** Find singing sand dunes, cinder cone volcanos, Joshua tree forests, mesas, and spring wildflowers at this 1.6-million-acre park. Most campgrounds are first come, first served. [nps.gov/moja](http://nps.gov/moja)

### BORON

**Twenty Mule Team Museum.** Explore local history, including borax mining in Death Valley and Boron. Exhibits include a recreated 1930s kitchen, beauty

shop, and volunteer firefighter department. [20muleteammuseum.com](http://20muleteammuseum.com)

### BORRERO SPRINGS

**Anza-Borrego Desert State Park.** Visit this expansive desert landscape in San Diego County to see dramatic badlands, cool palm oases, twisting slot canyons, and cactus-studded slopes. [parks.ca.gov](http://parks.ca.gov)

**Borrego Art Institute.** This nonprofit art gallery in a gleaming midcentury modern building is famous for its annual plein-air invitational and rotating exhibits by desert artists. Browse the gallery or sign up for a class. [borregoartinstitute.org](http://borregoartinstitute.org)

**Borrego Desert Nature Center.** Find books and maps dedicated to desert anthropology, birding, nature, history, and plant and flower identification. Register for a guided hike or educational program. [abdnha.org](http://abdnha.org)

**Ocotillo Wells State Vehicular Recreation Area.** This vast off-road playground in Southern California, offers more than 85,000 acres of desert terrain for activities like dirt biking, dune buggies, and camping, with stunning desert landscapes and diverse wildlife to explore. [parks.ca.gov](http://parks.ca.gov)

### CALIFORNIA CITY

**Desert Tortoise Research Natural Area.** Learn about one of the earth's oldest inhabitants—California's official state reptile, the desert tortoise. [tortoise-tracks.org](http://tortoise-tracks.org)

### CALIPATRIA

**Sonny Bono Salton Sea National Wildlife Refuge.** Located on the Pacific Flyway, this unique refuge sits at 277 feet below sea level. Stop into the visitor center and hike along a levee trail to spot birds. Waterfowl hunting season is October through February. [fws.gov](http://fws.gov)

### CANTIL

**Red Rock Canyon State Park.** Climb the colorful desert cliffs, buttes, and badlands of the El Paso Mountains. In spring, the park's floral displays are in full bloom. [parks.ca.gov](http://parks.ca.gov)

### CATHEDRAL CITY

**Museum of Ancient Wonders.** Find nearly 400 replicas and fossils, including full-scale reproductions of King Tutankhamun's chariot and treasures—all in an unassuming strip mall. [moaw.org](http://moaw.org)

## DEATH VALLEY

**Death Valley National Park.** The hottest, driest, and lowest national park in the U.S. boasts a diverse landscape of salt flats, sand dunes, badlands, valleys, canyons, and mountains. [nps.gov/deva](https://nps.gov/deva)

## DESERT HOT SPRINGS

**Cabot's Pueblo Museum.** This 5,000-square-foot Hopi-inspired structure was built from materials salvaged from the desert. The 35-room pueblo also houses a collection of Native American pottery and early-20th-century artifacts. [cabotsmuseum.org](https://cabotsmuseum.org)

## ESSEX

**Mitchell Caverns.** Tucked into a cliff in Providence Mountains State Recreation Area, these limestone caverns are a glittering netherworld of stalactites, stalagmites, and columns. [reservecalifornia.com](https://reservecalifornia.com)

## FURNACE CREEK

**Furnace Creek Visitors Center.** Watch a short film about the park. During the winter season, try a ranger-led walk or presentation about Death Valley's cultural and natural history. [nps.gov/deva](https://nps.gov/deva)

## INDIO

**Coachella Valley History Museum.** Explore rotating exhibits, a 1909 schoolhouse, and the world's only date museum, which highlights the origins of the desert fruit. Free for children 18 and under. [cvmh.org](https://cvmh.org)

## JOSHUA TREE

**Noah Purifoy Outdoor Desert Art Museum.** Behold this remarkable collection of large-scale, found-object sculptures created by artist Noah Purifoy, blending contemporary art with the rugged beauty of the desert. [noahpurifoy.com/joshua-tree-outdoor-museum](https://noahpurifoy.com/joshua-tree-outdoor-museum)

## MECCA

**Mecca Hills Wilderness.** This vast, undeveloped swath of desert shelters a maze of pastel-hued slot canyons formed by movement along the San Andreas Fault. Wander through a colorful labyrinthine canyon and explore water-carved slot canyons and steep sandstone ridges. [blm.gov/ca](https://blm.gov/ca)

**Salton Sea State Recreation Area.** This saline lake was formed in 1905 when floodwaters from the Colorado River breached an irrigation canal. It's a popular destination for birdwatchers and wildlife enthusiasts. [parks.ca.gov](https://parks.ca.gov)

## MORONGO VALLEY

**Big Morongo Canyon Preserve.** Hike through lush canyonlands in the Little San Bernardino Mountains of the Transverse Ranges, home to desert bighorn sheep, bobcats, and more than 250 bird species. [bigmorongo.org](https://bigmorongo.org)

## NEEDLES

**Havas National Wildlife Refuge.** Enjoy fishing, boating, kayaking, and spectacular wildlife-watching along the Pacific Flyway. Watch for the southwestern willow flycatcher, Yuma clapper rail, doves, and snow geese. [fws.gov/refuge/havas](https://fws.gov/refuge/havas)

## PALM DESERT

**Palm to Pines Scenic Byway.** Start in Palm Desert before winding your way through mountain switchbacks, pine forests, and stunning vistas with views of the Greater Palm Springs area. [blm.gov](https://blm.gov)

**Palm Springs Art Museum in Palm Desert.** This small museum features indoor rotating exhibits, as well as outdoor art, in a peaceful garden marked with palm trees and flowing water. [psmuseum.org](https://psmuseum.org)

**The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens.** Explore this family-friendly zoo and botanical gardens specializing in deserts, with more than 450 animals and 1,400 plant species. Feed a giraffe or hike nature trails. [livingdesert.org](https://livingdesert.org)

**Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument Visitor Center.** Discover palm oases and snowcapped mountains that reach 10,834 feet in elevation. Hike the easy Randall Henderson Trail from the visitor center, or set out on the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail. [blm.gov](https://blm.gov)

## PALM SPRINGS

**Agua Caliente Cultural Museum.** Dedicated to the history and culture of the Agua Caliente People, the nearly 10,000-square-foot permanent gallery is divided into five exhibition areas that each offer a unique piece of the Agua Caliente story. [accmuseum.org](https://accmuseum.org)

**Moorten Botanical Garden and Cactarium.**

Established in 1938, this family-owned arboretum features more than 3,000 varieties of desert plants alongside colorful rocks, ancient fossils, and pioneer relics. [moortenbotanicalgarden.com](https://moortenbotanicalgarden.com)

**Palm Springs Aerial Tramway.** 1 Tram Way, Palm Springs. World's largest rotating tram cars. Spectacular views, two restaurants, 50 miles of hiking trails, camping, winter activities, and more. 760/325-1391; 888/515-TRAM; [pstramway.com](https://pstramway.com) See ad this page.

**Palm Springs Air Museum.** Visit one of the world's largest collections of flyable WWII aircraft. Book a flight on a T-28 Trojan or T-33 Shooting Star jet. [palmspringsairmuseum.org](https://palmspringsairmuseum.org)

**Palm Springs Art Museum.** See the Aluminaire House, Albert Frey's masterpiece of modern design, plus rotating exhibits focusing on contemporary art and design. [psmuseum.org](https://psmuseum.org)

## RANCHO MIRAGE

**Children's Discovery Museum of the Desert.** Kids have fun while interacting with more than 80 hands-on exhibits that focus on gardening, animals, science, cooking, and nutrition. [cdmod.org](https://cdmod.org)

**Sunnylands Center & Gardens.** Tour the 200-acre former estate of publishing magnate Walter Annenberg and his wife Lenore. The massive glass-walled home is a stunning example of midcentury modern architecture. Stroll 15 acres of gorgeous gardens or reserve a spot for a guided home tour. [sunnylands.org](https://sunnylands.org)

## RIDGECREST

**Maturango Museum.** View exhibits about the natural history of the Mojave Desert, or join a museum-sponsored tour of Little Petroglyph Canyon, home to paleolithic-era petroglyphs carved into ancient volcanic outcrops. [maturango.org](https://maturango.org)

**Trona Pinnacles.** See these otherworldly geologic gems that have been featured in *Star Trek* and dozens of other films and commercials. More than 500 tufa spires, some as high as 140 feet, rise from the bed of the Searles Dry Lake basin. [blm.gov/ca](https://blm.gov/ca)

## SHOSHONE

**Shoshone Museum.** Ethnic and tribal art, history, minerals, and paleontology pack this small museum. View the skeletal remains of a prehistoric mammoth unearthed near Death Valley. [shoshonevillage.com](https://shoshonevillage.com)

## THOUSAND PALMS

**Coachella Valley National Wildlife Refuge.** Nearly 4,000 acres of protected land serve as a critical habitat for the threatened Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard. Open to hikers and horseback riders. [fws.gov](https://fws.gov)

## TWENTYNINE PALMS

**Joshua Tree National Park.** Go rock climbing, hiking, and camping while enjoying a stark landscape dotted with cholla cacti, creosote bushes, and the park's namesake Joshua trees. In spring, wildflowers carpet the desert floor. [nps.gov/jotr](https://nps.gov/jotr)

## WINTERHAVEN

**Picacho State Recreation Area.** 100 years ago Picacho was a gold mining town with 100 citizens. Today, this state park is popular with boaters, hikers, anglers and campers. Discover diverse scenery, including beavertail cacti, wild burros, bighorn sheep, and thousands of migratory waterfowl. [parks.ca.gov](https://parks.ca.gov)

## YERMO


**Calico Ghost Town.** Explore an Old West silver-mining town, founded in 1881. Enjoy shopping, restaurants, horseback riding, and camping. Visit Maggie Mine and take a ride on the Calico Odessa Railroad. [parks.sbcounty.gov](https://parks.sbcounty.gov)

## YUCCA VALLEY

**Hi-Desert Nature Museum.** Enhance your high-desert appreciation by exploring these interactive natural history and cultural exhibits. Observe native snakes, lizards, arachnids, and insects in the mini zoo. [hidesertnaturemuseum.org](https://hidesertnaturemuseum.org)





A close-up photograph of a giant panda's head and paws as it eats bamboo. The panda is holding a bamboo stalk in its mouth and using its paws to peel the outer layer. The background is a grey, textured wall.

