
the best of
2026
California
OFFICIAL VISITOR'S GUIDE
MANDY MOORE'S CALIFORNIA STORY
5 EPIC ITINERARIES
Plan your perfect California getaway
WHAT'S NEW NOW
Hot hotels, trending restaurants, and must-sees
PRO TRAVEL TIPS
Insider hacks for exploring more, spending less
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The end of the road is just the beginning.

The most iconic road trip in the US leads right to the Santa Monica Pier. But no matter what route you take, the big question is: what happens next? With beach vibes and city vibrations, your next adventure begins in Santa Monica.

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SANTA MONICA

WELCOME, WORLD

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DAN KURTZMAN/GETTY IMAGES

San Francisco

FUNDED IN PART WITH CITY OF SAN DIEGO TOURISM MARKETING DISTRICT ASSESSMENT FUNDS.

The sun's up in San Diego —
but something else is rising too.

A feeling. A vibe calling you to
pick a side. Not against anything,
but for something.

For laughter. For happiness.
For beach strolls, an afternoon sail,
maybe a concert under the stars.

Because when you open yourself
to joy, you spark it in others.

So come on down —
we saved you a spot to shine.

Join us at **SanDiego.org**

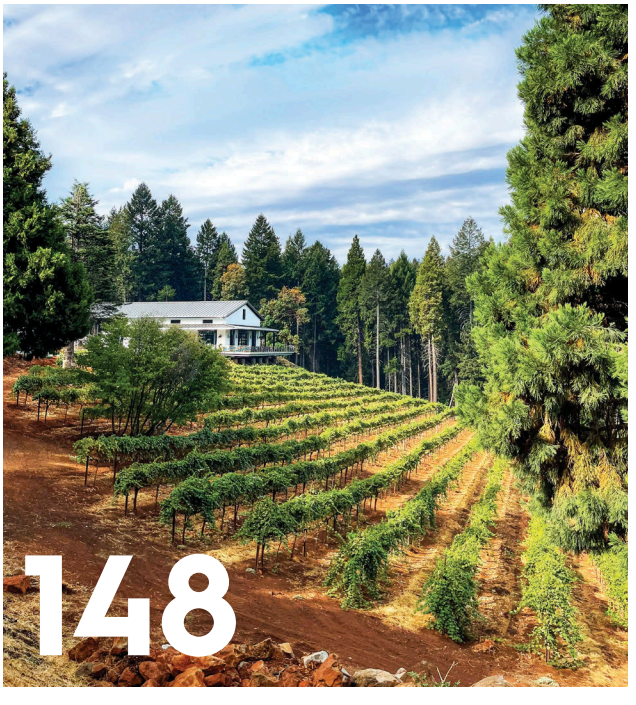


COME TO THE BRIGHT SIDE

San Diego®







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A celebrated wine region packed with outdoor offerings including hot springs and balloon rides

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Cliffside beach views paired with theme park thrills

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The land of tasting rooms, vinyl trails, and epic hikes

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Carve through the powder in this winter wonderland

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Whitewater adventures, flower fields, and an impressive collection of family-friendly museums

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A whimsical world dotted with historic homes and bridges that lead into awe-inspiring redwood forests

167 SHASTA CASCADE Volcanic springs, waterfalls, and miles of underground caverns create a magical wonderland

TOP LEFT Sip wellness tonics and lounge in the rain room at Terra in Palm Springs. **MIDDLE PHOTO** Try the Alitas de Pollo at Cubita restaurant in San Francisco. **BOTTOM LEFT** The delicious dry cider at Delfino Farms pairs perfectly with their apple pie.

ON THE COVER

Mandy Moore

The star of *This Is Us*, *Tangled*, and *The Breadwinner* was photographed in Los Angeles County at The Langham Huntington, Pasadena.

PHOTOGRAPHER
PETER YANG

FROM TOP: COURTESY TERRA PALM SPRINGS; MICHELLE MIN/COURTESY CUBITA; COURTESY DELFINO FARMS

CUE THE SUNSHINE



The forecast called for nonstop rain the day of Mandy Moore's cover shoot. Umbrellas in hand, we stepped into the Langham Huntington in Pasadena ready to improvise. But when she arrived, Moore brought the California sunshine with her. The clouds parted as the singer, actor, and Southern California local filled the space with her effortless warmth and grounded optimism.

And then, almost like magic, a rainbow appeared in the sky, and Moore ran outside with the photo team to take it all in. It felt perfectly fitting—an image of creativity, joy, and renewal that mirrors both Moore's story and the spirit of California itself.

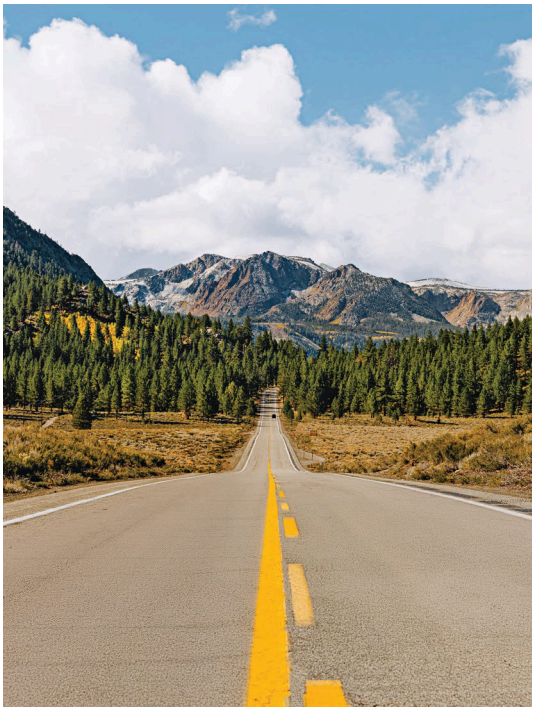
This year's guide celebrates that same spirit. Inside, you'll find our new "Golden Guide," a curated collection of perfect bites and hidden-gem hotels; a personalized, itinerary-based guide designed to help you travel according to your own vibe (page 36); "Tips For California Trips," packed with smart ways to make the most of your next getaway (page 60); and "Gold Medal—Worthy Getaways," spotlighting athlete favorites at California's snowiest playgrounds (page 68). You'll also be transported by a breathtaking photo essay of the Eastern Sierra—a reminder of how much beauty waits just beyond the beaten path.

As the United States approaches its 250th anniversary, California is preparing to shine on the global stage. With the Route 66 Centennial, the FIFA World Cup 2026, two Super Bowls and the LA28 Olympic and Paralympic Games on the horizon, there's never been a more exciting time to experience the Golden State.

Wherever your travels take you, I hope this guide reminds you of the possibilities that await you here. California is ready to welcome you with open skies and open arms.



CAROLINE BETETA
PRESIDENT AND CEO,
VISIT CALIFORNIA





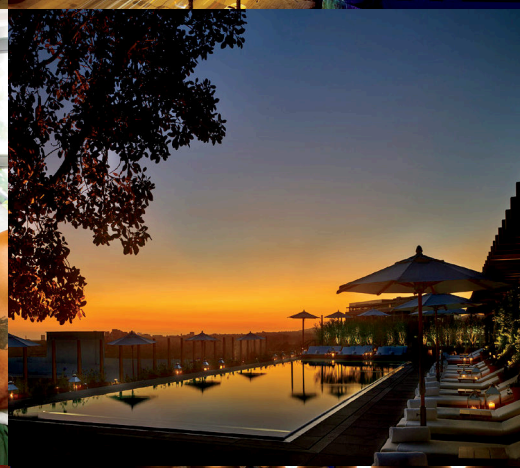
TOP ABOVE Photographer Dane Deaner road-tripped through the High Sierra capturing the mountains' majesty. **TOP BELOW** Cover star Mandy Moore pauses under a rainbow outside the Langham Huntington in Pasadena.

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: VISIT CALIFORNIA; DANE DEANER; JENÉ SHAW












There's a distinctive spirit that flows throughout West Hollywood.

One that fills you with the sense that something magical is about to happen.

From the moment you check into your hotel that once hosted your favorite rock star.

Or that urban oasis that's a whole relaxing vacation in itself.

Whether it's sipping a sunset margarita by the pool. That's on the roof. With city views for days.

Getting the celebrity treatment by having the spa come to you for an in-room facial.

Or ending the perfect date night by strolling, hand-in-hand, down streets where magic did indeed happen.

It's a spirit that can't be felt anywhere else. It's unmistakably West Hollywood.

UNMISTAKABLY WEST HOLLYWOOD

West Hollywood

VISITWESTHOLLYWOOD.COM

EXPLORE OUR 12 TOURISM REGIONS

CALIFORNIA WELCOME CENTERS℠

Stop by our state Welcome Centers to pick up free guides, talk to local travel experts, and get tips on dining and lodging. Please contact the center directly or go to *visitcwc.com* to confirm the center is open. Welcome Centers are listed here, north to south in each region.

SHASTA CASCADE
ANDERSON • 1699 Highway 273; 530/365-1180

NORTH COAST
EUREKA • 108 F St.; 707/441-4150
UKIAH • 200 South School St.; 707/391-0474

GOLD COUNTRY
AUBURN • 1103 High St., Suite 150; 530/887-2111
EL DORADO HILLS • 2023 Vine St., Suite 105; 916/358-3700

SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA
SANTA ROSA • 9 Fourth St.; 800/404-7673
SAN FRANCISCO • PIER 39, #B16, 2nd Level; 415/377-2707
HALF MOON BAY • *New address coming soon*; 650/726-8380

HIGH SIERRA
MAMMOTH LAKES • 2510 Main St.; 760/924-5501

CENTRAL VALLEY
FAIRFIELD • Jelly Belly Candy Company, 1 Jelly Belly Lane; 877/793-7386
MODESTO • 1315 J St.; 209/526-5588

CENTRAL COAST
GILROY • 8155-6 Arroyo Circle, Building A; 408/842-6436
SALINAS • 1-A Station Place; 831/757-8687

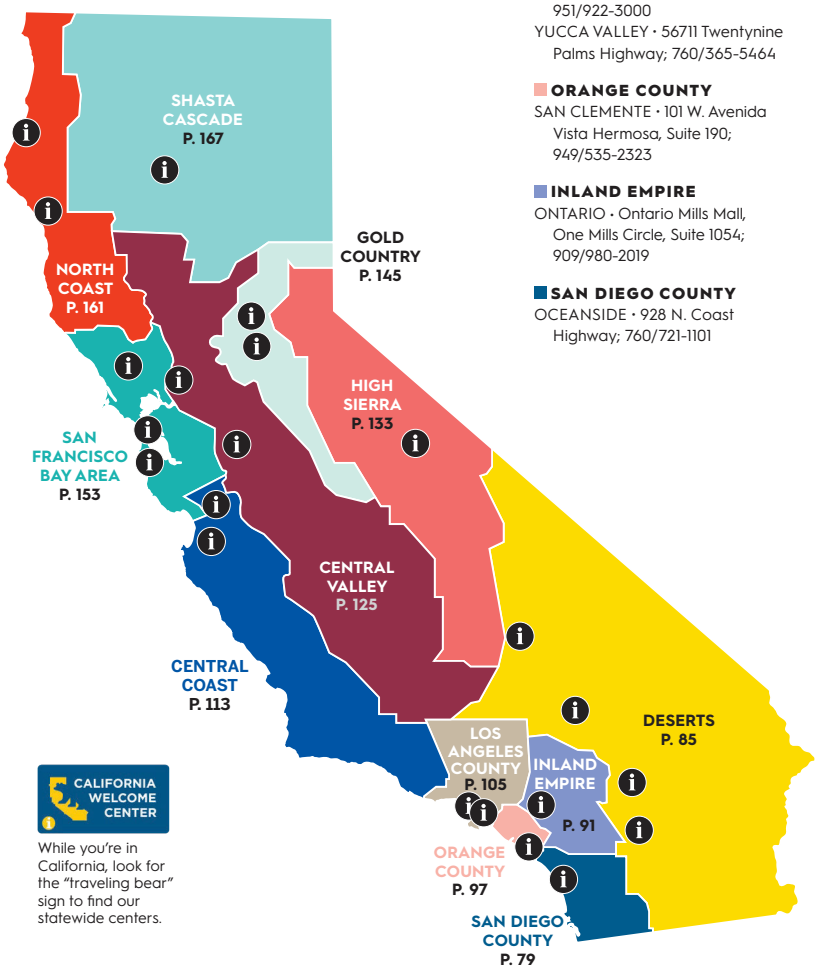
LOS ANGELES COUNTY
LOS ANGELES • 100 Citadel Dr., Suite 480; 323/888-1724
TORRANCE • Del Amo Fashion Center, 3525 W. Carson St.; 424/392-7495

DESERTS
RIDGECREST • 880 N. China Lake Blvd.; 760/375-8202
BARSTOW • 2796 Tanger Way, Suite 100; 760/253-4782
CABAZON • Cabazon Outlets, 48750 Seminole Dr., Suite #100; 951/922-3000
YUCCA VALLEY • 56711 Twentynine Palms Highway; 760/365-5464

ORANGE COUNTY
SAN CLEMENTE • 101 W. Avenida Vista Hermosa, Suite 190; 949/535-2323

INLAND EMPIRE
ONTARIO • Ontario Mills Mall, One Mills Circle, Suite 1054; 909/980-2019

SAN DIEGO COUNTY
OCEANSIDE • 928 N. Coast Highway; 760/721-1101



CALIFORNIA WELCOME CENTER

While you're in California, look for the "traveling bear" sign to find our statewide centers.

FOR MORE INFORMATION Please go to *visitcwc.com*

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2026 Official State Visitor's Guide™ and Travel Planner

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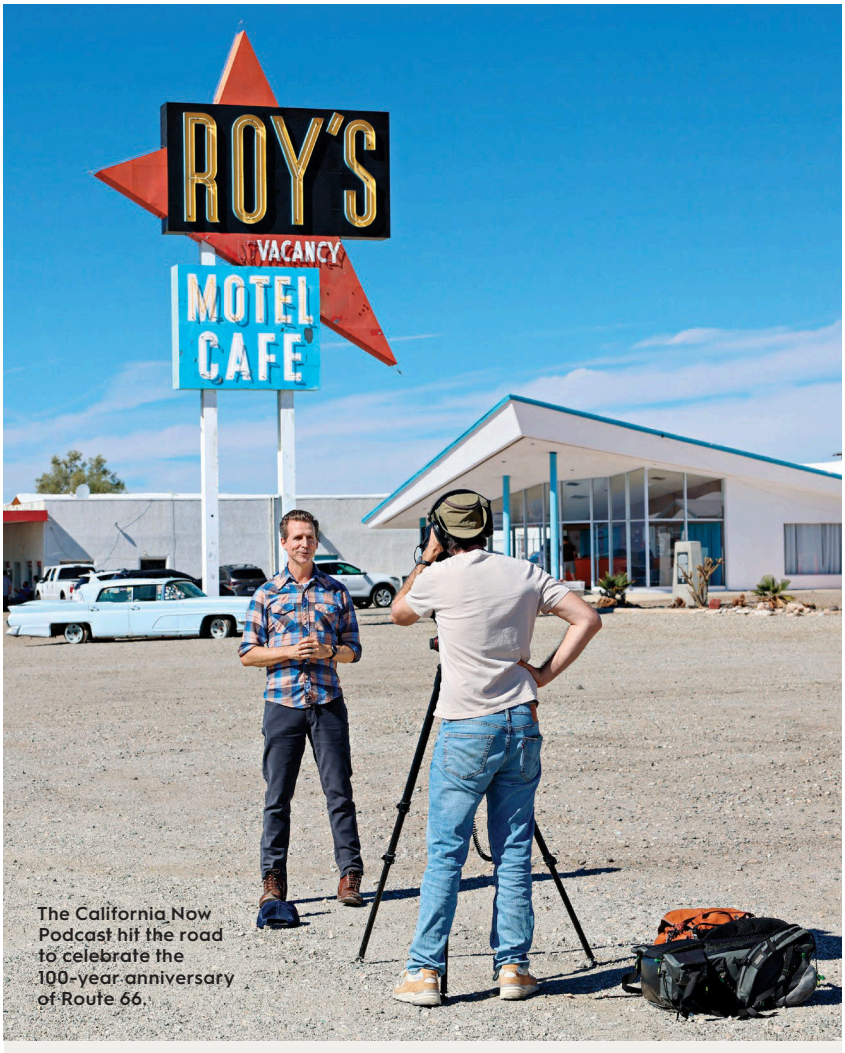
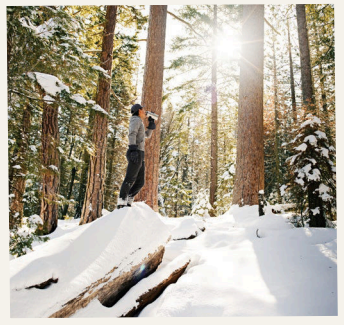


The California Now Podcast hit the road to celebrate the 100-year anniversary of Route 66.