The San Diego Zoo's new  
giant pandas are the first  
to enter the U.S. in 21 years

Giant pandas spend  
at least 12 hours a day  
eating bamboo



# SAN DIEGO COUNTY

Discover fine dining, epic surf, and endless good times in this SoCal paradise





Xin Bao's name means  
"precious treasure of prosperity  
and abundance"

Xin Bao (pictured) and Yun  
Chuan made their official  
debut on August 8, 2024

Sign up for "Early Morning  
with Pandas Walking Tour"  
for an exclusive look





Wilma's Carousel Bar



WILMA'S IS ONE OF ONLY TWO CAROUSEL BARS IN THE U.S.

a fresh, modern take on the property's classic Victorian style.

### FAMILY FUN

Life's a beach for kids in San Diego—and with a growing number of attractions, that's never been more true. Petco Park recently unveiled the world's tallest climbable baseball bat (a stunning 35 feet tall) as part of an interactive playspace in Gallagher Square. Shredders of all sizes can rip through the new eight-acre dirt bike course at Bradley Park in **San Marcos**. For splashy fun with a side of sea life, the Oceanside Trail at Cabrillo National Monument now connects the lighthouse overlook to the tide pools where visitors can search for sea stars and hermit crabs.



Bradley Park

## New & Noteworthy

### RESTAURANTS

Maximalism is in full swing and whimsy reigns supreme at recently launched **San Diego** restaurants. Dig into a dry-aged rib eye dripping in béarnaise at **La Jolla's** Art Deco-inspired Le Coq, where stuffed roosters in full plumage put a fine point on the theme. At Wilma's Carousel Bar in Little Italy, you can savor oysters under the twinkling carnival lights of a revolving bar. A sparkling lotus print adorns the walls of the haute Vietnamese

spot Kingfisher in Golden Hill.

In **Encinitas**, an artisan vibe emerges at Fox Point Farms, a three-acre organic regenerative farm with a 120-seat restaurant, brewery, and market.

### BEVERAGES

San Diego may be best known as a beacon of craft beer, but its burgeoning wine scene is now stealing some of the limelight. Taste your way through **Escondido's** San Pasqual Valley at the laid-back Forgotten Barrel, the 70-acre, Argentine-owned Orfila estate, or Cheval, where you can sip next to championship show horses. If you prefer beverages minus the buzz, alcohol-free options are also having a moment. At Mnemonic Coffee in Banker's Hill, try the Zephyr (blue jasmine and orange

foam) or visit Good News in Hillcrest for a sensual speakeasy feel.

### ACCOMMODATIONS

When it comes to hotels, what's old is new (and lots of fun). A natural oasis in the **Sonoran Desert**, Jacumba Hot Springs Hotel—once a hot spot for Hollywood royalty like Marlene Deitrich and Clark Gable—has reopened with chic rooms, serene pools, and a disco ball-adorned saloon. Not to be outdone, the retro-chic Pearl Hotel in Point Loma is getting an infusion of excitement thanks to Ponyboy, a restaurant concept from the former bar director of the three-Michelin-star Addison. Plus, the 135-year-old Hotel del Coronado is completing a \$550 million renovation in 2025, unveiling



# See Conservation from a New Perspective



San Diego Zoo  
**Safari Park**



# Small Town Scoop

*“We go (to Dog Beach) to play with dogs and read the little love notes people have painted on the rocks.”*

— KRISTYN HARVEY, INTERIOR DESIGNER



**T**ucked into San Diego’s sprawling North County sits the area’s tiniest town: Del Mar. What the 2.2-square-mile city (population: 3,882) lacks in size, it more than makes up for in panache. First established as a seaside resort for the Hollywood elite, Del Mar maintains the vibe of a glitzy vacation spot—even for those who live there year-round.

Interior designer Kristyn Harvey and her husband chose Del Mar to settle down after having their two children. Won over by the beauty, location, and community feel, Harvey says, “It’s just so calm and cozy.”

Harvey and her family make the most of the idyllic weather with frequent seaside hikes. She recommends Torrey Pines State Beach for a low-tide stroll: “We search for translucent moonstones.” The Sea Cliff Trail is best early in the morning to enjoy “unobstructed ocean views, sand dunes, and purple flowers.” The Coast to Crest Trail offers an inland adventure,

when only a burrito will do, it’s Kotija Jr Taco Shop for takeout and a sunset picnic at Seagrove Park.

As the owner and founder of a boutique design firm, Harvey has a passion for under-the-radar finds, and her favorite shopping spot is St. Peter’s Thrift. A plein air painting she discovered there hangs next to her bed. Home goods shop Pigment in One Paseo is also a favorite. “It’s all organized by color, which is so soothing,” Harvey says. The open-air plaza is also home

to a chic mix of stores, wellness spots, and buzzy eateries (think Blue Bottle Coffee, Salt & Straw, and Parakeet Cafe).

Make your way to Del Mar in summer, and the San Diego County Fair is a can’t-miss. “The ambience is so fun,” says Harvey, whose kids love the carousel and petting zoo. Whether you have a pup in tow or not, make sure to visit Dog Beach. Harvey says, “We go there to play with other people’s dogs and read the little love notes people have painted for their pets on the rocks.” 🌻



# Avocados

Dip a chip into a bowl of bright green guacamole, and there's a good chance you're tasting a dollop of SoCal. California yields 90 percent of the nation's avocados, and 60 percent of that bounty comes from San Diego County. The region's Mediterranean climate—characterized by warm, dry summers and mild, wet winters—is ideal for avocado farming.

The savory fruit arrived in California in 1871 via trees from Mexico. But it wasn't until mail carrier Rudolph Hass developed his eponymous varietal and planted an 80-acre farm in Fallbrook in 1948 that the crop really took off. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the demand for avocados increased, partially due to the growing popularity of Mexican cuisine. Today the average American eats eight pounds of avocados every year—and the vast majority of them are Hass.

Dubbed the “alligator pear” for obvious reasons, the avocado doesn't require much processing. Enjoy it spread on toast just like Lilly Hass (wife of Rudolph) had for breakfast every day of her 98-year-long life, or try some of the other creative ways San Diego chefs blend, grill, fry, or roll it into dishes.



**CALIFORNIA AVOCADOS ARE GROWN BY ABOUT 3,000 FARMERS ON APPROXIMATELY 50,000 ACRES.**



You can find a range of products—lotions, soaps, honey—at The Spoiled Avocado in Fallbrook, but the most notable is the avocado fudge. Don't miss the salted caramel flavor.

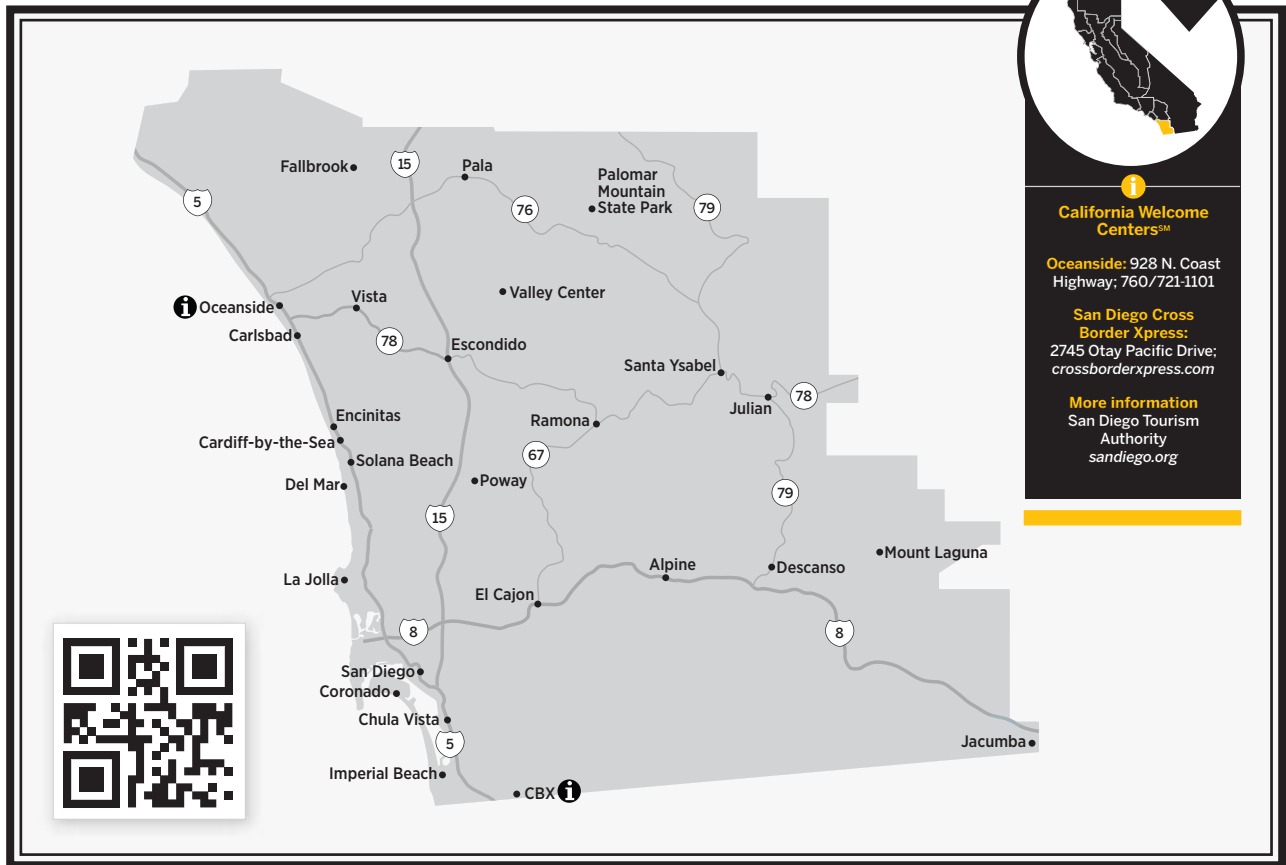


At Fallbrook's Avocado Festival, sample avocado fudge, vote for your favorite guacamole, or test your strength in the avocado holding contest.



Hit up the Poway Farmers Market to try The Goat (microgreens, goat cheese, avocado, and balsamic glaze) from Smashed, San Diego's first avocado toastery.





## visit

### CAMPO

**Pacific Southwest Railway Museum.** Explore vintage railway equipment and artifacts, and even hop aboard a locomotive dating back to the early 20th century. The museum also has a second outpost in La Mesa. [psrm.org](http://psrm.org)

### CARDIFF-BY-THE-SEA

**Cardiff State Beach.** Find a gently sloping sandy beach with warm water and consistent waves. Cardiff Reef on the beach's north side is one of the county's most iconic surf spots. [parks.ca.gov](http://parks.ca.gov)

**San Elijo State Beach.** Camp atop ocean bluffs at this popular park, across the street from a hub of restaurants, coffee spots, and gift shops. Wooden stairways lead down to the beach. [parks.ca.gov](http://parks.ca.gov)

### CARLSBAD

**Batiquitos Lagoon.** Stop by the nature center to grab a trail map or sign up for a guided walk. Hike along a coastal wetland trail through stands of eucalyptus and palms. [visitcarlsbad.com/directory/batiquitos-lagoon](http://visitcarlsbad.com/directory/batiquitos-lagoon)

**Visit Carlsbad.** Carlsbad is the ultimate coastal destination to unwind with seven miles of pristine beaches, lots of family fun and many luxury and budget-friendly hotel options to choose from. [visitcarlsbad.com](http://visitcarlsbad.com) See ad, p. 189

**The Flower Fields at Carlsbad Ranch.** See 50 acres of seasonal flower displays. Purple, red, yellow, pink, and

white blooms are planted in rainbow-like rows. Flowers peak in March, April, and May. [theflowerfields.com](http://theflowerfields.com)

### CHULA VISTA

**San Diego Bay National Wildlife Refuge.** Hike, stroll, or bike through about 2,600 acres of protected land. Bring your binoculars for bird-watching, or simply enjoy the sweeping views of San Diego Bay. [fws.gov](http://fws.gov)

### CORONADO

**Silver Strand State Beach.** Known as "The Strand," this wide beach offers camping, swimming, surfing, picnic spots, and more. A 10-mile-long bike path runs parallel to the beach from Imperial Beach to Coronado. [parks.ca.gov](http://parks.ca.gov)

### ENCINITAS

**San Diego Botanic Garden.** Explore a variety of themed gardens, including bamboo groves, a tropical rainforest, California native plants, and a subtropical fruit garden at this 37-acre property. [sdbgarden.org](http://sdbgarden.org)

### ESCONDIDO

**California Center for the Arts.** The sprawling 12-acre campus in downtown Escondido comprises a 1,500-seat concert hall, a visual arts museum, art studios, and more—all hosting rotating exhibits and performances. [artcenter.org](http://artcenter.org)

**San Diego Children's Discovery Museum.** This indoor/outdoor museum inspires children to learn and create through hands-on science, art, and cultural activities. [sdcdm.org](http://sdcdm.org)

### FALLBROOK

**Myrtle Creek Vineyards.** Taste Cabernet Sauvignon, Grenache, Syrah, and more at this family-owned boutique winery and tasting room located on a former citrus and avocado orchard. [myrtlecreekvineyards.com](http://myrtlecreekvineyards.com)

### JULIAN

**Cuyamaca Rancho State Park.** Explore 100 miles of trails for hiking and biking. Cuyamaca Peak offers inspiring views of deserts to the east and the coast to the west. [parks.ca.gov](http://parks.ca.gov)

**Julian Pioneer Museum.** View historical artifacts that depict the local history of this mining mountain town from 1869—when A.E. Coleman first discovered gold—to the turn of the last century. [julianpioneermuseum.org](http://julianpioneermuseum.org)

### LA JOLLA

**Torrey Pines State Beach.** Swim, surf, or sunbathe beneath coastal cliffs—a popular launch spot for hang gliders and paragliders. This wide, sandy beach stretches for 4.5 miles. [parks.ca.gov](http://parks.ca.gov)

**Torrey Pines State Natural Reserve.** Explore 1,500 acres of wild coastal land, home to our nation's rarest pine tree, *Pinus torreyana*. Follow trails up the cliffsides to find the perfect sunset spot. [parks.ca.gov](http://parks.ca.gov)

### OCEANSIDE

**California Surf Museum.** Learn about surf lifestyle, history, and the science behind waves. The permanent exhibit showcases a timeline of surfboards, starting with wooden models from the early 1900s. [surfmuseum.org](http://surfmuseum.org)

# KEEP THE HOWEVER YOU ROLL

ROLLING



STAY HERE.  
PLAY MORE.

visitcarlsbad.com

**Mission San Luis Rey.** Known as “King of the Missions,” San Luis Rey is set within a six-acre central square and marked by an octagonal dome atop the building. [sanluisrey.org](http://sanluisrey.org)

**Oceanside Cultural District.** Explore an eclectic, emerging art scene just east of Oceanside Pier. Galleries, venues, local murals, and tattoo artists capture the area’s coastal beauty and military heritage. [caculturaldistricts.org](http://caculturaldistricts.org)

## PALOMAR MOUNTAIN

**Palomar Observatory.** Near the top of Mount Palomar at 5,600 feet, take a guided tour of this astronomical observatory, which operates several telescopes. [sites.astro.caltech.edu/palomar](http://sites.astro.caltech.edu/palomar)

## SAN DIEGO

**Balboa Park Cultural District.** This 1,200-acre greenspace is the cultural heart of San Diego. Explore 17 museums, lush gardens, performing arts venues, a public golf course, and the San Diego Zoo. [caculturaldistricts.org](http://caculturaldistricts.org)

**Barrio Logan Cultural District.** Chicano Park serves as the heart of this vibrant area, celebrating Mexican-American culture. View local art in a variety of galleries, cafes, and breweries. [caculturaldistricts.org](http://caculturaldistricts.org)

**Cabrillo National Monument.** See the Old Point Loma Lighthouse, learn about the discoveries of Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo, and wander the tide pools. [nps.gov/cabr](http://nps.gov/cabr)

**Chicano Park Murals.** Find Chicano Park in Barrio Logan, San Diego’s oldest Mexican-American neighborhood. Explore more than 80 paintings—the largest collection of Chicano murals in the world. [chicano-park.org](http://chicano-park.org)

**San Diego Tourism Authority.** The official travel resource for the San Diego region. Explore 70 miles of picturesque coast, world-class attractions, vibrant neighborhoods, unique food culture, and more. Plan your trip at [sandiego.org](http://sandiego.org) See ad, p. 13

**San Diego Zoo.** 2920 Zoo Dr. A lush tropical oasis teaming with life, in the heart of downtown San Diego. Learn about the Zoo’s special tours and their efforts to save species from extinction at [sandiegozoo.org](http://sandiegozoo.org). 619/231-1515; See ad, p. 185