LISTEN IN

Josh Meyers uncovers the best of the Golden State on the **California Now Podcast.** Hear stories from the people who help make this state an unforgettable travel destination.
visitcalifornia.com/podcasts

TUNE IN
Scan the QR code to hear the latest episodes of the California Now Podcast



GET WEEKLY TRAVEL INSPIRATION

Need ideas for your next great trip? Sign up for our email newsletter to get a monthly calendar of can't-miss events, vacation itineraries, special offers, and travel tips sent straight to your inbox.
visitcalifornia.com/newsletters



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Visit our YouTube channel to plan your next California adventure. Explore our expertly curated travel itineraries, side-quest suggestions, "Perfect Day" plans, and scenic road trip ideas.
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CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT: KYLEE KRIZMANIC; DANA NEIBERT/GETTY IMAGES; ALEX POTEMKIN/GETTY IMAGES


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GOLDEN GUIDE

Bites • Adventures • Events • Culture • Outdoors

ON ISLAND TIME

Five California islands filled with history, wildlife, and heaps of coastal charm



FANNETTE ISLAND

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

CATALINA ISLAND
Los Angeles County

An hour from L.A., Catalina—the only stayable island on this list—offers snorkeling and roaming bison. Explore Catalina Casino, a 1929 landmark with a roller-skating rink and a movie theater.

FANNETTE ISLAND
Lake Tahoe

Paddle out to this tiny island in Emerald Bay to explore the stony ruins of a teahouse built by Tahoe's eccentric 1920s hostess.

SANTA CRUZ ISLAND
Channel Islands National Park

Santa Cruz is the largest of the eight Channel Islands with sea cliffs, the Painted Cave, and elusive island fox, found only on six of the Channel Islands.

TREASURE ISLAND
San Francisco Bay Area

Hop on a 10-minute ferry from San Francisco to brunch at Aracely Café or catch sunset views on this quirky man-made island created for the 1939 Golden Gate International Exposition.

WOODLEY ISLAND
Eureka

This working harbor offers a slow-paced stop on the way to the redwoods. Buy Dungeness crab straight off the boat and enjoy chowder dockside at Café Marina.



LAKE SHASTA CAVERNS

LET'S GO UNDERGROUND

Dark, dramatic, and dripping with history, California's caves are open for adventure

LAKE SHASTA CAVERNS

Just 20 miles north of Redding lies a 250-million-year-old underground world sculpted by nature. Accessible only via catamaran across Shasta Lake, Lake Shasta Caverns National Natural Landmark is now more dazzling than ever thanks to a recent renovation, which replaced 183 old bulbs with 1,000-plus state-of-the-art, energy-efficient LEDs. The highlight is the finale in the Cathedral Room, where multicolored LEDs light up the cave for a choreographed show.

CRYSTAL CAVE

Sequoia National Park may be famous for its towering trees, but there's even more magic beneath the surface. After being closed for four years, Crystal Cave—the only publicly accessible cave of the park's 275—has recently reopened. Book a guided tour to see calcite formations and an ancient stream.

GOLDEN DOME CAVE

Home to more than 800 caves, 24 of which are open to the public, Lava Beds National Monument in Tulelake is a geologic treasure trove. The park's crown jewel, Golden Dome, features an inner chamber coated in light-reflective, water-repelling bacteria that glimmers like gold leaf when touched by light.

CALIFORNIA CAVERN

Tap into your inner spelunker with a visit to this State Historic Landmark in the Sierra Nevada foothills. Take a walking tour with optional wriggles through narrow passageways—or embark on a more adventurous expedition that involves wading in knee-deep clay and crossing an underground lake by raft.

WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE

California's diverse landscapes teem with wildlife. Here are some of the state's signature creatures and surefire spots for viewing them:



ROOSEVELT ELK
At Redwoods National and State Parks in Humboldt County, the aptly named Elk Meadow and Elk Prairie are popular hangouts.



SOUTHERN SEA OTTERS
Spot the fuzzy cuties floating on their backs at Morro Bay Harbor, Monterey Bay, and Moss Landing State Beach (at the end of Jetty Road).



NORTHERN ELEPHANT SEALS
Pull off Highway 1 at San Simeon's Piedras Blancas Elephant Seal Rookery to see thousands of blubbery pinnipeds lounging on the sand from December to March. They also favor the beaches at Año Nuevo State Park and Point Reyes.



PENINSULAR BIGHORN SHEEP
In Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, bighorn sheep live a quiet life. Hike the South Lykken or Garstin trails to spot herds.

AMANDA FRIEDMAN

SAN JOSÉ 26

Fly. Stay. Play.

Biggest Games. Biggest Parties. Easiest Access.

Check it out at SJ26.org.



VISIT SAN JOSÉ CALIFORNIA

GET THE SCOOP

In the land of sunshine and innovation, even the ice cream is unexpected. These creameries are blending farmers' market finds, cultural traditions, and boundary-pushing creativity into every pint.



STONEFRUIT SUNSET

NICE DREAM, YUCCA VALLEY

A swirl of JH Family Ranch red plum, green plum, and yellow nectarine sorbets



TEXAS TWINKIE

AMPERSAND ICE CREAM, FRESNO

Black pepper cream-cheese swirled with jalapeño-bacon jam and smoked brisket

PERSIAN CUCUMBER

MASHTI MALONE'S, LOS ANGELES

This decades-old scoop shop is known for its Persian ice cream flavors



SECRET BREAKFAST

HUMPHRY SLOCOMBE, SAN FRANCISCO

Bourbon ice cream with carmelized cornflake cookies

CARSON DOWNING



LAVENDER HONEY

CARMELA, PASADENA

"Garden-inspired" with organic lavender flowers steeped in the milk and cream

TINKY WINKY

BAD WALTER'S BOOTLEG ICE CREAM, OAKLAND

Ube frozen custard and honeycomb toffee chunks

SANDALS

AN'S GELATO, SAN DIEGO

The hue comes from the butterfly pea flowers in Paru Tea's blue chamomile

BLUEBERRY GOAT CHEESECAKE

TASTE & SEE CREAMERY, REDDING

The star ingredient is their house-made blueberry compote

A ROCKY (ROAD) ORIGIN STORY

Ice cream urban legend states that Rocky Road was invented in California in the late 1920s. While the official bragging rights remain in limbo, here are a few scoopers we recommend tasting.



ROCKY ROAD
Fentons Creamery, Oakland

Walnuts, mini marshmallows, and a milk chocolate base



VIETNAMESE ROCKY ROAD
Wanderlust Creamery, Multiple locations

Vietnamese coffee ice cream swirled with condensed milk, marshmallow creme, crunchy caramelized cacao nibs, and French roast nibs



ROCKY ROAD
Manhattan Beach Creamery, Manhattan Beach

Decadently rich ice cream paired with mini marshmallows and almonds

ACCESS FOR ALL

From national parks to airports, California improves accessibility for wheelchair users, neurodivergent travelers, and more

California goes the extra mile to make sure every visitor feels welcome, including wheelchair users, neurodivergent travelers, and people who are visually or auditorily impaired. Check out these recent accessibility upgrades across the state:

NATIONAL PARKS

Sequoia and Kings Canyon released a video series highlighting features such as wheelchair-accessible campsites and shuttle buses to paved trails in giant sequoia groves. Yosemite improved access to Bridalveil Fall by adding larger viewing platforms and constructing ADA-compliant restrooms. Death Valley now offers an online guide to help neurodivergent travelers navigate the park's sensory experiences.

THEME PARKS

Through its Attractions Assistance Pass, Universal Studios Hollywood offers accommodations for visitors with cognitive disabilities who may have difficulty waiting in lines. Disneyland Resort has rolled out updates to its MagicBand+ program with new customization features for neurodivergent guests.

DESERT CITIES

The Greater Palm Springs area is now a Certified Autism Destination. The staff at dozens of hotels, restaurants, and attractions have undergone autism training to help travelers with sensory sensitivities enjoy their desert vacations.

TRANSPORTATION

In 2026, Sacramento International Airport will open an ADA-compliant skybridge to provide wheelchair and pedestrian access between Terminal B and Concourse B. California's train stations have undergone recent upgrades through the All Stations Accessibility Program, which provides funding to improve access for people with disabilities.



MOONSTONE BEACH, CAMBRIA



UNIVERSAL STUDIOS HOLLYWOOD

ACCESSIBILITY HUB
Check out our travel accessibility guide



WHEELCHAIR-FRIENDLY BEACHES

California continues to make it easier than ever for wheelchair users to explore the Golden State's great outdoors.

Travel + Leisure named **Huntington Beach** one of the top 10 beaches in the U.S. for wheelchair users, thanks to its 8.5 miles of smooth, paved oceanfront trail. Visitors can get even closer to the waves via mobi-mats and free or rental beach wheelchairs available at many other SoCal favorites, including **Venice Beach, Hermosa Beach, La Jolla Shores,** and **Ocean Beach.**

Farther up the coast, Monterey's **Del Monte Beach** and San Francisco's **Crissy Field** both offer accessible boardwalks and viewing areas that open up sweeping Pacific views. These easy-access spots invite visitors to enjoy the coast's natural beauty—no sand hurdles required.

Inland adventurers can roll riverside at Sacramento's **William B. Pond Recreation Area,** where smooth trails and accessible fishing docks make for a peaceful day by the water.

5 PERFECT BITES ALONG HIGHWAY 1

All along this iconic stretch of highway, one-of-a-kind roadside restaurants offer travelers tasty excuses to pull over. *Note: Always check current road conditions before traveling.*

Add these five must-stops to your route, listed north to south, for some local flavor with a side of ocean views.

GRILLED OYSTERS

Hog Island Oyster Co., Marshall

Fresh oysters grilled with smoky chipotle bourbon butter, served feet from Tomales Bay. Briny, savory, addictive—order two trays.

MUSHROOM SANDWICH

Dad's Luncheonette, Half Moon Bay

In a bright-red caboose by the sea, a former Michelin-starred chef serves this rich, mushroom-packed menu staple stacked with a runny egg, pickled onions, and Dad's signature sauce.

OLALLIEBERRY PIE

Duarte's Tavern, Pescadero

Enjoy a slice of jammy, crusty goodness loaded with fresh olallieberries—a signature of the region. Duarte's grows their own just up the road.

AMBROSIA BURGER

Nepenthe, Big Sur

Big Sur's famous burger is slathered with a tangy, Ambrosia sauce you'll not soon forget. Best enjoyed perched on the stunning cliffside terrace.

BROWN BUTTER SEA SALT COOKIE

Brown Butter Cookie Company, Cayucos (and other locations)

Famous for their buttery cookies sprinkled with sea salt, this beloved bakery started in Cayucos. Try the classic or variations such as toffee chocolate chip.

1



2



3



4



Have Brown Butter Cookie Company delivered right to your door with the Cookie Club. ↓

5



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: COURTESY HOG ISLAND OYSTER COMPANY; COURTESY DUARTE'S TAVERN; COURTESY NEPENTHE; COURTESY BROWN BUTTER COOKIE COMPANY; COURTESY UNIVERSAL STUDIOS HOLLYWOOD; ISTOCKPHOTO/GETTY IMAGES; JLPH/GETTY IMAGES

TRAVEL INFORMATION GUIDE

Use this handy resource to receive **free information** from the advertisers listed here.
The number on the left of each advertiser corresponds to the tear-out card on the next page.

SAN DIEGO (801)

See ads, pgs. 78-83

1 Bahia Resort Hotel
2 Birch Aquarium at Scripps Institution of Oceanography at UC San Diego
3 Catamaran Resort Hotel and Spa
4 San Diego Tourism Authority
5 San Diego Zoo
6 The Lodge at Torrey Pines
7 Visit Carlsbad

DESERTS (802)

See ads, pgs. 84-89

8 Palm Springs Aerial Tramway
9 The Oasis at Death Valley

INLAND EMPIRE (803)

See ads, pgs. 90-95

10 San Bernardino County
11 Visit Big Bear

ORANGE COUNTY (804)

See ads, pgs. 96-103

12 Paséa Hotel & Spa
13 South Coast Plaza
14 The Waterfront Beach Resort, a Hilton Hotel
15 Visit Buena Park
16 Visit Huntington Beach

LOS ANGELES COUNTY (805)

See ads, pgs. 104-111

17 Discover Claremont
18 Santa Monica Travel & Tourism
19 SoFi Stadium Tours
20 Visit Long Beach
21 Visit Pasadena
22 Visit West Hollywood

CENTRAL COAST (806)

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23 Cannery Row
24 City of Solvang
25 Explore Lompoc
26 Gilroy Gardens Family Theme Park
27 Pismo Beach
28 Portola Hotel & Spa
29 See Monterey
30 Tickle Pink Inn
31 Ventura Harbor Village
32 Visit Arroyo Grande
33 Visit Camarillo
34 Visit Oxnard
35 Visit San Luis Obispo
36 Visit Santa Barbara
37 Visit the Santa Ynez Valley
38 Visit Ventura

CENTRAL VALLEY (807)

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39 Sequoia Tourism Council
40 Visit Bakersfield
41 Visit Fairfield
42 Visit Fresno County
43 Visit Lodi
44 Visit Oakdale
45 Visit Modesto
46 Visit Stockton
47 Visit Visalia
48 Visit Yolo

HIGH SIERRA (808)

See ads, pgs. 132-143

49 Bass Lake Chamber of Commerce
50 Bike Lake Tahoe by Clearly Tahoe
51 Chukchansi Gold Resort & Casino
52 Clearly Tahoe Clear Kayaks
53 Desolation Hotel Hope Valley
54 Evergreen Lodge at Yosemite
55 Firefall Ranch at Yosemite
56 Fresno Yosemite International Airport
57 Lake Tahoe Accommodations
58 Lake Tahoe Balloons
59 Lake Tahoe Travel
60 Majestic Mountain Loop
61 Margaritaville Resort Lake Tahoe
62 Mono County Tourism
63 Rush Creek Lodge & Spa at Yosemite
64 Station House Inn
65 Tahoe Helicopters
66 Tahoe Lakeshore Lodge & Spa
67 Tenaya at Yosemite
68 The Landing Lake Tahoe Resort & Spa
69 The Redwoods in Yosemite
70 Visit Lake Tahoe
71 Visit Tuolumne County
72 Visit Yosemite | Madera County
73 Yosemite Mariposa County Tourism Bureau
74 Yosemite Mountain Sugar Pine Railroad
75 Yosemite's Scenic Wonders

GOLD COUNTRY (809)

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76 Current Adventure Kayaking / Lake Natoma Paddle Rentals
77 Dodge Ridge Mountain Resort
78 Don Pedro Recreation Agency
79 Helwig Winery
80 Mother Lode River Center
81 National Hotel Jackson
82 Sutter Creek Visitors Bureau
83 The Pines Resort
84 The River Fox Train
85 Visit Amador
86 Visit Folsom
87 Visit Placer
88 Visit Rancho Cordova
89 Visit Sonora

SAN FRANCISCO (810)

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90 Charles M. Schulz Museum
91 Choice Hotels
92 Exploratorium
93 Jelly Belly
94 Livermore Valley Wine Community
95 Marin French Cheese Co.
96 Petaluma Visitors Program

97 San Francisco North/Petaluma KOA
98 Sonoma County Tourism
99 The San Francisco Peninsula
100 Visit San Jose
101 Visit Tri-Valley

NORTH COAST (811)

See ads, pgs. 160-165

102 Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens
103 The Skunk Train
104 Trees of Mystery
105 Visit Ukiah

SHASTA CASCADE (812)

See ads, pgs. 166-173

106 California Welcome Center
107 Choose Redding Lodging
108 Explore Butte County
109 Lake Shasta Caverns National Natural Landmark
110 Plumas County Tourism
111 McCloud River Mercantile Co. Store & Hotel
112 Shasta Marina at Packers Bay
113 St. Bernard Lodge
114 Turtle Bay Exploration Park
115 UpStateCA Waterfalls Guide
116 Win-River Resort & Casino

FREE INFORMATION

BY MAIL

1. Circle your choices on the tear-out card.

2. Write in your name and address.

3. Tear out the postage-paid card and mail.

Information for this card will not be provided after December 31, 2026.