## SAN MARCOS

**Edwin and Frances Hunter Arboretum at Palomar College.** This 10-acre preserve is home to more than 600 species of trees and shrubs, including California native plants. Free and open to the public. [palomar.edu](http://palomar.edu)

## SANTA YSABEL

**Mission Santa Ysabel Asistencia.** Established in 1818, this mission has an onsite museum. The San Ysabel chapel, built in 1924, sits near the historic site. [symission.org](http://symission.org)

## VISTA

**Alta Vista Botanical Gardens.** Stroll through manicured gardens dotted with ponds and whimsical sculptures at this hilltop park in Vista. Practice walking meditation at the garden labyrinth. [altavistabotanicalgardens.org](http://altavistabotanicalgardens.org)

**Rancho Guajome Adobe.** Hike, bike, or horseback ride along multiuse trails surrounding this 19th-century hacienda. The large Spanish Colonial-style home is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. [sdparks.org](http://sdparks.org)

## stay

### HOTELS AND RESORTS

#### LA JOLLA

**The Lodge at Torrey Pines.** 170 rooms. 11480 North Torrey Pines Road. Step into the timeless charm of this AAA Five Diamond rated resort, overlooking the world-renowned Torrey Pines Golf Course with views of the Pacific Ocean. 858/453-4420; [lodgetorrey.pines.com](http://lodgetorrey.pines.com) \$\$\$



#### SAN DIEGO

**Bahia Resort Hotel.** 998 West Mission Bay Dr. 313 rooms. San Diego’s premier resort in Mission Bay. A scenic family-friendly escape tucked away on a 14-acre peninsula, featuring lush tropical gardens and a secluded beach. 858/488-0551; [bahiahotel.com](http://bahiahotel.com) \$\$\$-\$\$\$



**Catamaran Resort Hotel and Spa.** 3999 Mission Blvd. 310 rooms. A tropical Polynesian-themed hideaway in this Pacific Beach community offers casual elegance, with Mission Bay as its backyard and the Pacific Ocean across the street. 858/488-1081; [catamaranresort.com](http://catamaranresort.com) \$\$-\$\$\$



### KEY



WIFI



RESTAURANT  
ON PREMISES



FITNESS  
CENTER



SWIMMING  
POOL



HANDICAP  
ACCESSIBLE



SPA/SAUNA/  
HOT TUB



PETS  
WELCOME



UNDER  
\$100/NIGHT



\$100-\$200/  
NIGHT



OVER \$200/  
NIGHT



All cities are identified by region. To find more information about a city, turn to its regional section (pages listed below).

|             |                               |            |
|-------------|-------------------------------|------------|
| <b>SC</b>   | <b>Shasta Cascade</b>         | <b>64</b>  |
| <b>NC</b>   | <b>North Coast</b>            | <b>74</b>  |
| <b>SFBA</b> | <b>San Francisco Bay Area</b> | <b>82</b>  |
| <b>GC</b>   | <b>Gold Country</b>           | <b>94</b>  |
| <b>HS</b>   | <b>High Sierra</b>            | <b>104</b> |
| <b>CV</b>   | <b>Central Valley</b>         | <b>120</b> |
| <b>CC</b>   | <b>Central Coast</b>          | <b>130</b> |
| <b>LAC</b>  | <b>Los Angeles County</b>     | <b>144</b> |
| <b>OC</b>   | <b>Orange County</b>          | <b>156</b> |
| <b>IE</b>   | <b>Inland Empire</b>          | <b>166</b> |
| <b>D</b>    | <b>Deserts</b>                | <b>174</b> |
| <b>SD</b>   | <b>San Diego County</b>       | <b>182</b> |

|          |                             |                           |
|----------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>A</b> | Acton <b>LAC</b>            | Berkeley <b>SFBA</b>      |
|          | Adelanto <b>IE</b>          | Berry Creek <b>SC</b>     |
|          | Adin <b>SC</b>              | Bethel Island <b>CV</b>   |
|          | Agoura Hills <b>LAC</b>     | Beverly Hills <b>LAC</b>  |
|          | Agua Dulce <b>LAC</b>       | Bieber <b>SC</b>          |
|          | Aguanga <b>IE</b>           | Big Bar <b>SC</b>         |
|          | Ahwahnee <b>HS</b>          | Big Bear City <b>IE</b>   |
|          | Alameda <b>SFBA</b>         | Big Bear Lake <b>IE</b>   |
|          | Alamo <b>SFBA</b>           | Big Oak Flat <b>GC</b>    |
|          | Albany <b>SFBA</b>          | Big Pine <b>HS</b>        |
|          | Albion <b>NC</b>            | Big River <b>IE</b>       |
|          | Alder Springs <b>CV</b>     | Big Sur <b>CC</b>         |
|          | Alhambra <b>LAC</b>         | Biggs <b>SC</b>           |
|          | Alleghany <b>GC</b>         | Bishop <b>HS</b>          |
|          | Alpaugh <b>CV</b>           | Blairsden <b>SC</b>       |
|          | Alpine <b>SD</b>            | Blue Jay <b>IE</b>        |
|          | Alta <b>GC</b>              | Blue Lake <b>NC</b>       |
|          | Altadena <b>LAC</b>         | Blythe <b>D</b>           |
|          | Alturas <b>SC</b>           | Bodega <b>SFBA</b>        |
|          | Amador City <b>GC</b>       | Bodega Bay <b>SFBA</b>    |
|          | Amboy <b>D</b>              | Bodfish <b>HS</b>         |
|          | American Canyon <b>SFBA</b> | Bodie <b>HS</b>           |
|          | Anaheim <b>OC</b>           | Bonita <b>SD</b>          |
|          | Anaheim Hills <b>OC</b>     | Bonsall <b>SD</b>         |
|          | Anchor Bay <b>NC</b>        | Boonville <b>NC</b>       |
|          | Anderson <b>SC</b>          | Boron <b>D</b>            |
|          | Anderson Springs <b>NC</b>  | Borrego Springs <b>D</b>  |
|          | Angels Camp <b>GC</b>       | Boulder Creek <b>SFBA</b> |
|          | Angwin <b>SFBA</b>          | Bowman <b>GC</b>          |
|          | Antioch <b>CV</b>           | Bradley <b>CC</b>         |
|          | Anza <b>IE</b>              | Bray <b>SC</b>            |
|          | Apple Hill <b>GC</b>        | Brea <b>OC</b>            |
|          | Apple Valley <b>IE</b>      | Brentwood <b>CV</b>       |
|          | Applegate <b>GC</b>         | Bridgeport <b>NC</b>      |
|          | Aptos <b>SFBA</b>           | Bridgeville <b>HS</b>     |
|          | Arbuckle <b>CV</b>          | Brisbane <b>SFBA</b>      |
|          | Arcadia <b>LAC</b>          | Buellton <b>CC</b>        |
|          | Arcata <b>NC</b>            | Buena Park <b>OC</b>      |
|          | Arnold <b>HS</b>            | Burbank <b>LAC</b>        |
|          | Arroyo Grande <b>CC</b>     | Burlingame <b>SFBA</b>    |
|          | Artesia <b>LAC</b>          | Burney <b>SC</b>          |
|          | Arvin <b>CV</b>             | Butte City <b>CV</b>      |
|          | Atascadero <b>CC</b>        | Buttonwillow <b>CV</b>    |
|          | Atwater <b>CV</b>           | Byron <b>CV</b>           |
|          | Auburn <b>GC</b>            |                           |
|          | Avalon <b>LAC</b>           |                           |
|          | Avenal <b>CV</b>            |                           |
|          | Avila Beach <b>CC</b>       |                           |
|          | Azusa <b>LAC</b>            |                           |

|          |                         |                                  |
|----------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>B</b> | Baker <b>D</b>          | Cabazon <b>D</b>                 |
|          | Bakersfield <b>CV</b>   | Cahuilla <b>IE</b>               |
|          | Balboa <b>OC</b>        | Calabasas <b>LAC</b>             |
|          | Balboa Island <b>OC</b> | Calaxico <b>D</b>                |
|          | Baldwin Park <b>D</b>   | Calico <b>D</b>                  |
|          | Ballico <b>CV</b>       | California City <b>D</b>         |
|          | Banning <b>IE</b>       | California Hot Springs <b>CV</b> |
|          | Barstow <b>D</b>        | Calimesa <b>IE</b>               |
|          | Bartle <b>SC</b>        | Calipatria <b>D</b>              |
|          | Bass Lake <b>HS</b>     | Calistoga <b>SFBA</b>            |
|          | Bayside <b>NC</b>       | Callahan <b>IE</b>               |
|          | Bear Valley <b>HS</b>   | Calpella <b>NC</b>               |
|          | Beaumont <b>IE</b>      | Calpine <b>GC</b>                |
|          | Beckwourth <b>SC</b>    | Camarillo <b>CC</b>              |
|          | Bell <b>LAC</b>         | Cambria <b>CC</b>                |
|          | Bella Vista <b>SC</b>   | Cameron Park <b>GC</b>           |
|          | Bellflower <b>LAC</b>   | Camino <b>GC</b>                 |
|          | Belmont <b>SFBA</b>     | Campbell <b>SFBA</b>             |
|          | Belvedere <b>SFBA</b>   | Campo <b>SD</b>                  |
|          | Ben Lomond <b>SFBA</b>  | Canby <b>IE</b>                  |
|          | Benbow <b>NC</b>        | Canoga Park <b>LAC</b>           |
|          | Benicia <b>SFBA</b>     | Cantil <b>D</b>                  |
|          | Benton <b>HS</b>        | Canyondam <b>SC</b>              |
|          |                         | Capay <b>CV</b>                  |
|          |                         | Capistrano Beach <b>OC</b>       |
|          |                         | Capitola <b>SFBA</b>             |
|          |                         | Cardiff-by-the-Sea <b>SD</b>     |
|          |                         | Carlsbad <b>SD</b>               |
|          |                         | Carmel-by-the-Sea <b>CC</b>      |