BY PHONE

1. Circle the items you are interested in receiving and have the numbers ready for the operator.

2. To order, call 844/222-3221 *(toll-free for U.S. and Canada)*



Roaring Camp Railroads

YHELFMAN/SHUTTERSTOCK



RETRO REVIVAL

California brims with reimagined motels and roadside lodges—these six celebrate neon nostalgia and midcentury style while adding fresh new amenities and serious design cred



RIVER LODGE

Paso Robles

Once known for its can't-miss "MOTEL" sign overlooking the Salinas River, the 1940s-era Suburban Lodge is now River Lodge, a retro-chic Paso Robles escape. Its 28 guest rooms overlook a courtyard with rose gardens, firepits, billiards, and an adults-only pool and hot tub. Admire the Googie architecture before dining poolside at Ciao Papi, where sourdough-crusted pizzas, pastas, craft cocktails, and local wines await.

PACIFIC MOTEL

Cayucos

Located in one of California's classic beach towns, Cayucos' Pacific Motel is a labor of love by local couple Ryan and Marisa Fortini. The duo spent two and a half years fixing up the original 1920s bungalows and 1950s motel rooms, now sporting a beachy blue-and-white palette. Socialize in one of the motel's communal spaces—ping-pong and firepits included.



DID YOU KNOW

The world's first motel opened in San Luis Obispo, California, in 1925. Known as the Milestone Mo-tel, then Motel Inn, the now-closed retreat was designed so guests could drive their cars right up to the door of their rooms. Its name "motel" was coined by blending the words motor and hotel.





STARDUST HOTEL

Palm Springs

A recent $2 million renovation that included a fresh pink paint job, groovy wallpaper, and ornate tilework set the scene at the Stardust Hotel, a nine-room boutique property in Palm Springs that dates to 1955. Guests can lounge at the outdoor firepit, raid the vintage wardrobe closet, and even purchase the decor. Luxe add-ons include in-room massages, private chefs, yoga classes, cabana boys, and more.

HOTEL JUNE

Malibu

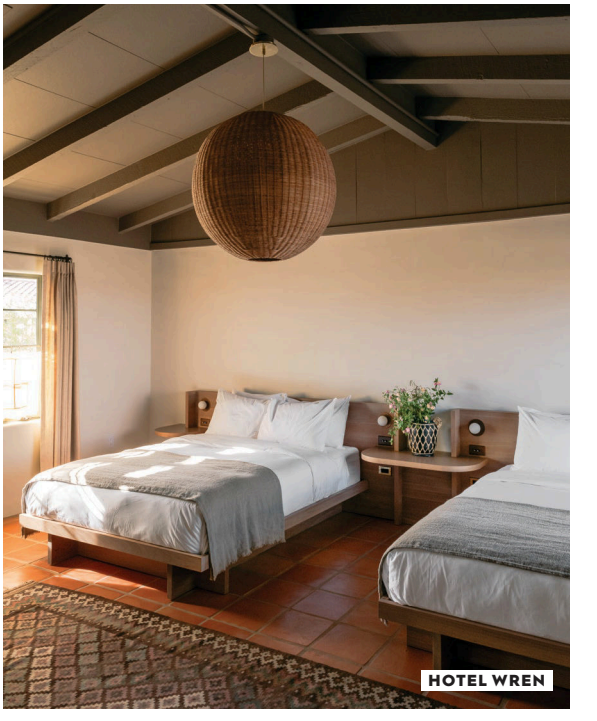
Founded by newlyweds Wayne and Helen Wilcox in 1949, this dreamy hotel along Pacific Coast Highway has long drawn artists—including Bob Dylan, who wrote *Blood on the Tracks* in bungalow 13. Reimagined as Hotel June in 2021, the property now features 13 bungalows with patios and Wayne's black-and-white photography. Borrow a bike and cruise to nearby Point Dume.

THE GRANGER HOTEL

San Diego

In its former life, The Granger Hotel was an office building and once housed a bank and a jewelry store. Later, it housed tigers, bears, and monkeys during the founding of the San Diego Zoo. Today, this design-forward hotel features vintage touches like 120-year-old doors, plus a custom ceiling mural, lobby bar, and a moody parlor room serving vesper martinis and ice cream sundaes.



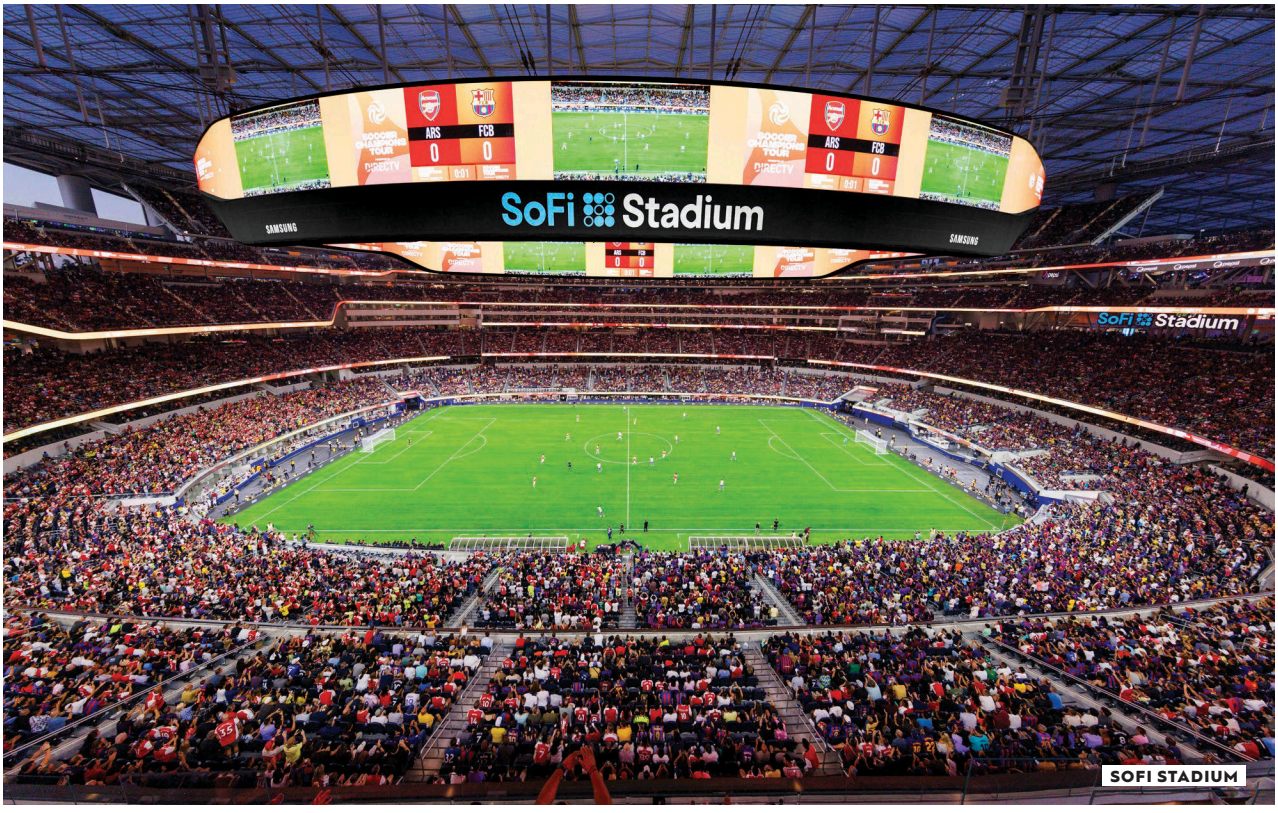


HOTEL WREN

Twentynine Palms

This 12-room escape began as a humble 1940s roadside motel. In 2025, the transformed property reopened as Hotel Wren, a stylish desert hideaway just 10 minutes from Joshua Tree National Park. Larger parties may opt to stay in the Wren House, a midcentury home overlooking the Pinto Mountains.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: KARYN MILLET/COURTESY NOMADA HOTEL GROUP; COURTESY STARDUST HOTEL (2); COURTESY HOTEL WREN; COURTESY HOTEL JUNE; COURTESY THE PACIFIC MOTEL; COURTESY NOMADA HOTEL GROUP; KARYN MILLET/COURTESY NOMADA HOTEL GROUP



SOFI STADIUM

GAME ON

California is set to host a series of once-in-a-lifetime events in 2026, making it a banner year for sports fans around the globe. These epic experiences are amplified by vacation-worthy packages and unforgettable parties that transform each competition into a can't-miss celebration. This is the year to go big.

FEB. 8, 2026

SUPER BOWL LX

Levi's Stadium, Santa Clara

The NFL's biggest game of the year returns to the Bay Area for the first time in a decade. The championship then heads to L.A.'s SoFi Stadium in 2027.

FAN EXPERIENCES Hospitality partner On Location offers everything from pregame parties to postgame field access. Meanwhile, local venues like San Francisco's Moscone Center feature interactive fan experiences like photo ops and panel discussions with NFL analysts, Hall of Famers, and coaches.

FEB. 13–15, 2026

NBA ALL-STAR 2026

Intuit Dome, Kia Forum, and Los Angeles Convention Center

Showcasing 24 of the league's best players, the NBA All-Star Game is celebrating its 75th anniversary. The weekend will also host the All-Star Celebrity Game, NBA Rising Stars, and on-court challenges Saturday night.

FAN EXPERIENCES The family-friendly Mascot Breakfast is a weekend highlight, while the NBA Champions Table culinary event is returning with celebrity chefs preparing curated bites. Official fan packages include access to the NBA EXP Lounge and meet-and-greets with basketball legends.

JUNE 12–JULY 10, 2026

2026 FIFA WORLD CUP

SoFi Stadium, Los Angeles; Levi's Stadium, Santa Clara

The global men's soccer tournament has a record 48 nations participating in 2026 with five group stage matches in each city. Levi's Stadium will host one round of 32 knockout matches while SoFi Stadium in Los Angeles will host two rounds of 32 matches, plus a quarterfinal game later in the tournament.

FAN EXPERIENCES On Location packages at both stadiums provide premium seats, exclusive lounges, elevated food and drink, commemorative gifts, expedited entry, and immersive, signature city-specific hospitality experiences.

JULY 26–AUG. 3, 2026

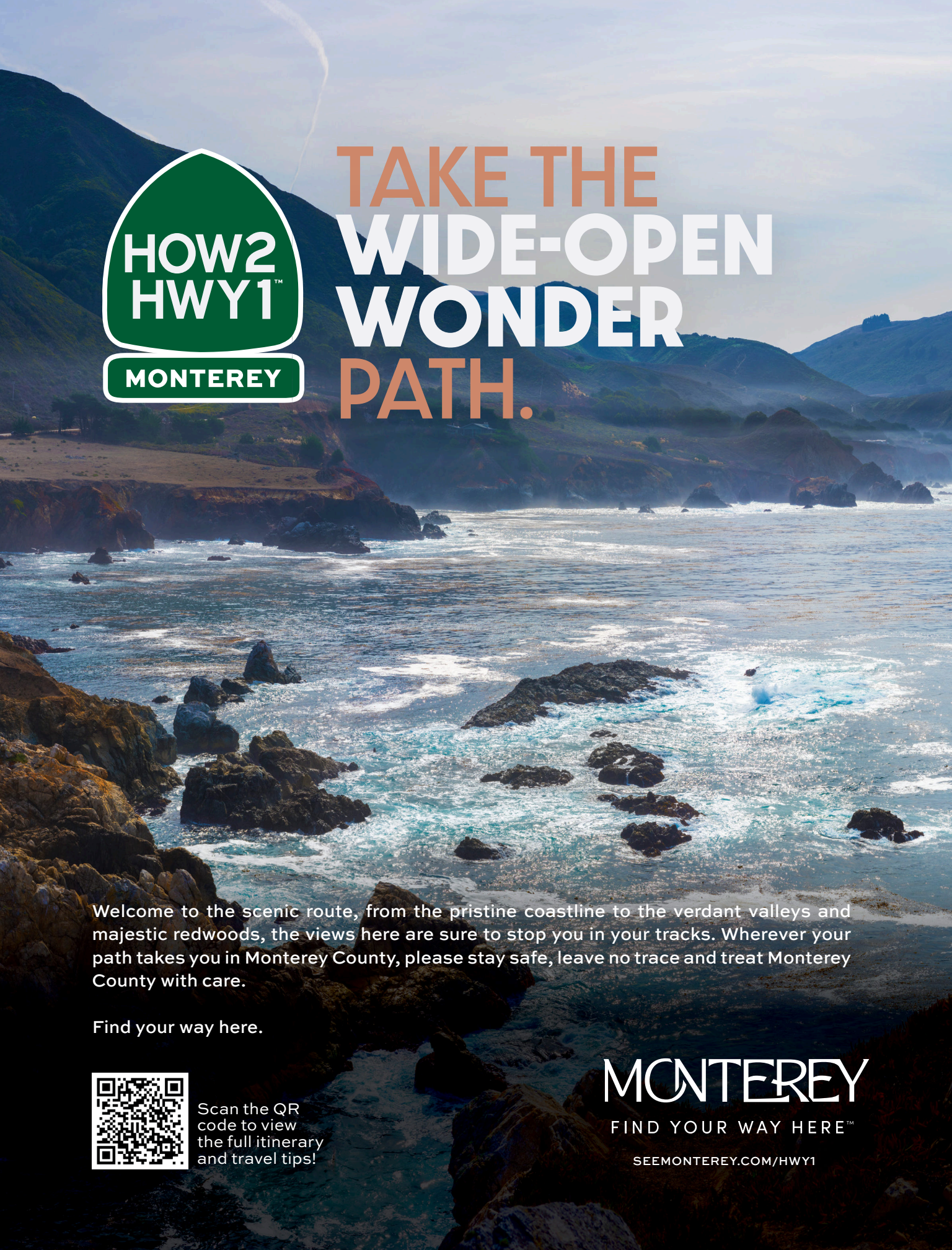
U.S. OPEN OF SURFING

Huntington Beach

The world's largest surfing competition is free to watch and features qualifying events for the World Surf League Challenger Series and the WSL Longboard Tour.

FAN EXPERIENCES In addition to surfing, catch motocross trick shows, athlete signings, a beach cleanup, and induction ceremonies for the Surfing Walk of Fame and Surfers' Hall of Fame. Enjoy a sunset serenade on select nights with live music on the sand.

ICON SPORTSWIRE/GETTY IMAGES


HOW2 HWY1™
MONTEREY
TAKE THE WIDE-OPEN WONDER PATH.
Welcome to the scenic route, from the pristine coastline to the verdant valleys and majestic redwoods, the views here are sure to stop you in your tracks. Wherever your path takes you in Monterey County, please stay safe, leave no trace and treat Monterey County with care.
Find your way here.
Scan the QR code to view the full itinerary and travel tips!
MONTEREY
FIND YOUR WAY HERE™
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HEY, DUDE!

Ever wondered what it's like to wrangle cattle or ride through alpine meadows on horseback? Discover what "cowboy core" is all about at these real-deal, California dude ranches.

V6 RANCH

MARBLE MOUNTAIN RANCH

Somes Bar

This action-packed, all-inclusive ranch in Siskiyou County has a "saddle and paddle" where guests ride horseback through scenic trails and raft the Klamath River the same day. The family-friendly ranch also offers fly-fishing in fall and shooting sports daily.

GREENHORN RANCH

Quincy

Set in the Lost Sierra at 4,400 feet, this welcoming, all-ages ranch is focused on horseback riding, fly-fishing, and archery by day and Western line-dancing, signature cocktails, and campfire marshmallows by night.