|                                |                           |                             |                      |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| Carmel Valley <b>CC</b>        | Devore <b>IE</b>          | Gazelle <b>SC</b>           | Isla Vista <b>CC</b> |
| Carmichael <b>GC</b>           | Devore Heights <b>IE</b>  | Georgetown <b>GC</b>        | Isleton <b>CV</b>    |
| Carpinteria <b>CC</b>          | Diamond Bar <b>LAC</b>    | Geyserville <b>SFBA</b>     | Ivanhoe <b>CV</b>    |
| Carson <b>LAC</b>              | Diamond Gateway <b>SD</b> | Giant Forest <b>HS</b>      |                      |
| Caspar <b>NC</b>               | Diamond Springs <b>GC</b> | Gilroy <b>CC</b>            |                      |
| Castaic <b>LAC</b>             | Dinuba <b>CV</b>          | Glen Avon <b>IE</b>         |                      |
| Castella <b>SC</b>             | Dixon <b>CV</b>           | Glen Ellen <b>SFBA</b>      |                      |
| Castro Valley <b>SFBA</b>      | Dorrington <b>GC</b>      | Glendale <b>LAC</b>         |                      |
| Castroville <b>CC</b>          | Dorris <b>SC</b>          | Glendora <b>LAC</b>         |                      |
| Catalina Island <b>LAC</b>     | Dos Palos <b>CV</b>       | Glennville <b>CV</b>        |                      |
| Cathedral City <b>D</b>        | Downey <b>LAC</b>         | Goldstone <b>D</b>          |                      |
| Catheys Valley <b>GC</b>       | Downville <b>GC</b>       | Goleta <b>CC</b>            |                      |
| Cayucos <b>CC</b>              | Doyle <b>SC</b>           | Gonzales <b>CC</b>          |                      |
| Cedar Grove <b>HS</b>          | Drytown <b>GC</b>         | Gorman <b>LAC</b>           |                      |
| Cedarville <b>SC</b>           | Duarte <b>LAC</b>         | Graeagle <b>SC</b>          |                      |
| Century City <b>LAC</b>        | Dublin <b>SFBA</b>        | Granada Hills <b>LAC</b>    |                      |
| Ceres <b>CV</b>                | Dulzura <b>SD</b>         | Grand Terrace <b>IE</b>     |                      |
| Cerritos <b>LAC</b>            | Dunnigan <b>GC</b>        | Granite Bay <b>GC</b>       |                      |
| Channel Islands <b>CC</b>      | Dunsmuir <b>SC</b>        | Grant Grove <b>HS</b>       |                      |
| Chatsworth <b>LAC</b>          | Durham <b>SC</b>          | Grapevine <b>CV</b>         |                      |
| Cherry Valley <b>IE</b>        |                           | Grass Valley <b>GC</b>      |                      |
| Chester <b>SC</b>              |                           | Graton <b>SFBA</b>          |                      |
| Chico <b>SC</b>                |                           | Green Valley Lake <b>IE</b> |                      |
| Chilcoot <b>SC</b>             |                           | Greenbrae <b>SFBA</b>       |                      |
| China Lake <b>D</b>            |                           | Greenfield <b>CC</b>        |                      |
| Chinese Camp <b>GC</b>         |                           | Greenview <b>SC</b>         |                      |
| Chino <b>IE</b>                |                           | Greenville <b>SC</b>        |                      |
| Chino Hills <b>IE</b>          |                           | Grenada <b>SC</b>           |                      |
| Chiriaco Summit <b>D</b>       |                           | Gridley <b>SC</b>           |                      |
| Chowchilla <b>CV</b>           |                           | Groveland <b>HS</b>         |                      |
| Chula Vista <b>SD</b>          |                           | Grover Beach <b>CC</b>      |                      |
| Cima <b>D</b>                  |                           | Guadalupe <b>CC</b>         |                      |
| Citrus Heights <b>GC</b>       |                           | Gualala <b>NC</b>           |                      |
| City of Industry <b>LAC</b>    |                           | Guernville <b>SFBA</b>      |                      |
| Claremont <b>LAC</b>           |                           | Gustine <b>CV</b>           |                      |
| Clarksburg <b>CV</b>           |                           |                             |                      |
| Clayton <b>SFBA</b>            |                           |                             |                      |
| Clearlake <b>NC</b>            |                           |                             |                      |
| Clearlake Oaks <b>NC</b>       |                           |                             |                      |
| Clearlake State Park <b>NC</b> |                           |                             |                      |
| Clements <b>CV</b>             |                           |                             |                      |
| Cleone <b>NC</b>               |                           |                             |                      |
| Cloverdale <b>SFBA</b>         |                           |                             |                      |
| Clovis <b>CV</b>               |                           |                             |                      |
| Coachella <b>D</b>             |                           |                             |                      |
| Coalinga <b>CV</b>             |                           |                             |                      |
| Coarsegold <b>GC</b>           |                           |                             |                      |
| Cobb <b>NC</b>                 |                           |                             |                      |
| Coffee Creek <b>SC</b>         |                           |                             |                      |
| Coleville <b>HS</b>            |                           |                             |                      |
| Colfax <b>GC</b>               |                           |                             |                      |
| Colma <b>SFBA</b>              |                           |                             |                      |
| Coloma <b>GC</b>               |                           |                             |                      |
| Colton <b>IE</b>               |                           |                             |                      |
| Columbia <b>GC</b>             |                           |                             |                      |
| Colusa <b>CV</b>               |                           |                             |                      |
| Commerce <b>LAC</b>            |                           |                             |                      |
| Compton <b>LAC</b>             |                           |                             |                      |
| Concord <b>SFBA</b>            |                           |                             |                      |
| Cool <b>GC</b>                 |                           |                             |                      |
| Copperopolis <b>GC</b>         |                           |                             |                      |
| Corcoran <b>CV</b>             |                           |                             |                      |
| Corning <b>SC</b>              |                           |                             |                      |
| Corona <b>IE</b>               |                           |                             |                      |
| Corona del Mar <b>OC</b>       |                           |                             |                      |
| Coronado <b>SD</b>             |                           |                             |                      |
| Corte Madera <b>SFBA</b>       |                           |                             |                      |
| Costa Mesa <b>OC</b>           |                           |                             |                      |
| Cotati <b>SFBA</b>             |                           |                             |                      |
| Cottonwood <b>SC</b>           |                           |                             |                      |
| Coulterville <b>GC</b>         |                           |                             |                      |
| Courtland <b>CV</b>            |                           |                             |                      |
| Covelo <b>NC</b>               |                           |                             |                      |
| Covina <b>LAC</b>              |                           |                             |                      |
| Crenshaw <b>LAC</b>            |                           |                             |                      |
| Crescent City <b>NC</b>        |                           |                             |                      |
| Crescent Mills <b>SC</b>       |                           |                             |                      |
| Crescenta Valley <b>LAC</b>    |                           |                             |                      |
| Crestline <b>IE</b>            |                           |                             |                      |
| Culver City <b>LAC</b>         |                           |                             |                      |
| Cupertino <b>SFBA</b>          |                           |                             |                      |
| Cutler <b>CV</b>               |                           |                             |                      |
| Cuyama <b>CC</b>               |                           |                             |                      |
| Cypress <b>OC</b>              |                           |                             |                      |

|          |                             |                        |
|----------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>D</b> | Daggett <b>D</b>            | Galt <b>CV</b>         |
|          | Daly City <b>SFBA</b>       | Garberville <b>NC</b>  |
|          | Dana Point <b>OC</b>        | Garden Grove <b>OC</b> |
|          | Danville <b>SFBA</b>        | Gardena <b>LAC</b>     |
|          | Davenport <b>SFBA</b>       | Gasquet <b>NC</b>      |
|          | Davis <b>CV</b>             |                        |
|          | Death Valley <b>D</b>       |                        |
|          | Del Mar <b>SD</b>           |                        |
|          | Del Norte <b>NC</b>         |                        |
|          | Delano <b>CV</b>            |                        |
|          | Descanso <b>SD</b>          |                        |
|          | Desert Center <b>D</b>      |                        |
|          | Desert Hot Springs <b>D</b> |                        |

|          |                           |                           |
|----------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>E</b> | Earlham <b>CV</b>         | El Centro <b>D</b>        |
|          | Earlham <b>CV</b>         | El Cerrito <b>SFBA</b>    |
|          | Easton <b>CV</b>          | El Dorado <b>GC</b>       |
|          | Edgewood <b>SC</b>        | El Dorado Hills <b>GC</b> |
|          | El Cajon <b>SD</b>        | El Monte <b>LAC</b>       |
|          | El Centro <b>D</b>        | El Portal <b>HS</b>       |
|          | El Cerrito <b>SFBA</b>    | El Segundo <b>LAC</b>     |
|          | El Dorado <b>GC</b>       | El Sobrante <b>SFBA</b>   |
|          | El Dorado Hills <b>GC</b> | El Toro <b>OC</b>         |
|          | El Monte <b>LAC</b>       | Elk <b>NC</b>             |
|          | El Portal <b>HS</b>       | Elk Creek <b>CV</b>       |
|          | El Segundo <b>LAC</b>     | Elk Grove <b>GC</b>       |
|          | El Sobrante <b>SFBA</b>   | Emeryville <b>SFBA</b>    |
|          | El Toro <b>OC</b>         | Empire <b>CV</b>          |
|          | Elk <b>NC</b>             | Encinitas <b>SD</b>       |
|          | Elk Creek <b>CV</b>       | Encino <b>LAC</b>         |
|          | Elk Grove <b>GC</b>       | Escalante <b>CV</b>       |
|          | Emeryville <b>SFBA</b>    | Escondido <b>SD</b>       |
|          | Empire <b>CV</b>          | Esparito <b>CV</b>        |
|          | Encinitas <b>SD</b>       | Essex <b>D</b>            |
|          | Encino <b>LAC</b>         | Etna <b>IE</b>            |
|          | Escalante <b>CV</b>       | Eureka <b>NC</b>          |
|          | Escondido <b>SD</b>       | Exeter <b>CV</b>          |
|          | Esparito <b>CV</b>        |                           |
|          | Essex <b>D</b>            |                           |
|          | Etna <b>IE</b>            |                           |
|          | Eureka <b>NC</b>          |                           |
|          | Exeter <b>CV</b>          |                           |

|          |                            |                            |
|----------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>F</b> | Fair Oaks <b>GC</b>        | Fairfax <b>SFBA</b>        |
|          | Fairfield <b>CV</b>        | Fall River Mills <b>SC</b> |
|          | Fairfield <b>CV</b>        | Fallbrook <b>SD</b>        |
|          | Fall River Mills <b>SC</b> | Farmersville <b>CV</b>     |
|          | Fallbrook <b>SD</b>        | Farmington <b>CV</b>       |
|          | Farmersville <b>CV</b>     | Fawnskin <b>IE</b>         |
|          | Farmington <b>CV</b>       | Felcity <b>D</b>           |
|          | Fawnskin <b>IE</b>         | Felton <b>SFBA</b>         |
|          | Felcity <b>D</b>           | Ferndale <b>NC</b>         |
|          | Felton <b>SFBA</b>         | Fillmore <b>CC</b>         |
|          | Ferndale <b>NC</b>         | Firebaugh <b>CV</b>        |
|          | Fillmore <b>CC</b>         | Fish Camp <b>HS</b>        |
|          | Firebaugh <b>CV</b>        | Florin <b>GC</b>           |
|          | Fish Camp <b>HS</b>        | Folsom <b>GC</b>           |
|          | Florin <b>GC</b>           | Fontana <b>IE</b>          |
|          | Folsom <b>GC</b>           | Fontana <b>IE</b>          |
|          | Fontana <b>IE</b>          | Forbestown <b>SC</b>       |
|          | Forbestown <b>SC</b>       | Ford City <b>CV</b>        |
|          | Ford City <b>CV</b>        | Foresthill <b>GC</b>       |
|          | Foresthill <b>GC</b>       | Forestville <b>SFBA</b>    |
|          | Forestville <b>SFBA</b>    | Forks of Salmon <b>SC</b>  |
|          | Forks of Salmon <b>SC</b>  | Fort Bidwell <b>SC</b>     |
|          | Fort Bidwell <b>SC</b>     | Fort Bragg <b>NC</b>       |
|          | Fort Bragg <b>NC</b>       | Fort Irwin <b>D</b>        |
|          | Fort Irwin <b>D</b>        | Fort Jones <b>SC</b>       |
|          | Fort Jones <b>SC</b>       | Fort Ross <b>SFBA</b>      |
|          | Fort Ross <b>SFBA</b>      | Fortuna <b>NC</b>          |
|          | Fortuna <b>NC</b>          | Foster City <b>SFBA</b>    |
|          | Foster City <b>SFBA</b>    | Fountain Valley <b>OC</b>  |
|          | Fountain Valley <b>OC</b>  | Fowler <b>CV</b>           |
|          | Fowler <b>CV</b>           | Frazier Park <b>CV</b>     |
|          | Frazier Park <b>CV</b>     | Fremont <b>SFBA</b>        |
|          | Fremont <b>SFBA</b>        | French Camp <b>CV</b>      |
|          | French Camp <b>CV</b>      | French Gulch <b>SC</b>     |
|          | French Gulch <b>SC</b>     | Fresno <b>CV</b>           |
|          | Fresno <b>CV</b>           | Friant <b>CV</b>           |
|          | Friant <b>CV</b>           | Furnace Creek <b>D</b>     |
|          | Furnace Creek <b>D</b>     |                            |

|          |                        |                    |
|----------|------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>G</b> | Galt <b>CV</b>         | Gardena <b>LAC</b> |
|          | Garberville <b>NC</b>  | Gasquet <b>NC</b>  |
|          | Garden Grove <b>OC</b> |                    |
|          | Gardena <b>LAC</b>     |                    |
|          | Gasquet <b>NC</b>      |                    |

|                             |                             |                             |                             |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Gazelle <b>SC</b>           | Georgetown <b>GC</b>        | Geyserville <b>SFBA</b>     | Giant Forest <b>HS</b>      |
| Gilroy <b>CC</b>            | Glen Avon <b>IE</b>         | Glen Ellen <b>SFBA</b>      | Glendale <b>LAC</b>         |
| Glen Avon <b>IE</b>         | Glendale <b>LAC</b>         | Glendora <b>LAC</b>         | Glennville <b>CV</b>        |
| Glen Ellen <b>SFBA</b>      | Glendora <b>LAC</b>         | Glennville <b>CV</b>        | Goldstone <b>D</b>          |
| Glendale <b>LAC</b>         | Glennville <b>CV</b>        | Goldstone <b>D</b>          | Goleta <b>CC</b>            |
| Glendora <b>LAC</b>         | Goldstone <b>D</b>          | Goleta <b>CC</b>            | Gonzales <b>CC</b>          |
| Glennville <b>CV</b>        | Goleta <b>CC</b>            | Gonzales <b>CC</b>          | Gorman <b>LAC</b>           |
| Goldstone <b>D</b>          | Gorman <b>LAC</b>           | Graeagle <b>SC</b>          | Granada Hills <b>LAC</b>    |
| Goleta <b>CC</b>            | Graeagle <b>SC</b>          | Granada Hills <b>LAC</b>    | Grand Terrace <b>IE</b>     |
| Gonzales <b>CC</b>          | Granada Hills <b>LAC</b>    | Grand Terrace <b>IE</b>     | Granite Bay <b>GC</b>       |
| Gorman <b>LAC</b>           | Grand Terrace <b>IE</b>     | Granite Bay <b>GC</b>       | Grant Grove <b>HS</b>       |
| Graeagle <b>SC</b>          | Granite Bay <b>GC</b>       | Grant Grove <b>HS</b>       | Grapevine <b>CV</b>         |
| Granada Hills <b>LAC</b>    | Grant Grove <b>HS</b>       | Grapevine <b>CV</b>         | Grass Valley <b>GC</b>      |
| Grand Terrace <b>IE</b>     | Grapevine <b>CV</b>         | Grass Valley <b>GC</b>      | Graton <b>SFBA</b>          |
| Granite Bay <b>GC</b>       | Grass Valley <b>GC</b>      | Graton <b>SFBA</b>          | Green Valley Lake <b>IE</b> |
| Grant Grove <b>HS</b>       | Graton <b>SFBA</b>          | Green Valley Lake <b>IE</b> | Greenfield <b>CC</b>        |
| Grapevine <b>CV</b>         | Green Valley Lake <b>IE</b> | Greenfield <b>CC</b>        | Greenview <b>SC</b>         |
| Grass Valley <b>GC</b>      | Greenfield <b>CC</b>        | Greenview <b>SC</b>         | Greenville <b>SC</b>        |
| Graton <b>SFBA</b>          | Greenview <b>SC</b>         | Greenville <b>SC</b>        | Grenada <b>SC</b>           |
| Green Valley Lake <b>IE</b> | Greenville <b>SC</b>        | Grenada <b>SC</b>           | Gridley <b>SC</b>           |
| Greenbrae <b>SFBA</b>       | Grenada <b>SC</b>           | Gridley <b>SC</b>           | Groveland <b>HS</b>         |
| Greenfield <b>CC</b>        | Gridley <b>SC</b>           | Groveland <b>HS</b>         | Grover Beach <b>CC</b>      |
| Greenview <b>SC</b>         | Groveland <b>HS</b>         | Grover Beach <b>CC</b>      | Guadalupe <b>CC</b>         |
| Greenville <b>SC</b>        | Grover Beach <b>CC</b>      | Guadalupe <b>CC</b>         | Gualala <b>NC</b>           |
| Grenada <b>SC</b>           | Guadalupe <b>CC</b>         | Gualala <b>NC</b>           | Guernville <b>SFBA</b>      |
| Gridley <b>SC</b>           | Gualala <b>NC</b>           | Guernville <b>SFBA</b>      | Gustine <b>CV</b>           |
| Groveland <b>HS</b>         | Guernville <b>SFBA</b>      | Gustine <b>CV</b>           |                             |
| Grover Beach <b>CC</b>      | Gustine <b>CV</b>           |                             |                             |
| Guadalupe <b>CC</b>         |                             |                             |                             |
| Gualala <b>NC</b>           |                             |                             |                             |
| Guernville <b>SFBA</b>      |                             |                             |                             |
| Gustine <b>CV</b>           |                             |                             |                             |