HUNEWILL GUEST RANCH

Bridgeport

Experience California's oldest working guest ranch just outside Yosemite. Family-run and set on 4,500 acres of alpine meadows and picturesque trails, it offers cozy cabins and hearty, home-cooked meals in the founder's Victorian home. Expect evening fun like square dancing, creek-side barbecues, and watching the gentling of foals.

RANKIN RANCH

Caliente

Discover authentic ranch life at this historic, 31,000-acre working cattle ranch, family-run since 1863. Now with fifth-generation owners at the helm, the ranch is known for its high-quality home-raised beef, its many biking opportunities, and other classic outdoor activities like hiking, swimming, and fishing for rainbow trout in Rankin's onsite pond.

V6 RANCH

Parkfield

Set in rugged Cholame Valley, V6 delivers true Western adventure—cattle drives with camping under the stars, riding clinics, and the hands-on Cowboy Academy, culminating in a friendly skills showdown with a belt-buckle prize. Enjoy an all-inclusive Dude Ranch Getaway at Parkfield Lodge and savor award-winning, oak-fired barbecue at the cafe.

ALISAL RANCH

Solvang

Roam the range in luxury at this 10,500-acre ranch in Santa Ynez Valley that has been welcoming guests since 1946. Choose from horseback riding, egg gathering, fishing, or family bingo—or add on golf or spa days. You also have easy access to charming Solvang and Santa Ynez wineries.

CRAZY HORSE RANCH

Morongo Valley

Take your horsemanship skills to the next level at this family-owned ranch outside Palm Springs where the focus is on private lessons, trail rides, and rescue animals. Come for a Cowboy for a Day package or bunk down in one of the cabins for an extended stay.

COWBOY CULTURE
Explore places to go from zero to horseback-hero

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: DYLAN GORDON/COURTESY V6 RANCH; COURTESY THE HIVE; COURTESY BATCH MEAD; DENISE ROCCO-ZILBER COURTESY HEIDRUN MEADERY(2)

FROM HIVE TO GLASS

A medieval beverage gets a modern update

Toss out your preconceived notions about mead—it's not just a boozy drink for Viking feasts and renaissance fairs. California's new-school mead makers are redefining this ancient honey-based drink with bold flavors.



THE HIVE



HEIDRUN MEADERY



BATCH MEAD



HEIDRUN MEADERY

MEADIOCRITY MEAD
San Marcos

These San Diego County makers use local wildflower honey and tend their own bees to maximize purity. Try rotating taps with flavors like blood-orange cinnamon or zesty lime—and don't miss the rousing Saturday karaoke nights.

STRAD MEADERY
Rancho Cordova

Strad sources honey from Central Valley farms to craft 20 flavors, such as apricot, yuzu, and pomegranate. The industrial-style tasting room near Sacramento is a dog- and kid-friendly spot with board games.

BATCH MEAD
Temecula

Batch makes small-batch meads using local honey and real fruit. The meadery specializes in a variety of styles, including can-style, off-dry, and dessert.

HONEY POT MEADERY
Anaheim

This meadery kicks things up a notch with chipotle and habañero infusions, offering a fiery twist on the traditional honey base.

HEIDRUN MEADERY
Marin County

Located near Point Reyes, Heidrun specializes in dry, crisp, effervescent meads best enjoyed on the scenic patio overlooking bucolic pastureland.

THE HIVE
Woodland

A farm-to-fork restaurant and California's largest honey and mead tasting room offers mead flights, varietal honeys, and pollinator gardens—all while highlighting the vital role of honeybees.

| ROAD-TRIPPING |

100 YEARS OF ROUTE 66

Hit the road to celebrate Route 66's centennial in 2026. Cruise past classic diners, glowing neon signs, and legendary roadside eats—and don't miss the in-person events and festivals along the route.



19
CONCRETE TEEPEES AT THE WIGWAM MOTEL
San Bernardino



ROAD FOOD

◀ **VEGGIE PIZZA**
Cross Eyed Cow, Oro Grande

BRIAN BURGER
Emma Jean's Holland Burger Café, Victorville

GRILLED SPINY LOBSTER
The Lobster, Santa Monica

STUFFED MUSHROOMS
Sycamore Inn, Rancho Cucamonga

CLUB SANDWICH
Ludlow Café, Ludlow

15¢
PRICE OF THE FIRST MCDONALD'S HAMBURGER SOLD
San Bernardino, 1940

FROM TOP: VISIT CALIFORNIA; COURTESY CROSS EYED COW

HIGHWAY HISTORY

1926


A FEDERAL HIGHWAY SYSTEM IS CREATED
Route 66 from Chicago to Los Angeles is cobbled together from existing roads.

1930s


THE GREAT DEPRESSION
Route 66 becomes a major artery for migrants heading to California to find work and escape the Dust Bowl.

1941–45


WORLD WAR II
The military uses Route 66 to move troops and supplies, and job seekers head west to work in defense plants.

1946–60


FAMILY ROAD TRIPS
Post-war Americans enjoy more leisure time and find their anthem: "(Get Your Kicks on) Route 66."

1960–64


DEFINING A NEW CULTURE
The TV show *Route 66* depicts two young men traveling cross-country in a Corvette.



CARS, LEFT TO RIGHT: GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK PHOTO; DIFFERENT BRIAN/GETTY IMAGES; SHUTTERSTOCK/IG DIGITAL ARTISTS; SHUTTERSTOCK/KEVIN TICHENOR; SHUTTERSTOCK/SERGEY KOHL; SHUTTERSTOCK/GESTALT IMAGERY; SHUTTERSTOCK/OLEG GOLOVNEV; SHUTTERSTOCK/JONATHAN WEISS; MOVIESTORE COLLECTION LTD/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

PHOTO OPS AND SOUVENIR STOPS

1 NEEDLES
Ogle the kitschy Western decor at Wagon Wheel Restaurant.

2 AMBOY
Browse fridge magnets, trucker hats, and penny souvenirs at Roy's Motel and Café. Snap photos of its 1959 neon sign.

3 BARSTOW
Survey road signs, photos, and ephemera at the Route 66 Mother Road Museum.

4 ORO GRANDE
Admire the glimmer of glass-bottle sculptures at Elmer's Bottle Tree Ranch.

5 VICTORVILLE
Nab selfies with the 1917 Model T Ford and Volkswagen "love bus" at the California Route 66 Museum.

6 SANTA MONICA
Walk the pier to the Route 66 end-of-the-trail sign.

11

BEAUX-ARTS ARCHES ON PASADENA'S COLORADO STREET BRIDGE

1,600 FEET

LENGTH OF THE SANTA MONICA PIER

ROUTE 66 CENTENNIAL EVENTS

ROUTE 66 CRUISIN' CAR SHOW, AMBOY
(March): Roy's Motel and Café will host Amboy's first annual car show.

ROUTE 66 CRUISIN' REUNION, ONTARIO
(September): A massive celebration on Euclid Avenue featuring 1,000-plus vintage cars and live entertainment.

RENDEZVOUS BACK TO ROUTE 66, SAN BERNARDINO
(October): Downtown San Bernardino hosts an epic day of classic cruising for cars built before 1999.

ROUTE 66 CENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS, PASADENA
Enjoy two yearlong celebrations, including the 150th anniversary of Colorado Boulevard, and see a new car-culture series at the Gamble House.

2 **CHINESE LION STATUES GUARDING AMBOY'S DESERT**

250 FEET

HEIGHT OF AMBOY CRATER'S VOLCANIC CINDER CONE

CALIFORNIA'S ROUTE 66 IN FILM

***THE GRAPES OF WRATH* (1940):** Depression-era migrants journey to California

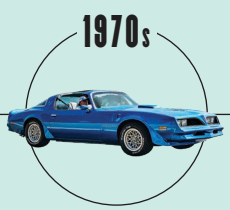
***EASY RIDER* (1969):** Two Harley-riding outsiders travel across the country

***BAGDAD CAFE* (1987):** A stranded German tourist finds friendship in a desert outpost

***KILL BILL VOL. 2* (2004):** A martial arts assassin goes on a quest for vengeance

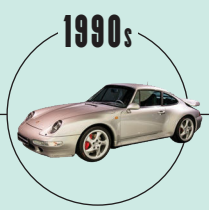
***CARS* (2006):** A hotshot racing car gets stuck in a dusty Route 66 town





1970s

NEED FOR SPEED
Four-lane interstate highways become king, and drivers prefer the faster roads. Traffic on Route 66 nosedives, and businesses close.



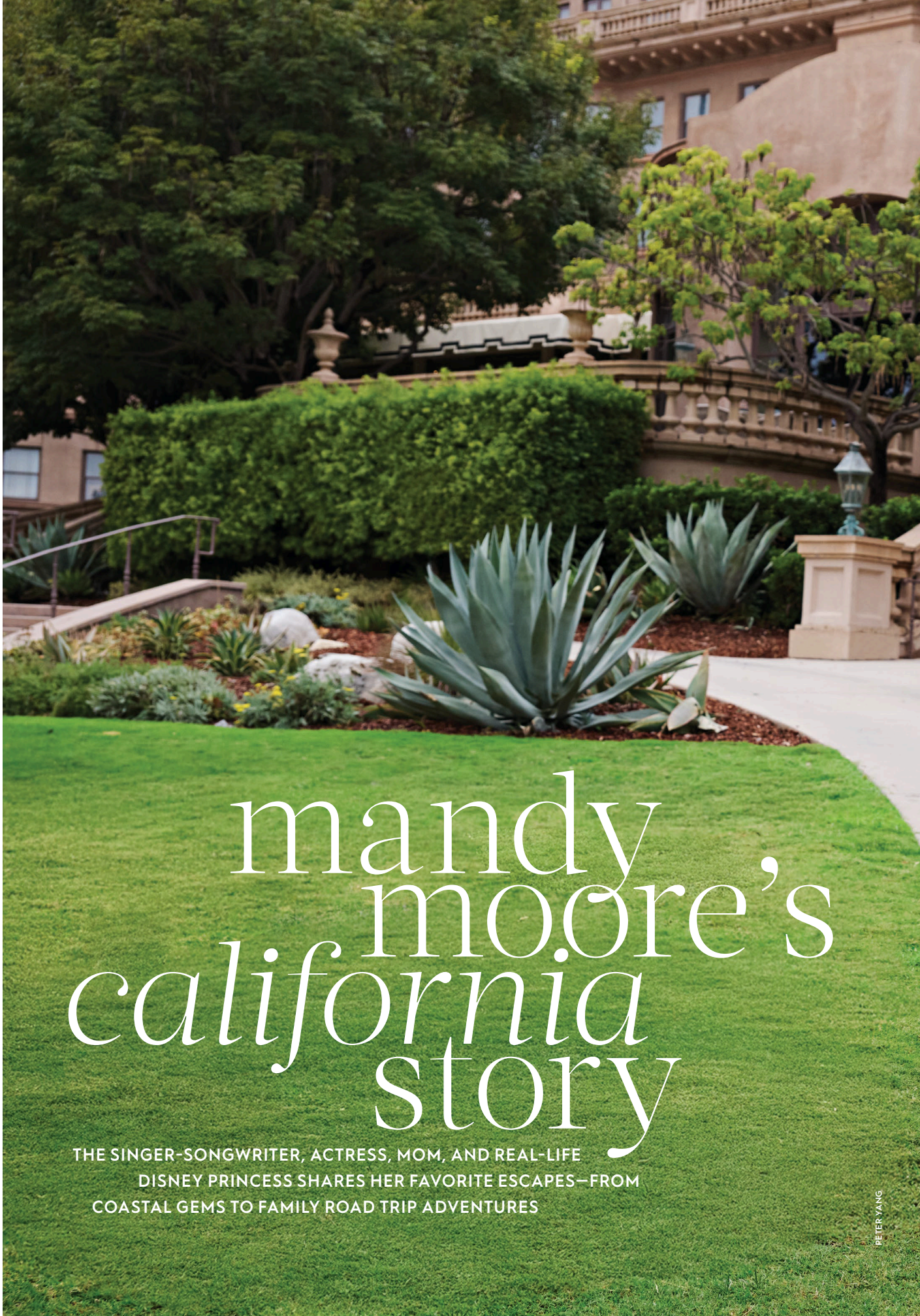
1990s

PRESERVATION
Communities recognize Route 66's cultural value and make a push to restore historic landmarks.



2026

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION
Americans honor Route 66's legacy with a yearlong celebration.



mandy moore's *california* story

THE SINGER-SONGWRITER, ACTRESS, MOM, AND REAL-LIFE DISNEY PRINCESS SHARES HER FAVORITE ESCAPES—FROM COASTAL GEMS TO FAMILY ROAD TRIP ADVENTURES

PETER YANG



The Langham Huntington, Pasadena

Moore's love for California appears even in her songwriting. Her folksy and contemplative 2020 track "Tryin' My Best, Los Angeles," was made for long PCH drives with the windows rolled down.

Mandy Moore stands before a double rainbow. "Oh my God," she says with a sigh, clearly gobsmacked. "It all worked out. It almost always does."

Her day had begun under a siege of rain in Pasadena, at The Langham Huntington, not far from her home. The actress (*This Is Us*, *A Walk to Remember*, *Tangled*, *Dr. Death*, and *The Breadwinner*) and singer ("Candy," "I Wanna Be with You") is at the shoot for this very story. And it's here that she finds herself in the middle of a very real California dream. Or a scene from a Disney movie, at the very least.

California, of course, is where happy endings are made every day, whether via Mother Nature or Hollywood magic. And that alluring aura is what brought Moore out here. "I always thought of California as a dream world," she remembers of her childhood, where Amanda Leigh Moore grew up outside Orlando, Florida. It's a late afternoon a few days after the shoot. "Los Angeles, the whole state, represented a dream," Moore says. "A career. Everything that I could ever hope for in my life."

Now 41, Moore was about 10 years old when she saw another young girl sing the national anthem at an Orlando Magic game. She didn't know people her age got to do that. Soon she was doing it too. By the time she was 13, Moore was recording demos in studios and—here's an origin story—eventually was discovered when a FedEx driver overheard her singing and recommended her to someone at a label. She was signed.

Moore knows that, FedEx driver aside, the bones of her story resemble that of many Los Angeles transplants. "This happens to people every day. People flock there to live out their Hollywood dreams." So, sure, her story might be fairly common, but it's exceptional all the same. Because she succeeded. Also exceptional: Moore immediately felt at home here.

"I felt like I belonged immediately, and I know that's not the case for everybody who's new anywhere," she says. "There was something immediately warm about California, and I think that's because it is a land of so many transplants. It's accustomed to new arrivals and welcoming them with open arms. And I felt that."

HEADING WEST

Moore's career began with her 1999 debut single "Candy," which established her as a teen star. Her first album, *So Real*, was released later that year, followed by *I Wanna Be with You* in 2000. The early aughts were ruled by the fizzy (and at times yearning) hits from Moore and her contemporaries. Unlike her peers, Moore quickly looked beyond music. She made her acting debut in *The Princess Diaries* in 2001 and grew her credits to star in *A Walk to Remember*, *Saved*, *Tangled,* and much more. Her role as family matriach Rebecca Pearson on the hit NBC series *This Is Us* landed Moore an Emmy nomination and a People's Choice Award win.

While working on that series' first season, she posted an Instagram praising the band Dawes. Lead singer Taylor Goldsmith noticed and they began DMing. Then dating. Eventually, they married in 2018 in Pasadena with her family, friends, and *This Is Us* castmates looking on. Moore's second California dream had reached realization. She'd found her place, sure, but this new chapter was the moment it truly began to feel like home.

PETER YANG


“Los Angeles, the whole state, represented a dream.”


“I just knew—this feels like a family home. In my bones.”

"I do think that at some point I'm going to have to end up in Northern California." Moore reveals. "I love the sunshine and everything that Southern California represents, but at the end of the day, I'm a cooler, chillier, gray-weather kind of gal."

ALTADREAMERS

Altadena is a small community about 15 miles north of downtown Los Angeles, in the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains. It's known for early-1900s homes, a thriving Black community (one of the first middle-class Black communities in California), and the famous Christmas Tree Lane, a street lined with towering cedars that are lavishly decorated for the holidays.

"My brother-in-law and sister-in-law lived there," Moore says. "So we started becoming more and more familiar with Altadena. And slowly but surely so many of our friends started moving there. It's beautiful and you're sort of tucked away near the foothills. It just felt like this dream that nobody was really talking about."