## H

- Half Moon Bay **SFBA**
- Hamilton City **CV**
- Hanford **CV**
- Happy Camp **SC**
- Harbor City **LAC**
- Hat Creek **SC**
- Havilah **HS**
- Hawaiian Gardens **LAC**
- Hawthorne **LAC**
- Hayfork **SC**
- Hayward **SFBA**
- Healdsburg **SFBA**
- Heber **D**
- Helena **SC**
- Hemet **IE**
- Hercules **SFBA**
- Herlong **SC**
- Hermosa Beach **LAC**
- Hesperia **IE**
- Highland **IE**
- Highland Park **LAC**
- Hillsborough **SFBA**
- Hilmar **CV**
- Hilt **SC**
- Hinkley **D**
- Hollister **CC**
- Hollywood **LAC**
- Holtville **D**
- Home Gardens **IE**
- Homeland **IE**
- Homewood **HS**
- Honeydew **NC**
- Hood **CV**
- Hoopa **NC**
- Hopland **NC**
- Hornbrook **SC**
- Hornitos **SC**
- Horse Creek **SC**
- Hughson **CV**
- Huntington Beach **OC**
- Huntington Lake **HS**
- Huntington Park **LAC**
- Huron **CV**
- Hyampom **SC**

Lockeford CV  
Lodi CV  
Loleta NC  
Loma Linda IE  
Lomita LAC  
Lompoc CC  
Lone Pine HS  
Long Beach LAC  
Loomis GC  
Los Alamitos OC  
Los Alamos CC  
Los Altos SFBA  
Los Angeles LAC  
Los Banos CV  
Los Gatos SFBA  
Los Molinos SC  
Los Olivos CC  
Los Osos CC  
Lost Hills CV  
Lower Lake NC  
Loyalton GC  
Lucerne NC  
Lucerne Valley IE  
Lucia CC  
Ludlow D  
Lynwood LAC

**M**  
Macdoel SC  
Mad River SC  
Madera CV  
Malibu LAC  
Mammoth Lakes HS  
Manchester NC  
Manhattan Beach LAC  
Manteca CV  
Manton SC  
March Air Force Base IE  
Maricopa CV  
Marin City SFBA  
Marina CC  
Marina del Rey LAC  
Mariposa HS  
Mark West SFBA  
Markleeville HS  
Marshall SFBA  
Martinez SFBA  
Marysville CV  
Maxwell CV  
Maywood LAC  
McArthur SC  
McCloud SC  
McFarland CV  
McKinleyville NC  
McKittrick CV  
Meadow Vista GC  
Mecca D  
Meeks Bay HS  
Mendocino NC  
Mendota CV  
Menifee IE  
Menlo Park SFBA  
Merced CV  
Meyers HS  
Mi-wuk Village HS  
Middletown NC  
Midway City OC  
Mill Valley SFBA  
Millbrae SFBA  
Milpitas SFBA  
Mineral SC  
Mira Loma IE  
Mira Mesa SD  
Miranda NC  
Mission Beach SD  
Mission Hills LAC  
Mission Valley East SD  
Mission Valley West SD  
Mission Viejo OC  
Modesto CV  
Mojave D  
Mokelumne Hill GC  
Mono Lake HS  
Monrovia LAC  
Montague SC  
Montara SFBA  
Montclair IE  
Monte Rio SFBA  
Montebello LAC  
Montecito CV  
Monterey CC  
Monterey Park LAC  
Montrose LAC  
Moorpark CC  
Moraga SFBA  
Moreno Valley IE  
Morgan Hill CC  
Morongo Valley D  
Morro Bay CC

Moss Beach SFBA  
Moss Landing CC  
Mount Baldy IE  
Mount Hebron SC  
Mount Laguna SD  
Mount Shasta City SC  
Mountain Center IE  
Mountain Ranch GC  
Mountain View SFBA  
Murphys GC  
Murrieta IE  
Myers Flat NC

**N**  
Napa SFBA  
National City SD  
Needles D  
Nevada City GC  
New Cuyama CC  
Newark SFBA  
Newberry Springs D  
Newbury Park CC  
Newcastle GC  
Newell SC  
Newhall LAC  
Newman CV  
Newport Beach OC  
Nice NC  
Nipomo CC  
Nipton D  
Norco IE  
Nord SC  
Norden HS  
North Fork HS  
North Highlands GC  
North Hollywood LAC  
North Lake Tahoe HS  
North Sacramento GC  
North Shore D  
Northridge LAC  
Northstar HS  
Norwalk LAC  
Novato SFBA  
Nubieber SC

**O**  
O'Brien SC  
O'Neals GC  
Oak Glen IE  
Oak View CV  
Oakdale CC  
Oakdale CV  
Oakhurst HS  
Oakland SFBA  
Oakley SFBA  
Oakville SFBA  
Occidental SFBA  
Ocean Beach SD  
Oceano CC  
Oceanside SD  
Ocotillo D  
Oemette CV  
Oildale CV  
Ojai CC  
Olancha D  
Old Station SC  
Olema SFBA  
Olivehurst CV  
Olympic Valley HS  
Ontario IE  
Orange OC  
Orange Cove CV  
Orangevale GC  
Orcutt CC  
Orick NC  
Orinda SFBA  
Orland CV  
Orleans NC  
Oro Grande D  
Orosi HS  
Oroville SC  
Otay SD  
Oxnard CC

**P**  
Pacific Beach SD  
Pacific Grove CC  
Pacific Palisades LAC  
Pacifica SFBA  
Pacifica LAC  
Pacinto LAC  
Paicines CC  
Pajaro SD  
Pala SD  
Palermo SC  
Palm City SD  
Palm Desert D  
Palm Springs D  
Palmdale LAC  
Palo Alto SFBA

Palo Cedro SC  
Palo Verde D  
Palomar Mountain SD  
Palos Verdes Estates LAC  
Panamint Springs D  
Paradise SC  
Paradise Hills SD  
Paramount LAC  
Parlier CV  
Pasadena LAC  
Paso Robles CC  
Patterson CV  
Pauma Valley SD  
Paynes Creek SC  
Pearblossom LAC  
Pebble Beach CC  
Penn Valley GC  
Penryn GC  
Perris IE  
Pescadero SFBA  
Petaluma SFBA  
Phelan IE  
Phillipsville NC  
Philo NC  
Picacho D  
Pico Rivera LAC  
Piercy NC  
Pine Grove GC  
Pinomonte SD  
Pinecrest HS  
Pinole SFBA  
Pioneer GC  
Pioneertown D  
Piru CC  
Pismo Beach CC  
Pittsburg CV  
Pixley CV  
Placentia OC  
Placerville GC  
Plainville CV  
Planada CV  
Platina SC  
Pleasant Hill SFBA  
Pleasanton SFBA  
Plymouth GC  
Point Arena NC  
Point Mugu CC  
Point Reyes Station SFBA  
Pollock Pines GC  
Pomo NC  
Pomona LAC  
Pondosa SC  
Pope Valley SFBA  
Poplar CV  
Port Hueneme CC  
Porterville CV  
Portola SC  
Poway SD  
Prather CV  
Princeton CV  
Princeton-by-the-Sea SFBA  
Prunedale CC  
Pueente Hills LAC

**Q**  
Quail Valley IE  
Quartz Hill LAC  
Quincy SC

**R**  
Ramona SD  
Rancho Bernardo SD  
Rancho Cordova GC  
Rancho Cucamonga IE  
Rancho Mirage D  
Rancho Palos Verdes LAC  
Rancho Santa Fe SD  
Rancho Santa Margarita OC  
Randsburg D  
Ravendale SC  
Raymond GC  
Red Bluff SC  
Red Mountain D  
Redcrest NC  
Redding SC  
Redlands IE  
Redondo Beach LAC  
Redway NC  
Redwood City SFBA  
Redwood Valley NC  
Reedley CV  
Requa NC  
Reseda LAC  
Rialto IE  
Ricardo D  
Richgrove CV

Richmond SFBA  
Ridgecrest D  
Rio Dell NC  
Rio Linda GC  
Rio Vista CV  
Ripley D  
Ripon CV  
Riverbank CV  
Riverside IE  
Rocklin GC  
Rohnert Park SFBA  
Rohnerville NC  
Rolling Hills LAC  
Rosamond D  
Rosemead LAC  
Roseville GC  
Rough and Ready GC  
Rowland Heights LAC  
Rubidoux IE  
Running Springs IE  
Ruth SC  
Rutherford SFBA  
Ryde CV