Her mother-in-law found their home, actually. "This gentleman who was leaving was in his nineties, and he had lived there for 50-plus years and had raised his family there. I just knew—this feels like a family home. In my bones."

She and her husband spent three and a half years renovating and moved in before Christmas of 2023. "We met our neighbors and apologized profusely for the endless construction and just started to feel this sense of how special this community was. New businesses were starting to open. The cool coffee shops were starting to come there, but it still retained its charm. And we found a school for our kids that was in the neighborhood. Our friends opened up Bernie, which is now Betsy, within walking distance. I was like, 'Oh my God, this is a dream.' A quaint small town even though I'm 25 minutes from work. We loved it. We started to call ourselves AltaDreamers. I think we got a good year there before the fires."

Today, almost a year from the Eaton Fire tragedy, the townspeople have helped revive the neighborhood with restaurant crawls and lines out the door for Betsy, love for the Altadena Cookie Co., and more. Even the quirky Bunny Museum has begun reconstructing its collection, one rabbit donation at a time.

PETER YANG



Where do you live?
Northeast L.A.

Why there?
We're still a stone's throw from the city and all the friends and places we love, but with more air and space and closer to the mountains.

What is the biggest misperception about Californians?
There's a misperception that there's no sense of community in L.A. but, in reality, everyone is looking out for each other. The fires were an example of the innate generosity of Angelenos in particular.

What is the stereotype that most holds true?
Everyone has a GREAT idea for a movie. Ha!

What is your favorite Golden State splurge?
A guide at Disneyland.

Time for a road trip—where are you going?
San Francisco and all the stops along the way—Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, Paso Robles, Monterey, etc.

If you could decree an official state culinary experience, what would it be?
Betsy in Altadena. Best restaurant in all the land.

Best California song?
"Desperados Under the Eaves" by Warren Zevon.

How would your California dream day unfold?
Coffee overlooking the Pacific before the kids wake up, a long hike through the redwoods, a train ride in Griffith Park with the kids, then dinner at Betsy with friends.

How would you define California style?
Effortlessly layered, undone, chic, and ready for any occasion.

CALIFORNIA STATE OF MIND

The singer's love for California goes well beyond her backyard. If Moore needs to relax, she heads to Big Sur. Either in her mind or in reality.

"When people ask about California and they ask me where they should go, Big Sur is at the top of the list. I tell them to take that drive on Highway 1. It's so singular."

What she means is the rocky, rugged coastline between Carmel-by-the-Sea and San Simeon, sandwiched between the Santa Lucia Mountains and the Pacific Ocean. "Your perception of California changes, you don't know if you're on the coast of Ireland or wherever, because it's so magnificent and breathtaking. And it's so great to do just by



The secret to a perfect road trip for a family of five? A good soundtrack with lots of music that everyone loves, Moore says, and full freedom to choose what's on screen.

PETER YANG



> “I hope that California feels as proud of me as I am of it.”

yourself.” Even in your mind. “So if I can’t sleep or I want to just sort of relax, I put myself in that part of the world. And oh wow. It makes me happy. It brings me an immediate sense of peace.”

These days, as a parent of three kids under five with husband Goldsmith—sons Gus and Ozzie and daughter Lou—she might not be able to take as many solo drives. “It’s a great drive to do with a partner. And the kids love it… seeing the seals off the side of the freeway and the Monterey Bay Aquarium.”

THIS IS HER: FAMILY ROAD TRIP

As a family, the Moore/Goldsmith clan crisscrosses the whole state in their car. “I’m big on road-tripping, especially within the state—it’s just so much easier than flying with three kids. We love to pack up the car and hit the road.”

They’ve developed a road trip template. “We have a giant playlist of songs that we know everybody likes, and that’ll be an instant mood shifter,” Moore reveals. “Some snack options, all the requisite crackers and puffs and stuff that kids like.”

“We have electric cars, so that means that we will have to make a couple of stops to charge along the way. We plot it out so we’ll be in places where there’s something for us to walk around and do, get some ice cream, have lunch.” They’re foodies, she says.

“We’re very food-driven when it comes to planning our trips. We take pleasure in finding and trying new things, discovering a new little sandwich shop on our way up north.” The car also becomes a free space of sorts. “I would say also for us, all bets are off when it comes to travel. We’re not big screen people, so screens are reserved for travel, whether it’s on an airplane or in the car.”

Moore does get away without the kids too. "I just took a moms' trip to Ojai with my best girlfriends. That's always a big spot for us. We landed there after the fires for a while when we were trying to figure out where we were going to go and where we were going to stay. Ojai is just one of our favorite places and it brought a lot of solitude and a lot of peace during a really chaotic time."

"I love Palm Springs. Petaluma. Santa Barbara and Montecito. The producers of *This Is Us* took the whole cast to the San Ysidro Ranch after the show wrapped, which was magical. We're going to go do Healdsburg post-holidays with the whole family. We haven't done too much down south to San Diego, although I do feel like a LEGOLAND [California] trip is imminently in our future!"

DISNEYLAND DEVOTEE

The real-life Disney princess recently embarked on a classic parenting rite of passage: heading to Anaheim for her child's first Disneyland adventure.

Though she grew up in Orlando, Moore is a Disneyland convert. "I feel like that is my real California indoctrination," she says. "I am full Disneyland—any day, ride or die."

She brought son Ozzie to the parks for his third birthday. "On the way there I thought, 'He has no idea how his world is about to change.'" After a day on Dumbo, the King Arthur Carousel, and more, Ozzie left with stars in his eyes. "In the car he would not stop: 'I met C-3PO! I saw R2-D2! I went on Peter Pan!' His brain exploded in the best way."

But did the kids realize they were in Mickey's house with the real Rapunzel? If so, it didn't beat meeting Star Wars icons. Moore says her eldest, Gus, will often troll her: "He'll ask, 'Mom, who's your favorite Disney princess?' I say, 'Rapunzel.' Then he'll pick a different one." As for the littlest two, it still hasn't clicked that they're traveling with royalty. "Maybe with Lou one day—fingers crossed—it'll carry some clout."

HOME, ALWAYS

"Anywhere I am in California, I feel at home. I never felt that relationship with Florida, where I was born and raised until I was 15." Moore is connecting the dots now, really trying to put words to her identity, her ethos, her vibe. She arrived here with a dream, carved out a career, built an identity, fell in love, grew a family. And now?

Moore's husband and fellow singer-songwriter Taylor Goldsmith snap a selfie with their kids Gus and Ozzie on Peter Pan's Flight. The whole crew celebrated Ozzie's first trip to the Magic Kingdom with rides on Buzz Lightyear Astro Blasters, King Arthur Carrousel, and a family trip into the sky on Dumbo the Flying Elephant.



"I really have this sense that I'm coming into my own here in California," she says. "I feel a real kinship with the city, with the state, with the people here. I do feel like an Angeleno, and I feel like I've spent more than half of my life here and so many of the really seminal chapters of my life have been here." She's thinking her albums, her pivot to acting, her marriage, her kids.

"It's given me so much, and I'm really grateful for it. But I also have a sense of ownership, a sense of pride. I hope that California feels as proud of me as I am of it. I'm proud to be a Californian and I'm proud to live here. I'm proud to have had my kids here and to raise my kids here. I don't think I could have dreamed this big."

FROM LEFT: COURTESY MANDY MOORE; PETER YANG



10

SPOTS MANDY LOVES

Moore has her go-to places around her neighborhood—like getting a cup at Highlight Coffee in Pasadena, picking up sandwiches and pasta at nearby Ferrazzani's, or stopping by Altadena Beverage and Market ("Altadena Bev" to locals) for "great snacks, wine, and to-go stuff." Below are more of her favorite places to eat, shop, and explore:

Lady & Larder, Santa Monica
"for sandwiches, snacks, or mini cheese boards"

Helen's Wines Fairfax, Los Angeles
"the best curation of wines"

Valerie Confections, Glendale
"for chocolate treats and the greatest cakes"

Rory's Place and Rory's Other Place, Ojai
"incredible food—the pastries, coffee, and soft serve at the latter is amazing"

La Super-Rica Taqueria, Santa Barbara
"the best Mexican food"

Stationaery, Carmel-by-the-Sea
"for breakfast or brunch"

Living Desert Zoo and Gardens, Palm Desert
"the kids flipped"

WHAT'S YOUR VACATION VIBE?

WHETHER YOU'RE TRAVELING WITH THREE GENERATIONS OF FAMILY OR IT'S JUST YOU AND YOUR CARRY-ON, CALIFORNIA SETS THE GOLD STANDARD FOR GETAWAYS. THESE FIVE VACATIONS MATCH DIFFERENT TRAVEL STYLES WITH PLAY-BY-PLAY ITINERARIES FOR AN UNFORGETTABLE TRIP.

BY JESSICA SEBOR





VISIT CALIFORNIA


San Diego Zoo

ULTIMATE FAMILY PLAYCATION

SAN DIEGO

If you want to make core memories for your kiddos, this trip is for you. With famously fabulous year-round weather, 17 miles of coastline, and hundreds of restaurants where the dress code is almost always flip-flop-friendly, San Diego is about as good as it gets for families.

DAYS: 3

VIBE: Maximum fun, minimum stress

WHO'S COMING: The whole family. This trip works for kids of all ages and grandparents too.

HIGHLIGHTS: Beach, train, unicorn-shaped bao buns, space museum

DON'T FORGET TO PACK: Favorite swimsuits, reusable water bottles, sun hats, sun screen, extra patience

DAY 1

THEME PARK DAY

You arrived in sunny San Diego yesterday and checked into the US Grant. The glamorous 100-year-old institution is centrally located and welcomes families who want to feel pampered. For extra space, book an adjoining room or suite.

Harness that first-day excitement into theme-park fun. At Devil's Dozen in Little Italy, cheeky pastries, espressos, and kids' steamer drinks are paired with rotating, seasonal flavors. This spot prides itself on nailing the classic donut staples, like the old-fashioned and wickedly good "sinnamon" sugar. Devil's opens at 7 a.m., and sells pastries until "souled" out.

Back in the car, choose between the seasonally open Sesame Place (kids 8 and under) or SeaWorld San Diego. If you select Sesame Place, spend the day sweepin' the clouds away, riding mini

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: AMAZING AERIAL PREMIUMSHUTTERSTOCK; COURTESY SEAWORLD SAN DIEGO; LUIS GARCIA


Encinitas

PLAN A TRIP
Scan the code to find more family vacation ideas

coasters, splashing in the water park, and sitting on the iconic 123 stoop in Chula Vista. At SeaWorld San Diego, kids can shake flippers with a dolphin, ride marine-life-themed roller coasters, and walk through glow-in-the-dark jellyfish tanks.

Continue the day's delights with a late lunch at Harumama in Little Italy. Even picky eaters won't be able to resist the whimsical unicorn-shaped bao buns. As night falls, head to Belmont Park. Hit up the classic arcade, take a ride on Liberty Carousel, and grab cheeseburgers and a funnel cake from Belmonty's as you stroll down the boardwalk until everyone's ready to call it a night.

DAY 2

EXPLORE THE BEACHES BY TRAIN

Sleep in this morning if you can—the beach will still be there when you get up. Order room service (The US Grant has a great kids' menu), and stroll the eight blocks to Santa Fe Depot, where kids will flip over the thrill of traveling to the beach via choo-choo train.

Along the 40-minute ride to seaside Encinitas, sit on the left side for views of golden cliffs and coastal wetlands. From the station, it's a quarter-mile walk to Moonlight Beach. Rent chairs and umbrellas and let the kids splash in the shallow water, climb around the sandy playground, and search for coquina clamshells along the shore. Lunch is at the shockingly good Beach Wolf snack shop (carnitas tacos are a must).

Take a break from the sun with some window shopping at funky boutiques along Highway 101 before capping off the day at Modern Times Far West Lounge. Adults will appreciate the hazy IPAs, and everyone will love the kid-friendly vegan food (think chicken tenders and creative flatbreads). Walk over to Cali Cream and choose from 55 homemade flavors before taking the last train back (or catching a car) to your hotel.

DAY 3

ALL ABOUT BALBOA

It's not a San Diego family trip without a day at Balboa Park, home of the world-famous San Diego Zoo. Stop for lattes, hot chocolates, and cardamom buns at Goldchild Coffee Roasters right next to your hotel. Then get to the zoo right when they open and secure a first-come, first-served timed ticket for the giant pandas.

While you wait to see Yun Chuan and Xin Bao, hop on a 35-minute free double-decker bus tour around the zoo grounds. You'll spot elephants, polar bears, giraffes, rhinos, flamingos, tapirs, and more—plus it's a great way to cover a lot of ground without a ton of tiny steps. After you disembark, spend some time watching the sweet koalas perched in the eucalyptus trees on your way to Panda Ridge. If your little ones still need to burn off energy, visit the Wildlife Explorer's Base Camp with 3 acres of interactive play areas. Next, regroup and recharge over lunch at Albert's, where alfresco tables sit beneath a hidden waterfall (be sure to book ahead).

When you're all zoo-ed out, visit the nearby Air & Space Museum to climb inside a helicopter or go solo in a simulator (for those 44 inches and up). Stroll through the park and end the night with farm-to-table food and live music under the stars at Panama 66.


SeaWorld San Diego

FAMILY-FRIENDLY HAPPY HOUR

San Diego-based content creator Yesenia Auer(@sandiegogirlmom) shares her picks.

FOX POINT FARMS, ENCINITAS
"I love the variety of what you can do there. Kids can meet the cow and goats or hop on the tractor. There's also a big lawn and garden path that's awesome for kids to run around and explore."

NOVO BRAZIL, MISSION VALLEY
"There's an outdoor area with a little play structure. It's all fenced in, so you don't need to worry about cars. Plus, there are big-screen TVs and it's a great place to go and watch sports."

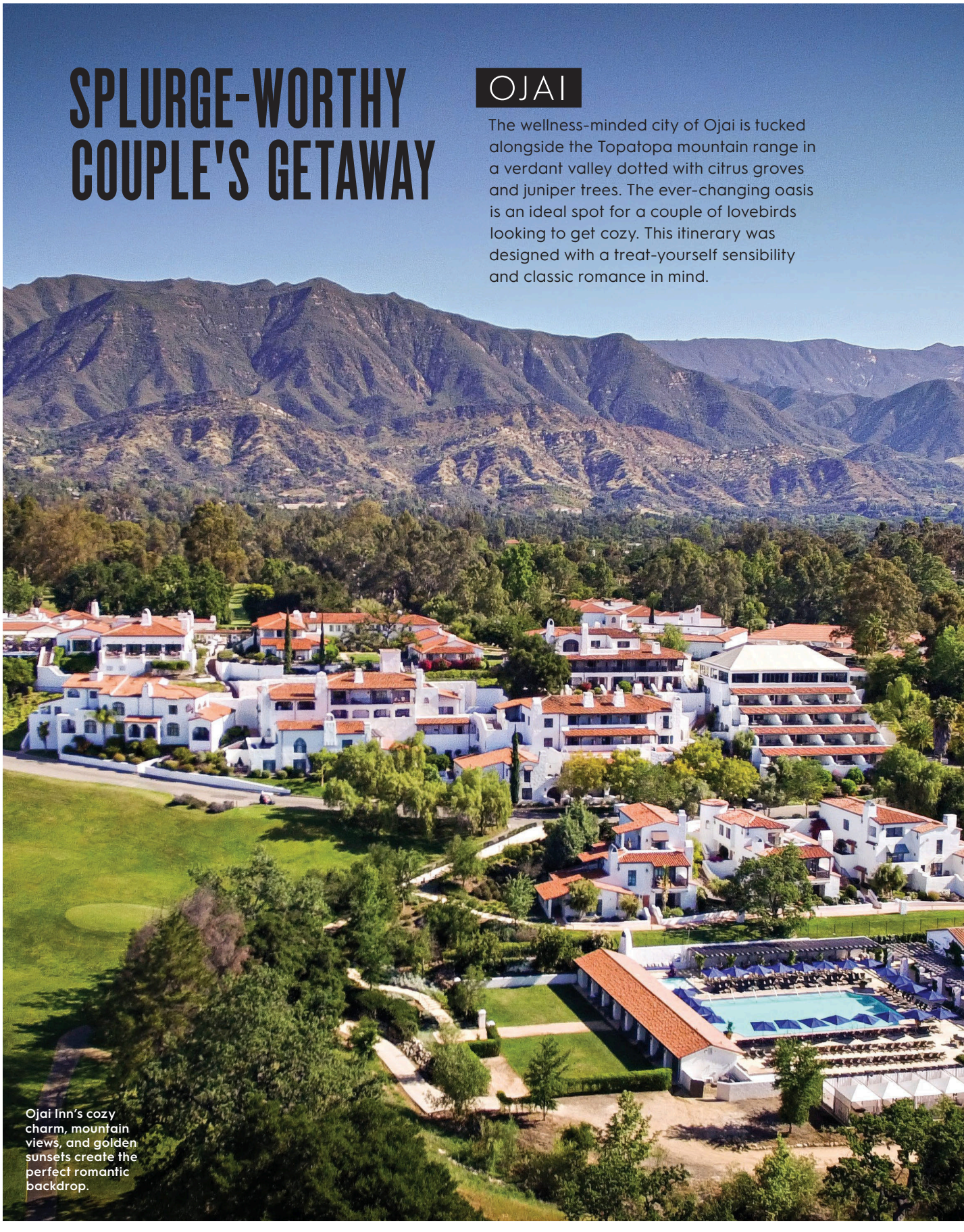
DRAFT REPUBLIC, SAN MARCOS
"With a bowling alley, shuffleboard courts, and an arcade inside, it's super relaxed and fun for everyone. The food is excellent too. Definitely get the mac 'n' cheese."

STONE BREWING, ESCONDIDO
"The outside area is beautiful, with koi ponds and little waterfalls that keep the kids entertained while you relax with a drink."

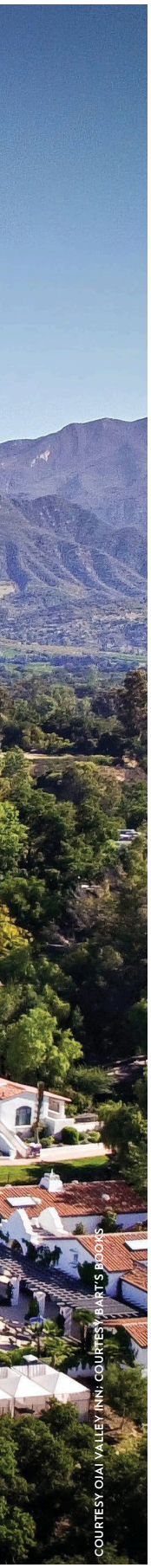
SPLURGE-WORTHY COUPLE'S GETAWAY

OJAI

The wellness-minded city of Ojai is tucked alongside the Topatopa mountain range in a verdant valley dotted with citrus groves and juniper trees. The ever-changing oasis is an ideal spot for a couple of lovebirds looking to get cozy. This itinerary was designed with a treat-yourself sensibility and classic romance in mind.



Ojai Inn's cozy charm, mountain views, and golden sunsets create the perfect romantic backdrop.



COURTESY OJAI VALLEY INN; COURTESY BART'S BOOKS

DAYS: 3

VIBE: Pure romance with zero pretense

WHO'S COMING: Just the two of you

HIGHLIGHTS: Private helicopter, pink sunsets, couples massage by the fire

DON'T FORGET TO PACK: Breezy coverup, sunglasses, date-night outfits, swimwear, soft sweater, a deep connection

DAY 1

RELAX AT A FIVE-STAR RESORT

Ojai's small-town feel means the closest airports (Santa Barbara, Burbank, and Los Angeles) are an hour-plus away. Set the tone for unrushed romance this morning by taking your time. Upon arrival, check in to a luxury escape: The Ojai Valley Inn. The historic 1923 property is marked by Spanish Colonial architecture, sprawling oak-shaded grounds, and views of the Topatopas from nearly every angle.

While you're waiting for your room, get straight to it with a couple's massage at the onsite Spa Ojai. The serene 31,000-square-foot facility features a casita feel with fruiting lemon trees in quiet courtyards and multiple pools surrounded by vine-covered pergolas.

Once you're thoroughly refreshed, enjoy a Lavender Lemonade (fresh lemon, vodka, and estate-grown florals) in the room. Dinner is at Olivella and Vine, the resort's culinary crown jewel, featuring valley-to-table offerings from Chef Andrew Foskey. The menu changes daily, but you can expect indulgent delights such as Petrossian Royal Osteria caviar served with stracciatella panna cotta, spring onion, and shaved truffle.

DAY 2

TAKE YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO NEW HEIGHTS

Chances are good the valley sun is shining this morning—Ojai gets about 298 days of clear skies each year—and it's time to venture out. Head into town and enjoy a couple of cappuccinos at Three Birds, shaded by the silvery canopy of an olive tree.

Next up, you'll get a lay of the land and some incredible photo ops with a private ride from Orbic Helicopters. From Camarillo, your pilot will whisk you from the shoreline at Oxnard to the turquoise Lake Casitas and up through craggy mountain peaks.

Once back on solid ground, head to brunch at The Dutchess. The Burmese-Californian restaurant from a husband-and-wife team serves creative mashups like spicy fried chicken and scallion waffles, and is also known for their pastries. Then meander through the world's largest outdoor bookstore, Bart's Books, where shelves are piled with more than 130,000 titles.

Sip your way through the late afternoon with a two-hour private tasting at Walson Holland, where you'll try Rhône-style and Burgundian-inspired wines in a garden setting. Get dinner on the town with the five-course tasting menu at Nocciola. Request a table on the treehouse-like patio and try the spahetti with roasted duck ragu.

DAY 3

GET A LITTLE BIT COUNTRY

Try something new together to deepen your bond: take private aerial yoga classes located on the property, or a raptor encounter (a bird of prey meet-and-greet) can be arranged by the resort.

Afterward, head to Bluegrass Brunch hosted on Sundays at the onsite restaurant, The Oak. It includes a luxurious spread—think carving station and raw bar—plus live music. Walk off your bottomless mimosas at Frog Creek Farm. During springtime and early summer, you can fill a basket full of lavender to take home for a sweet-smelling souvenir.

Pick up the Picnic at Ojai Rôtie (French-Lebanese style rotisserie chicken with all the fixings) and a bottle of red from Point de Chêne in town. Then when the light starts to shift, saddle up for a sunset trail ride with Ojai Valley Trail Riding Company. Ojai is famous for its "pink moments" where the sky swirls with dusty rose tones. The ranch invites couples to stay for dinner, so settle in afterward at one of the picnic tables to eat under the stars. Then, what better way to end the night than with drinks and a cozy slow dance downtown at Sam's Place?

DESSERT DELIGHTS FOR TWO

Whether you're strolling through town or settling in after a hike, these shareable Ojai sweets are perfect for two.

MATCHA AFFOGATO, Rory's Other Place

SOURDOUGH LEMON OLIVE OIL CAKE, Chris Bakes

CARROT CAKE, Hotel El Roblar

LAVENDER BAKLAVA, Ojai Rôtie

DUBAI CHOCOLATE-COVERED STRAWBERRIES, The Nest

OJAI ORANGE, Ojai Ice Cream

MALTED SHAKE, Bonnie Lu's



Bart's Books

ADRENALINE-FUELED ADVENTURE

GOLD COUNTRY

If you measure a vacation in heartbeats per minute and prefer a bike saddle to a beach chair, this trip is for you. Gold Country makes it easy to turn your most ambitious group chat into a real-life escape. Plunging canyons, granite domes, rushing whitewater, and pine-covered ridges call to bold explorers, with excellent restaurants and lively cocktail bars waiting to cap off the day.

DAYS: 4

VIBE: High-octane wilderness

WHO'S COMING: Your favorite thrill seekers

HIGHLIGHTS: Cliff jumping into crystal pools, via ferrata, pickle pizza

DON'T FORGET TO PACK: Waterproof camera, collapsible cooler, bug spray, lightweight rain shell, the call of the wild

DAY 1

SHRED, SPLASH, AND SUNBATHE

Rally the troops in Sacramento—the international airport makes for an easy landing spot—and then dig into breakfast at The Morning Fork. The friendly feel of the mom-and-pop diner will put everyone in good spirits for the hourlong drive to Nevada City, your base camp for the day. Rent some rugged wheels and a rack from Bear Valley Bicycles.

Head to Empire Mine State Historic Park to ride mountain bike trails above one of California's richest gold mines. Newbies will like the flat Hardrock Loop, while more experienced riders can cruise through rock features along The Wire.

Grab a barrel bratwurst at Thirsty Barrel Brewing, then cool off all afternoon at South Yuba River State Park, where you can jump off craggy rocks into emerald-green pools.

After a day of sun, dirt, and swimming, a juicy pale ale will sound good. Find your pint and your dinner at Three Forks Bakery & Brewing Co., where pizzas come out hot from the wood-fired oven. Tuck in for the night at Inn Town Campground. The deluxe canvas tents come with electricity, cozy beds and your own balcony.

DAY 2

GET HOOKED ON THE GREAT OUTDOORS

As the morning light streams through your tent, pack the car and head into town. Stop in for lattes and pastries at Outer Heaven Espresso—the cheddar-chive biscuits took home the blue ribbon at the Nevada County Fair.

Hit the river for a morning spent honing your overhead cast with a fly-fishing trip through Off the Hook. One experienced guide per every two anglers ensures everyone gets hands-on experience selecting flies, tying knots, and tangling with the Yuba's notoriously hard-fighting wild rainbow trout.

Back on dry land, pack up some sandwiches from The Ham Stand and use the afternoon to explore the area's bridges, many of which are over a century old. Visit the Historic Bridgeport Covered Bridge, Oregon Creek, and Edwards Crossing, stopping for photo ops and a picnic on sun-warmed rock.

Celebrate your catch with drinks at Golden Era, a former turn-of-the-century saloon; dinner at Lola, which serves upscale American in a Victorian-inspired dining room; and live bluegrass music at Crazy Horse, a onetime watering hole for thirsty forty-niners. Spend the night spitting distance south in Grass Valley and listen for bumps in the night at the Holbrooke, one of California's most haunted hotels.

DAY 3

HEART-PUMPING HISTORY

Before you make the three-hour drive to Columbia, stop in for a coffee and a strawberry scone at Brew Bakers Coffee and Tea House. The tiny cafe features art pieces from local Grass Valley artists.

Halfway through the trip, roll into Quarry Park Adventures in Rocklin for some heart-pumping fun. Soar across the quarry on long zip lines, swing over dramatic drops, or tackle the via ferrata course—an "iron path" that climbs 40 feet above the quarry floor along rugged granite walls.

Lunch is at Rosebud's in Jackson, a family-owned spot that sources much of the food from their very own farm. Get an order of the homemade corned beef hash for the table. Back in the car, make one more short detour to Indian Grinding Rock State Historic Park to learn about the incredible history of the Northern Sierra Miwok and visit the chaw'se—the park's namesake feature—marked by 1,185 mortar holes.

Once you make it to Columbia State Historic Park, a preserved Gold Rush town, unwind with an early evening stagecoach ride. Explore old-timey shops before a pickle pizza and sarsaparilla shot at the St. Charles Saloon. Then drive 20 minutes



South Yuba River


Quarry Park Adventures

At Quarry Park Adventures in Rocklin, you can climb towering quarry walls, soar on zip lines, and trek across suspended bridges.

for a nightcap—and a comfy bed—at the Murphys Historic Hotel.

DAY 4

LET THE GOOD TIMES RIP

Send your trip off with a splash on a whitewater rafting excursion. Meet your guide at 9:30 a.m. at Zephyr Rafting's Midpines base, a little less than two hours away, for a quick safety session and a shuttle upstream.

The full-day trip rafts 16 miles of classic whitewater on the Merced River. If you go in the high-water season, expect the fresh snowmelt to make for big bouncy waves right from the start. Warmer weather means a more mellow ride. Either way, you'll snake through granite-lined canyons with thrilling rapid sections like Split Rock and Ned's Gulch and float along easier stretches where you can take in wildflower fields, pine forests, and soaring rock walls.

Back on solid ground, make the two-hour drive back to Sacramento. Stop in Bauhaus Bauer in Modesto for paella on the patio, you've earned it.

5 MORE ADVENTURES FOR THRILL-SEEKERS

Chasing a bigger rush? These nearby adventures take you underground, off-road, and into the sky for nonstop adrenaline.

1. GO UNDERGROUND
Crawl and rappel through passageways on the expedition tour at Moaning Caverns in Vallecito.

2. CLIMB THE CLIFFS
Test your grip on more than 70 limestone routes at Auburn Quarry.

3. RIDE OFF-ROAD
Tackle exciting back roads to creek crossings and historic mining sites on a motorcycle tour with Sierra Nevada Adventures.

4. SKYDIVE LODI
Free-fall over vineyards on a tandem jump, then glide under a parachute with breathtaking Sierra foothills views.

5. GLIDE THE FOOTHILLS
Soar above rolling Gold Country with a Paraglide Coloma pro pilot.

SORAYA MATOS(2)

GROUP GETAWAY

SAN FRANCISCO

Spending quality time with close friends is always a good idea: It feeds the soul, strengthens bonds, and offers a much-needed excuse to let loose. With incredible variety—Michelin-star restaurants on one block, hole-in-the-wall dim sum the next—all packed into a walkable city, San Francisco has something for everyone in your group. Add in the easy access to wine country, and you've got the ultimate escape.

DAYS: 3

VIBE: "Let your hair down"-style reconnection

WHO'S COMING: The whole gang (or just your bestie)

HIGHLIGHTS: Tea leaf reading in an artist's abode, luxury wine tasting, Japanese bathhouse

DON'T FORGET TO PACK: A vacation hat, sheet masks for all, a light jacket, go-with-the-flow energy

DAY 1

LET'S HIT THE TOWN

Kick off your trip with a very good brunch at the Michelin-starred and woman-owned Hilda and Jesse in North Beach, where you'll find retro decor with whimsical touches (look for the gnomes in the potted ficus) and food to match.

Drop your bags off at the Kabuki Hotel in Japantown—Zen-meets-boho with a leafy courtyard—before heading to Golden Gate Park.

Your first stop is the de Young Museum. Take in the Piazzoni murals and Ruth Asawa's wire sculptures before ascending the Hamon Observation Tower for a 360-degree sweep of the



Trendy Valencia Street brims with vintage finds and indie boutiques featuring local designers.


Hamel

Hamel Family Wines in Sonoma offers biodynamic vineyards, stunning views, modern architecture, and private tastings.

Golden City. Pause for an iced green tea at the Japanese Tea Garden and take some time to wander around the blooming grounds.

Next, take a short cab ride to Lands End for a windy walk through cypress trees with views of shipwrecks in the distance and ruins of a Gilded Age swimming pool beneath. After some windswept selfies, regroup at your hotel before dinner at Bottega. Dried flowers hang from the ceiling, and generous portions of modern Italian make sharing a must. Keep the night rolling with inventive cocktails at Dalva in the Mission District and dancing at Dahlia, where the DJs spin until 2 a.m.

DAY 2

SONOMA FOR THE DAY

Make the most of the Bay Area's wonders by booking a luxury tour through Sonoma Valley. Beau Wine Tours will whisk you 45 miles north in a luxury sprinter.

Your personal concierge can create a bespoke adventure tailored to you, but a full-day trip typically takes visitors through three deluxe tasting experiences. Start off at Hamel in the heart of Sonoma for a guided tour. Then, settle in for an open-air tasting set against a backdrop of olive trees and volcanic slopes covered in manzanita chaparral. VJB Cellars is a great midday stop thanks to a full Italian market where your group can soak up estate-grown Sangiovese with a salumi board.

Your final stop is the historic Moon Mountain Vineyard, home to Repris. Wander through 18,000 square feet of natural rock caves and savor Rhône-style wines while taking in panoramic views from high above the fog line.

After a quick power nap back in the city, plan the next stop at Bix, a classic supper club in the Financial District with cocktails and live jazz every night.

DAY 3

SHOPPING, SPAS, AND PSYCHICS

Chances are you'll be craving some coffee after a night on the dance floor. Take a 2-mile city stroll to Four Barrel where beans are freshly roasted in a vintage German machine. Across the street, wait in line—while regaling last night's antics—at the original Tartine Bakery, a San Francisco institution serving airy gougères and crackly morning buns.