**S**  
Sacramento GC  
St. Helena SFBA  
Salinas CC  
Salton City D  
Salyer SC  
Samoa NC  
San Andreas GC  
San Anselmo SFBA  
San Ardo CC  
San Benito CC  
San Bernardino IE  
San Bruno SFBA  
San Carlos SFBA  
San Clemente OC  
San Diego SD  
San Dimas LAC  
San Fernando LAC  
San Francisco SFBA  
San Gabriel LAC  
San Gregorio SFBA  
San Jacinto IE  
San Joaquin CV  
San José SFBA  
San Juan Bautista CC  
San Juan Capistrano OC  
San Juan Hot Springs OC  
San Leandro SFBA  
San Lucas CC  
San Luis Obispo CC  
San Luis Rey SD  
San Marcos SD  
San Marino LAC  
San Martin CC  
San Mateo SFBA  
San Miguel CC  
San Onofre OC  
San Pablo SFBA  
San Pedro LAC  
San Rafael SFBA  
San Ramon SFBA  
San Simeon CC  
San Ysidro SD  
Sanger CV  
Santa Ana OC  
Santa Barbara CC  
Santa Clara SFBA  
Santa Clarita LAC  
Santa Cruz SFBA  
Santa Fe Springs LAC  
Santa Margarita CC  
Santa Maria CC  
Santa Monica LAC  
Santa Nella CV  
Santa Paula CC  
Santa Rosa SFBA  
Santa Ynez CC  
Santa Ysabel SD  
Santee SD  
Saratoga SFBA  
Saticoy CC  
Sattley GC  
Sausalito SFBA  
Sawyers Bar SC  
Scotia NC  
Scott Bar SC  
Scotts Valley SFBA  
Sea Ranch SFBA  
Seal Beach OC  
Seaside CC  
Sebastopol SFBA  
Seiad Valley SC  
Selma CV  
Shafter CV

Shandon CC  
Shasta SC  
Shasta Lake SC  
Shaver Lake HS  
Shelter Cove NC  
Sherman Oaks LAC  
Shingle Springs GC  
Shingletown SC  
Shoshone D  
Sierra City GC  
Sierra Madre LAC  
Sierraville GC  
Signal Hill LAC  
Silverado D  
Simi Valley CC  
Skyforest IE  
Smith River NC  
Snelling CV  
Soda Springs HS  
Solana Beach SD  
Soledad CC  
Solvang CC  
Somerset GC  
Somes Bar SC  
Sonoma SFBA  
Sonora GC  
Soquel SFBA  
South Gate LAC  
South Laguna OC  
South Lake Tahoe HS  
South San Francisco SFBA  
Spring Valley SD  
Springville CV  
Stanford SFBA  
Stanton OC  
Stinson Beach SFBA  
Stockton CV  
Stovepipe Wells D  
Stratford CV  
Strathmore CV  
Studio City LAC  
Suisun City CV  
Summerland CC  
Sun City IE  
Sun Valley LAC  
Sunland LAC  
Sunnyvale SFBA  
Sunset Beach OC  
Surfside OC  
Susanville SC  
Sutter CV  
Sutter Creek GC  
Sylmar LAC

**T**  
Taft CV  
Tahoe City HS  
Tahoe Vista HS  
Tahoma HS  
Tarzana LAC  
Taylorsville SC  
Tecopa D  
Tehachapi CV  
Tehama SC  
Temecula IE  
Temple City LAC  
Templeton CC  
Termo SC  
Thermal D  
Thermalito SC  
Thornton CV  
Thousand Oaks CC  
Thousand Palms D  
Three Rivers CV  
Tiburon SFBA  
Tipton CV  
Toluca Lake LAC  
Tom's Place HS  
Tomas SFBA  
Topanga LAC  
Torrance LAC  
Trabuco Canyon OC  
Tracy CV  
Trinidad NC  
Trinity Center SC  
Trona D  
Truckee HS  
Tujunga LAC  
Tulare CV  
Tulelake SC  
Tulume GC  
Turlock CV  
Tustin OC  
Twain Harte GC  
Twenty-nine Palms D  
Twin Bridges HS  
Two Harbors OC

**U**  
Ukiah NC  
Union City SFBA  
Universal City LAC  
Upland IE  
Upper Lake NC

**V**  
Vacaville CV  
Valencia LAC  
Vallecito GC  
Vallejo SFBA  
Valley Center SD  
Valley Ford SFBA  
Valley Springs GC  
Van Nuys LAC  
Venice LAC  
Ventucopa CC  
Ventura CC  
Vernalis CV  
Vernon LAC  
Victorville IE  
Vidal D  
Vidal Junction D  
Villa Park OC  
Vina SC  
Vinton SC  
Visalia CV  
Vista SD  
Volcano GC

**W**  
Walders Basin HS  
Walker HS  
Walnut LAC  
Walnut Creek SFBA  
Walnut Grove CV  
Warner Springs SD  
Wasco CV  
Waterford CV  
Watsonville SFBA  
Wawona HS  
Weaverville SC  
Weed SC  
Weimar GC  
Weitchpec NC  
Weldon HS  
Wendell SC  
Weott NC  
West Covina LAC  
West Hollywood LAC  
West Los Angeles LAC  
West Point GC  
West Sacramento CV  
Westchester LAC  
Westlake Village LAC  
Westley CV  
Westminster OC  
Westmoreland D  
Westport NC  
Westwood LAC  
Westwood SC  
Wheatland CV  
Wheeler Ridge CV  
Whiskeytown SC  
Whittier LAC  
Whittier NC  
Wildomar IE  
Williams CV  
Willits NC  
Willow Creek NC  
Willow Ranch SC  
Willows CV  
Wilmington LAC  
Winchester IE  
Windsor SFBA  
Winnetka LAC  
Winterhaven D  
Winters CV  
Winton CV  
Woodcrest IE  
Woodlake CV  
Woodland CV  
Woodland Hills LAC  
Woodside SFBA  
Woodville CV  
Wrightwood IE

**Y**  
Yermo D  
Yokuts Valley HS  
Yolo CV  
Yorba Linda OC  
Yosemite Village HS  
Yountville SFBA  
Yreka SC  
Yuba City CV  
Yucaipa IE  
Yucca Valley D



# Tamera Mowry-Housley

THE SISTER, SISTER STAR TOASTS ALL THE FABULOUS WINE, FOOD, AND FUN THAT AWAIT HER AT HOME IN NAPA VALLEY AND THROUGHOUT THE GOLDEN STATE

**Where do you live?** Napa Valley.

**Why there?** Napa is where my husband, Adam, and his family grew up—and they are sixth-generation Californians. On one of our first dates he took me to what's now our family's winery, Century Oak, and I helped him clean out the tanks after harvest. I love wine country, and we have a winery and tasting room and coffee pub called BarnHouse.

**Who or what is your greatest California love?** Diversity—in every way. You can be in the stunning mountains of Lake Tahoe and Shasta, you have all the coast, from San Diego and L.A. to the spectacular North Coast. There are the plains of the Central Valley and the Gold Rush area of the foothills with little towns like Amador City and Sutter Creek.

**What is the biggest misperception about Californians?** That we are blond-haired and blue-eyed. I debunk that!

**What is the stereotype that most holds true?** Californians love the outdoors and the weather. Whether on the beach or the snow, we love to get outside.



Sister, Sister

**What is your favorite Golden State splurge?**

We love going to spas and resorts. Of course, we have them here in wine country, like Auberger or Stanly Ranch, but we've enjoyed Carmel Valley Ranch and numerous places in Orange County, San Diego, and even under the Golden Gate Bridge at Cavallo Point. Many times we even take the kids because there are so many with kid programs that cater to outdoor adventure.

**Time for a road trip—where are you going?** I would jump in the car with Adam and head to Tomales for some fresh oysters and then stop in Bodega Bay for the clam chowder and then end up in a place like Timber Cove or Mendocino to see the gorgeous ocean views.

**If you could decree an official state culinary experience, what would it be?** To enjoy just any farm-to-table restaurant in the Napa Valley. There are so many amazing places to eat. There's Farmstead, Brasswood, Bistro Don Giovanni, Mustards, Bistro Jeanty, and local places like Il Posto.

**What is your favorite way to play in California?** Go wine tasting! While we love Napa Valley and the amazing wines here, we also enjoy other regions. Tastings in Suisun Valley—there's a new Caymus location that is beautiful—in Lodi at Century Oak, in the foothills, the Central Coast, Sonoma, and Santa Barbara.



**Where would you go for the ultimate shopping spree in California?**

We have been shopping at the Century City Mall for years, especially when Adam and I used to live just down the street. I also love to find little boutiques. There are some amazing ones in L.A. and in the Bay Area. We also had the chance to shop in the Santana Row area of San Jose and it was fantastic.

**Best California song?**

It's a tie between "California Love" by 2Pac and "Going Back to Cali" by LL Cool J, one of our wedding songs!

**How would your California dream day unfold?** Waking up to see the golden sunrise over the hills, then going on a spa date and wine tasting, and then an amazing dinner. In between, horseback riding through the foothills and shopping at boutiques. At the end of the day, cuddles and hugs from my kids as we watch the sun set over the ocean. ✨

Lake Tahoe



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