Then it's time for shopping on Valencia Street, packed with one-of-a-kind boutiques and vintage shops. Rifle through the racks at No Shop, find clever stationery and quirky homewares at Open Editions, fun kitchenware at Landline Home, and step into another world at Paxton Gate, a dark and enchanting curiosity shop with taxidermy, jewelry, and raw-cut crystals.

Sample the tostadas in Loló's relaxed backyard patio, then head to your reservation at Kabuki Springs, a serene homage to Japan's indulgent sentos. After a few hours rotating through the cold plunge, hot pool, and cedar sauna, you'll feel positively brand-new.

Swap happy hour for an only-in-SF tea leaf reading at the Gregangelo Museum. Even without the fortune telling, exploring the artist's private home—a dreamlike multiverse with dozens of fantastical rooms—is more than worth the trippy trip. If time allows, stop in at On Waverly and check out their wonderfully curated collection of books, prints, and stickers. Move on to Verjus for natural wine and French-inspired small plates and then call it a night.

4 MUST-SHOP SPOTS

"San Francisco is a city of neighborhoods, and each one has its own unique vibe. That's what makes shopping here so fun," says Lili Henry, personal stylist and color analysis expert based in the Bay Area. Check out her top destinations:

THE FINERIE
"Boho and easygoing. Perfect if you want pieces that go from week to weekend."

McMULLEN
"Their pieces make your outfit look intentional... everything feels effortless but special."

LAN JAENICKE
"Modern and a little artsy. The mix of textures and shapes keeps it interesting."

EDDY
"Eclectic girly vibe. A great place to find a dress for a Napa trip."


Landline

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: COURTESY HAMEL; SORAYA MATOS(2)

FIND YOUR BLISS SOLO TRIP

JOSHUA TREE

The stripped-down beauty of the California desert makes for a dreamy setting if you're seeking peaceful solitude. Whether you're yearning for a journey of self-discovery or simply want to disconnect, you'll find it in the open sand fields, rugged mountains, and palm-filled oases—all balanced with luxury spa days and posh resorts.

DAYS: 3

VIBE: Serenity now

WHO'S COMING: Party of one

HIGHLIGHTS: Mineral hot springs, guided sound bath, cactus field at sunrise

DON'T FORGET TO PACK: Your journal, extra sunscreen, flashlight, packable jacket, sense of wonder



DAY 1

EXPERIENCE DESERT MAGIC

Reward yourself for making it to the desert with a sourdough cinnamon roll and coffee at Luna Bakery in Yucca Valley and head into Joshua Tree National Park.

Get your first taste of the miraculous protected landscape on Hidden Valley Trail. The 1-mile loop winds through the park's signature boulder formations. Then hop in the car for a winding drive along Park Boulevard. Pull over to take pics at the appropriately named monzogranite Skull Rock, and to climb on the 30-foot-long Arch Rock, reachable via a short 0.6-mile trek.

As the midday sun sets in, return to Hidden Valley for lunch at the campground, where you can seek shade in the Chasm of Doom, a small cave system off the trailhead. Stick around for sunset at Keys View before heading to Twentynine Palms for burgers and live music at Grnd Sqrl. End the day at Reset, a minimalist modern retreat built out of shipping containers. Each room is designed with a rainfall shower, record player, and private outdoor space.

DAY 2

DEEP THOUGHTS AND DARK SKIES

Set your alarm early and pack your headlamp for a sunrise hike to the Cholla Cactus Garden. The early morning light makes the inch-long needles on thousands of teddy bear cholla cacti glow, backdropped by a burnt-orange sun and and creamsicle clouds.

After a solo meditation, drive into town for a classic sausage, egg, and cheddar at Frontier Cafe. Take your full belly back into the park for a guided ranger tour of Keys Ranch, a preserved homestead developed by a former prospector, followed by the 1.1-mile Barker Dam hike. Keep an eye out for road runners and jackrabbits, and soak in the 2,000-year-old petroglyphs created by the Serrano and Cahuilla peoples.

Stop for a double pepperoni at Sky High Pie in Joshua Tree (vegan pies and salads also available) before spending the afternoon getting in touch with good vibrations with a sound bath experience inside the Integratron's massive wooden dome. Dinner is a beef brisket taco with a side of crispy tots at Pioneertown's Red Dog Saloon. Then stare into space at Sky's the Limit Observatory in Twentynine Palms, or through a private astronomy experience that takes place on Reset hotel's 180 acres of uninterrupted desert.

DAY 3

UNCOVER OASES

Order a double-shot lavender latte at



Two Bunch Palms Spa



Winter is colder, sometimes below freezing, but lighter crowds can make for a pleasant solo sojourn.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: WAY OUT VISUALCOURTESY TWO BUNCH PALMS; COURTESY LA COPINE; VISIT CALIFORNIA; AMAZING ANDREW PEACOCK/GETTY IMAGES

HOW TO HIKE ALONE

Anna Marini, preventive search-and-rescue coordinator at Joshua Tree, offers some tips for hiking safely:

CHECK THE FORECAST
"The weather can change drastically in every season. Layers are important."

DOWNLOAD MAPS
"You'll probably lose service, so bring physical maps or download them from the NPS app."

SHARE YOUR ITINERARY
"Tell someone where you're going and when you plan to be back. Warn family and friends about the lack of cell service."

WATCH FOR WILDLIFE.
"We do have venomous animals. Bees are also attracted to water and can get aggressive. Don't leave your windows cracked with a soda can in your car."

Más o Menos to fuel your morning trek to a desert oasis. On the 3-mile Fortynine Palms Oasis hike, you'll climb over a ridge studded with barrel cacti before ending in a rocky canyon where emerald green palms encircle a natural spring.

Next, say farewell to the park and drive to the town of Joshua Tree to choose from one of the roadside specials like homemade biscuits smothered in country gravy at Crossroads Cafe. Then it's time to treat yourself with a day pass at Two Bunch Palms, an adults-only retreat in Desert Hot Springs. Find full mind-body-and-spirit renewal through the three-hour Desert Revival Treatment, which combines a warm oil massage, Reiki session, and detoxifying magnesium wrap. Relax in geothermal waters, naturally heated to 100 degrees, while sipping an icy date shake in the shade.

When you're ready for dinner, take a 20-minute trip to Yucca Valley for elevated fare at La Copine. Reservations are a good idea—and so is the shrimp roll served with pickled carrots, jalapeño, house mayo, and Thai basil on a buttery brioche bun. Toast yourself for an adventure well had with a nightcap from Reset's Split Rock Bar, best enjoyed in your room's outdoor soaking tub under the inky desert sky.



La Copine



Sierra *Magic*

EXPERIENCE THE UNTAMED BEAUTY OF THE EASTERN SIERRA, HOME TO CALIFORNIA'S MOST DRAMATIC NATURAL TERRAIN

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DANE DEANER **WORDS BY** ANN MARIE BROWN



RAINBOW FALLS

Fed by snowmelt and the never-ending flow of the Middle Fork San Joaquin River, Rainbow Falls makes a grand statement as it plunges 101 feet over a rhyodacite cliff. Hike to the falls in late morning on a sunny day to see the cataract's namesake—two colorful rainbows that arc across its mist. The sun's angle at midday makes the magic happen.



DEVILS POSTPILE

Near Mammoth Lakes, a surreal cluster of 60-foot-high rock "posts" ranks as one of the world's finest examples of columnar basalt. This geologic marvel formed about 82,000 years ago when a volcanic vent spewed hot lava, forming a deep pool. The lava cooled, hardened, and eventually cracked into thousands of six-sided columns. A short climb to the Postpile's top lets you view the hexagons under your feet.



PARKER LAKE

Every dirt road carved into an Eastern Sierra canyon leads to a good surprise. Follow this dusty track on a slow cruise through sagebrush-covered plains, then trek the 2-mile trail to Parker Lake, nestled in a forested pocket below 12,861-foot Parker Peak. Duck families float on the emerald lake's surface, trophy-sized trout lurk in its depths, and ospreys circle high above.





MONO LAKE

This ancient lake with its otherworldly tufa formations is one of the Sierra's most mysterious sights. Created by calcium mixing with carbonate in the alkaline water, hundreds of tufas dot the lake's edges and poke up from its surface. Walk the shoreline path at Mono Lake Tufa State Natural Reserve or join a guided kayak tour, and bring binoculars to view the lake's astounding bird life.



MOBIUS ARCH

The Alabama Hills present a study in contrasts: The Sierra crest's angular, saw-toothed profile lurks in the background, but this high-desert playground holds a maze of rounded boulders and gracefully curved arches. Follow your whims through the Alabamas' golden rock grottos and walk the trail to Mobius Arch. The twisted span of granite perfectly frames Mount Whitney, the tallest peak in the Lower 48.



CONVICT LAKE

This trout-filled lake was named after an 1871 shootout between a posse and escaped convicts, but that grim history is eclipsed by technicolor scenery. Aspens and willows turn brilliant gold in autumn, and the canyon's ancient peaks show their colors year-round. Hike the lake's loop trail to survey the stripes and swirls of rust, bronze, and gray decorating Laurel Mountain and Sevehah Cliff.



LAKE GEORGE

The Mammoth Lakes Basin's glacier-carved lakes are clustered so tightly, you can ride a bike from one to the next. At the pavement's end lies Lake George, a sapphire jewel tucked below the towering wall of Mammoth Crest. Rent a boat from the small store or launch your paddleboard, then float around the sublime lake and scan for rock climbers high above on Crystal Crag's granite fin.



JUNE LAKE LOOP

Unseen by drivers whizzing by on U.S. 395, the June Lake Loop hosts four large lakes—Grant, Silver, Gull, and June—sheltered by colossal peaks. A 16-mile asphalt ribbon weaves through the horseshoe-shaped canyon, skirting the lakes and dropping by its friendly mountain village. Stop in for ice cream or a craft brew, or spend a few nights in a woodsy cabin or campsite.


Sundial Bridge

TIPS FOR CALIFORNIA TRIPS

WE ASKED TRAVEL PROS, FOODIES, AND DOLLAR-STRETCHING EXPERTS HOW TO BALANCE RICH EXPERIENCES WITH SERIOUS **VALUE** ON A CALIFORNIA VACATION

BY KATRINA HUNT

MEET THE EXPERTS



JULIE FALCONER
Travel blogger of California Wayfaring



DARRYL GORDON
San Diego-based food & travel writer



KIM HAMILTON
Travel content creator



LUCY SIMON
Special projects editor, *Food & Wine*



KATIE DILLON
La Jolla Mom blogger



LARS PETERSON
Senior editor, Investopedia special projects



ALI KHAN
TV personality and host of *Ali Khan Eats*

EAT WELL (AND DRINK) FOR LESS

FOODIE TIPS UNDER $20

California is a wonderland for foodies, but you don't need to max out your budget for culinary delights that come with bragging rights. Use these tips:

HIT UP HAPPY HOURS

"Many places offer discounted plates and drinks for $5–$15," says Darryl Gordon, who suggests asking a hotel staffer for good spots. "It's a smart way to sample local restaurants without spending much." Some of his favorites in San Diego include Deckman's North at 3131 in North Park and Rustic Root in Solana Beach.

SEEK OUT A CITY'S FOOD-HALL MARKETPLACE

Foodies love the shops and food-hall options at spots like San Francisco's Ferry Building Marketplace, San Diego's Liberty Public Market, and Los Angeles' Smorgasburg or Grand Central Market—where visitors can sample gourmet bites or grab a quick, affordable meal.

ONE WORD: TACOS

"California is known for great Mexican food, so I recommend seeking out local taquerias or food trucks," says Julie Falconer. "You can enjoy a delicious, filling meal without breaking the bank. In San Francisco, I love La Taqueria in the Mission."

FOLLOW THE FOOD TRUCKS

Plenty of towns have roving trucks or food-truck parks that serve up foodie-magnet fare. Redding has The Park and San Francisco has Spark Social SF, while Indio offers a weekly Food Truck Friday. The Oakland Museum of California hosts a one-two punch of food and culture with its Friday Nights at OMCA, set outside the museum with trucks and live music.

PLAN AROUND RESTAURANT WEEKS

You'll find prix fixe specials for lunch and dinner that often hit that $20 mark. Many are in January and February, including Napa Valley's 28-day Restaurant Month and Los Angeles' Dine LA Restaurant Week. Check your destination's tourism board website for dates and more dining deals.



Luna Mexican Kitchen

EAT AT BIB GOURMANDS

Michelin awards the Bib Gourmand to restaurants that combine excellent food and great value—and California has 123 of them (as of press time), including 22 in the "on a budget" category. "I kinda live for them," says Ali Khan, whose favorites include Mariscos Jalisco in Los Angeles and A16 in San Francisco. More great options include Pho Momma in Sacramento and Luna Mexican Kitchen in San Jose.

CHECK THE CALENDAR

Hi-Lo Liquor Market (located in Culver City, Long Beach, and Costa Mesa) hosts free tastings from exciting new alcohol brands and cocktail creators. Before you head out, check your location's events calendar to see what awaits.

CALIFORNIA'S ONE $ BIB GOURMANDS

- Pho Momma, *Sacramento*
- Los Carnalitos, *Hayward*
- Luscious Dumplings, *Monrovia*
- Tacos Oscar, *Oakland*
- Lao Xi Noodle House, *Arcadia*
- Rocio's Mexican Kitchen, *Bell Gardens*
- Teni East Kitchen, *Oakland*
- Little Fish, *Los Angeles*
- Komal, *Los Angeles*
- Dumpling Home, *San Francisco*
- Pho 79, *Garden Grove*
- La Azteca, *Los Angeles*
- Pine & Crane, *Los Angeles*
- China Village, *Albany*
- Mae Malai Thai House of Noodles, *Los Angeles*
- Carnes Asadas Pancho Lopez, *Los Angeles*
- Ramen & Tsukemen Tao, *Buena Park*
- New Dumpling, *El Cerrito*
- Lola 55, *San Diego*
- Pollo a la Brasa, *Los Angeles*
- Villa's Tacos, *Los Angeles*
- Liu's Cafe, *Los Angeles*

EXPERT TIP

"I often crave something low-key after a long day of wine tasting," says Lucy Simon. "When visiting Napa I find myself at Oxbow Public Market often, sometimes even more than once a day. The market itself is every food-lover's dream: There are stalls that overflow with gorgeous local produce, great coffee, a wide array of cheeses, and so much more. A trip to Oxbow isn't complete without a smashburger and handspun milkshake from Gott's Roadside next door."

ILLUSTRATIONS: EMMA ISENHART. COURTESY LUNA MEXICAN KITCHEN. PREVIOUS PAGE: AMANDA FRIEDMAN

FIVE CLASSIC CALIFORNIA TOWNS

$50 DAYS

"You could spend all $50 on a great meal," says Darryl Gordon, "but it's just as easy to make it last all day." These expert itineraries show how to eat, play, and explore without overspending.

SAN DIEGO

MORNING Coffee and pastry from rising San Diego–born chain Better Buzz (try the "Best Drink Ever"), followed by beach time or walking around Balboa Park.

LUNCH "You're in San Diego, so getting Mexican food is a great bet," says Gordon, "especially if it is a fish or Tijuana-style taco," like the ones at The Taco Stand. Spend the afternoon wandering around Little Italy and the Embarcadero.

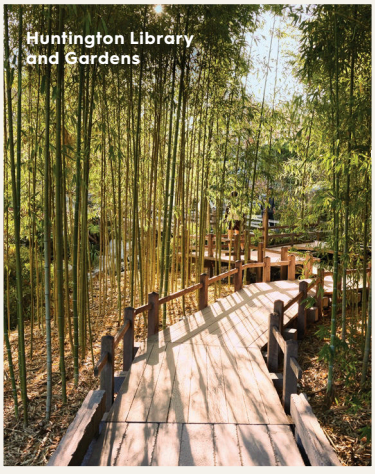
DINNER Choose from a classic burger at Hodad's, authentic Asian food on Convoy Street, or a few slices of pizza from Tribute.

HEALDSBURG

MORNING Grab a raspberry-orange muffin at Flying Goat Coffee and enjoy it on a quiet bench in Healdsburg Plaza right outside.

AFTERNOON "For a late lunch," Simon says, "I'm having a glass of wine and a wood-fired pizza on the roof of the Matheson (Roof 106)—like the broccolini pie with preserved lemon."

EVENING End the day with a cocktail and shared-plates dinner at Lo & Behold Bar and Kitchen. "A daiquiri truly hits different after a day of wine tasting," she says.



Huntington Library and Gardens

PASADENA

MORNING Choose from the different Toast Bar options at Lavender & Honey in downtown paired with a tea or coffee.

AFTERNOON Don't miss Pie 'n Burger, says Lars Peterson, "a modest diner specializing in the classic L.A.-style burger: smashed patty, crisp iceberg lettuce, dripping dressing." After lunch, walk the grounds of the nearby Huntington Library, famous for its gardens, art, and collection of very old books. "Free Day is the first Thursday of the month—but you must act fast when they open the online ticket-reservation system," he says.

EVENING Try another local legend, the Orange Chicken at Panda Inn—the original restaurant (complete with a sushi menu) that launched the spinoff chain Panda Express.

MENDOCINO

MORNING Grab a coffee and croissant from The Waiting Room, the casual to-go section of the acclaimed Café Beaujolais, then stroll Mendocino Village.

AFTERNOON Choose a sandwich from the beloved Mendocino Market, like the Pesto Veggie, Grilled Real Crab & Cheddar, or Local Rockfish. Then head to Fort Bragg to explore Glass Beach (remember: Look but don't take any glass).

EVENING Enjoy the sunset over some fish 'n' chips and a local craft beer at Sea Pal Cove in Fort Bragg, complete with a dockside view.

SANTA CRUZ

MORNING Start your day at Steamer Lane Supply, where you can grab a breakfast taco and go watch the experts ply the famous waves of Steamer Lane across the street. For another kind of workout, drive up to Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park to walk among the giant trees.

AFTERNOON Pick up a sandwich at Zoccoli's Delicatessen (try the Santa Cruzer with homemade hummus) and enjoy an afternoon at the Beach Boardwalk, either playing on the sand or riding the century-old Giant Dipper coaster (boardwalk admission is free, and you pay per ride).

EVENING Have a few giant slices and a big salad at the downtown Pizza My Heart. "We grab a slice of pizza and t-shirt," says Kim Hamilton (there's an ongoing deal that includes a shirt), "then walk across the street for a cookie at Pacific Cookie Company."



Crystal Cove Shake Shack

BITES & SIGHTS

Pair a local-favorite sandwich with a scenic (free) dining spot.

ORDER: The Turkado, Board & Brew
VIEW: Del Mar's Powerhouse Park

Get one of the best sandwiches in town and enjoy it at this grassy oceanfront park.

ORDER: Cove Deluxe Burger, Shake Shack
VIEW: Crystal Cove State Beach, Newport Beach

This classic burger shack (no relation to the national chain) is located in the state park that teeters on a bluff overlooking the Pacific Ocean.

ORDER: Jackson Club, Green Store
VIEW: Hermosa Beach

Since 1914, this beloved deli has been serving classics like the Jackson Club—wrapped in a sun-dried tomato tortilla—just a block from Hermosa Beach.

ORDER: Clam Chowder Bread Bowl, Splash Café
VIEW: Pismo Beach

Enjoy Pismo Beach's most famous dish in a sourdough bread bowl, just steps from the oceanfront Pier Plaza.

ORDER: Molinari Special, Molinari
VIEW: San Francisco's Ina Coolbrith Park

The classic Italian sandwich on focaccia is big enough to share. Walk a half-mile to Ina Coolbrith Park, where you can hike up the hill for expansive views of the city and beyond.

FROM TOP: AMANDA FRIEDMAN; COURTESY CRYSTAL COVE SHAKE SHACK



The Giant Dipper, Santa Cruz's iconic wooden roller coaster, celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2024.

Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk

COURTESY SANTA CRUZ BEACH BOARDWALK



Lands End Trail serves up sweeping Golden Gate Bridge views, wildflowers, and sea-sprayed cliffs.

Lands End, San Francisco

GETTY IMAGES. NEXT PAGE, FROM TOP: BBPRINCE/SHUTTERSTOCK; AMANDA FRIEDMAN

SHOP LIKE A LOCAL, *SPEND LIKE A PRO*

1 WEEKLY FARMERS' MARKET Beyond the fresh produce, you'll find artisan-made jewelry, clothing, and other treasures that you or people at home will love. Plus, you can stock up on fresh fruit or pastries for an easy breakfast. In downtown San Luis Obispo, the Thursday night market combines craft vendors with live music and enough food for a full evening of shopping, dining, and entertainment.

2 BROWSE TOP THRIFT SHOPS Every city and even smaller towns have their star stores. In San Francisco, check out Held Over, and in Palm Springs, don't miss Revivals and The Frippery. Want recommendations? Ask a hotel staffer, bartender, or waitperson.

3 MAKE THE MOST OF COLLEGE TOWNS Telegraph Avenue in Berkeley, 2nd St. in downtown Davis, and Claremont Village near Claremont Colleges are lined with bookstores, clothing shops, and boutiques that combine fun aesthetics with student-friendly prices.

4 HIT LOCAL FLEA MARKETS AND SWAP MEETS In L.A., it's the Rose Bowl Flea Market; in San Diego, Kobey's Swap Meet (weekends only), and in Santa Cruz, the weekly So-So Market.

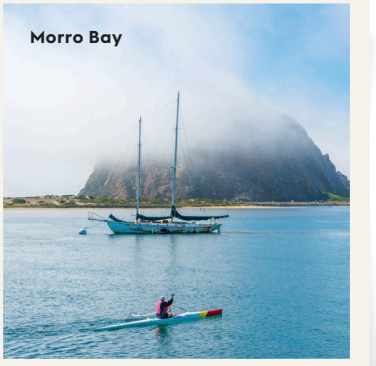
5 DON'T SLEEP ON THE OUTLET MALLS California has excellent outlet malls all over the state that punch above their weight in terms of discounted luxury brands. Consider the Cabazon and Desert Hills outlet malls, a neighboring duo of malls just outside Palm Springs that offers a jaw-dropping array of big names, such as Christian Louboutin, Jimmy Choo, and Prada.

EXPERT TIP

The first rule of smart shopping when traveling is to go where the locals go. In Napa, Peterson loves to sip and browse at Back Room Wines, featuring "tastings of local vintages (and imports) from smaller wineries." Every Friday, the store does a blind tasting of four wines for $25.



Rose Bowl Flea Market


Morro Bay

ADVENTURE ON A BUDGET

- **EXPLORE CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS.** Most just charge a day-use fee of about $10 per car, and some are free, including Columbia State Historic Park, Robert Louis Stevenson State Park, and Old Sacramento.
- **HIKE IN A FAMOUS LOCAL PARK.** Consider the East Ridge Trail in Runyon Canyon Park in Los Angeles (you can see the Hollywood Sign), Lands End Trail in San Francisco's Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Chico's Bidwell Park, and San Diego's Balboa Park.
- **RENT A KAYAK.** Plenty of places start at just $20 per hour, with discounts for added hours, like Morro Bay Sub Sea Tours or Cal Coast Adventures in Santa Barbara.
- **BIKE AROUND TOWN.** The Redding Bikeshare program is just $18 a day. In San Diego, you can pedal around scenic Mission Bay with a bike from San Diego Bike Rentals for $15 per hour.
- **RENT A DUFFY BOAT IN NEWPORT BEACH.** "If you split it with a handful of friends, it becomes affordable," says Peterson. (Rates can start at a little over $100 an hour.) "Bring a picnic and chug around the harbor for a few hours, enjoying the water and the breeze."

Insider tip: Free 2026 national park days are April 19–27, June 19, Aug. 4, and Sept. 26.

CULTURE, SPORTS, AND ENTERTAINMENT

Plenty of big-name attractions around California charge little or no admission. In Los Angeles, the Getty and the Getty Villa charge no admission (you'll just pay to park) and The Broad downtown is also free. Here are more ways to soak up culture without draining your wallet:

CHECK FOR FREE MUSEUM DAYS

See if the museum you're visiting has free or discounted days each month—at the de Young in San Francisco, admission is free the first Tuesday of each month. At the Palm Springs Art Museum, every Thursday evening is free. In Riverside, each first Thursday and first Sunday of the month mean free admission to the Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Art & Culture.

LEVERAGE MEMBERSHIPS

AAA, AARP, and some credit cards (such as Bank of America) get you in free or with a discount to museums such as LACMA, the Autry Museum of the American West, and Sacramento's California Museum. Bank of America and Merrill Lynch's Museums on Us program offers free admission on select days (the first full weekend of the month) to card holders.

TRAVELING WITHIN THE STATE?

Your California library card offers park passes (one per family per year) and free museum passes on the Discover & Go platform; tickets are made available at the start of the month.

SCORE FREE TICKETS FOR NFL SUMMER TRAINING CAMPS

The L.A. Rams hold their camp at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles while the Chargers train at The Bolt in El Segundo (register online for free tickets). The Dallas Cowboys train every summer in Oxnard, where open practices are free to watch.

WATCH THE LOS ANGELES PHILHARMONIC REHEARSE

Watch rehearsals on Tuesday or Thursday afternoons at the Hollywood Bowl during concert season; seats are limited but free.

ATTEND A TV TAPING

Book your free seats online for L.A.-based TV shows at One Camera Audiences or 1Iota.com.

SEE MOVIES—AND STARS—AT A-LIST FILM FESTIVALS

Plan your trip around one of the film festivals that regularly show Oscar contenders. While VIP tickets can be pricey, many screenings are priced similar to what you'd pay at your multiplex at home. Screenings at the Mill Valley Film Festival and Burbank International Film Festival start at about $20, and the Santa Barbara Film Festival does daily free screenings. At many festivals, you can also check out free talks and other events.

12 *ALWAYS-FREE* ATTRACTIONS

- Sundial Bridge, *Redding*
- Avenue of the Giants, *Humboldt County*
- Gold Bug Park, *Placerville*
- Cable Car Museum, *San Francisco*
- Alabama Hills National Scenic Area
- Wat Dhammararam Buddhist Temple, *Stockton*
- Griffith Observatory, *Los Angeles*
- Sunnylands Center and Gardens, *Rancho Mirage*
- Orange County Museum of Art, *Costa Mesa*
- Old Town Temecula
- Old Town San Diego
- Piedras Blancas Elephant Seal Rookery, *San Simeon*



The Getty Villa

EXPERT TIP You only have to widen your calendar a smidge to find lower prices on hotels. "Travel midweek or during low season," says Falconer. "You can often get cheaper rates, especially in places that are popular weekend destinations for locals in California, like the Santa Ynez Valley, Sonoma Valley, and Napa Valley."

QUICK TIPS FOR GETTING AROUND

RENT FOR JUST A DAY

Some companies will drop the car off at your hotel and pick it up later, even in another city, says Dillon. "It's often cheaper than paying nightly parking fees, and you can choose exactly what type of car you want. Or look for a car rental company within walking distance of your hotel and rent for the day."

MAKE THE MOST OF MASS TRANSIT

Bay Area locals swear by BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit) for exploring San Francisco and outlying areas. San Diego has trolleys and trains that cover all of downtown and extend to Old Town and La Jolla. Los Angeles, meanwhile, has a more comprehensive subway than most visitors realize: Use it to visit the Walk of Fame or explore Santa Monica. Even towns like Mammoth Lakes and South Lake Tahoe have mass transit services that may cover most of your getting-around needs.

ASK YOUR HOTEL ABOUT SEASONAL SHUTTLES

"Coronado has a free summer shuttle around the island," says Dillon. "It's worth asking your hotel concierge if any local transportation programs are running."

TIME IT RIGHT

In L.A. and much of Southern California, traffic is manageable between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. Plan to be at an attraction during late afternoon then make your way back to your hotel later in the evening.

STOP BY CALIFORNIA WELCOME CENTERS

The 22 centers around the state offer big selections of free maps, brochures, and coupons for big attractions. Several are at outlet malls, including The Citadel Outlets near downtown Los Angeles and The Premium Outlets in Gilroy. The onsite staffers can also offer tips on local gems and more good values.



BART

TIME YOUR TRIP RIGHT

Low season for many areas tends to be winter, right after the new year, but here are some different shoulder seasons to plan around too:

WINE COUNTRY
Late fall and early spring

BEACH TOWNS
Early fall or late spring

DESERT
Summer is low season here (enjoy the pool), while late spring and early fall also bring good deals

MOUNTAINS
Spring (when you might still be able to ski) and fall (great leaf-peeping)

THEME PARKS
Come in late summer, early fall, or January for shorter wait times and sometimes lower rates

FAMILY TRAVEL HACKS

Bringing the whole crew? A little planning can pay off big.

1 BUY YOUR THEME PARK TICKETS ONLINE. They're always less expensive—sometimes more than a third off the price at the gate.

2 LOOK FOR FREE HOTEL PERKS. "The easiest way to add value is to book hotels that include breakfast and parking," says Dillon. "Those two costs add up quickly." Also keep an eye out for freebies like loaner bikes and beach toys. Locations such as Kimpton hotels and Hyatt's Joie de Vivre tend to offer bikes and other gear that take your trip to the next level.

3 VISIT SAN DIEGO IN OCTOBER. The annual Kids Free San Diego promotion offers free admission for kids (typically 11 and under) with a paying adult to major attractions such as LEGOLAND California, SeaWorld San Diego, and the San Diego Zoo. Hotels and restaurants offer discounts too.

4 CONSIDER GO CITY OR CITYPASS. If you're going to a lot of attractions in one town, consider a sightseeing pass. "They're all structured differently, so mock up your itinerary and compare the cost of individual discounted tickets versus the pass price," says Dillon. City Pass Los Angeles bundles admission to Universal Studios Hollywood and Warner Bros. Studio Tour—and throws in the Grammy Museum, the La Brea Tar Pits, and more.

5 BRING A REUSABLE WATER BOTTLE; CONSIDER A LOCKER. "There are refill stations around theme parks, and quick-service restaurants will give you free water," says Hamilton. At Disneyland, soft-sided coolers are allowed or can be stored in lockers, which start at $7.

6 ENJOY SOME MEALS AWAY FROM THE PARK. "When we're taking a break from Disneyland, we head to the Anaheim Packing District," says Hamilton. "Most items are under $20 per person, and there's outdoor seating and a grassy area for little ones to run around. In Buena Park, we like The Source. The Korean fried chicken at Pelicana is well-priced, delicious, and the portions are generous. Just down the road is Porto's Bakery & Cafe—I love grabbing the cheese rolls and baked goods for breakfast the next day."

LV-OLGA/SHUTTERSTOCK. PREVIOUS PAGE: CASSIA DAVIS/COURTESY J. PAUL GETTY TRUST

GOLD MEDAL-WORTHY

SNOW GETAWAYS

DISCOVER THE CALIFORNIA SKI RESORTS WHERE WINTER OLYMPIANS PLAY AND TRAIN

BY MEGHAN MIRANDA



Northstar

COURTESY NORTHSTAR CALIFORNIA/VAIL RESORTS



California consistently ranks among the top states for producing Winter Olympians. More than 20 homegrown athletes competed in each of the last three Winter Games, many snagging podium spots for their on-the-snow performances.

The Golden State's gold medal count is no coincidence. With world-renowned terrain, the legendary High Sierra snowpack, and lift-accessed ski areas that span the state, California has earned a reputation as an elite snow sport training ground.

And the best part? The very same runs, halfpipes, and freeride zones that shape tomorrow's champions are open to anyone with a lift ticket. Meet the athletes who grew up on California snow—and discover their favorite mountains, runs, and après spots.

HOME TURF
Mammoth Mountain

EVENT
Snowboard halfpipe

Tamarack Cross-Country Ski Center



Mammoth Brewing Co.

BEA KIM



Since joining the U.S. Ski & Snowboard team in 2022, Kim has been making waves in the halfpipe. She earned her first World Cup podium with a second-place finish at the 2023/24 LAAX Open and third overall in the FIS World Cup. The Southern California native honed her freeride skills on the slopes of Mammoth Mountain.

WHY YOU'LL LOVE HER HOME MOUNTAIN *Expansive freeride parks plus diverse, challenging terrain*

"Mammoth Mountain has it all—jumps, rails, and halfpipes of all different sizes, which fosters progression. Athletes who train here learn to ride everything. That's why the resort produces so many world-class snowboarders."

TOP TERRAIN PICKS *The halfpipe at Main Park*

"Obviously, the pipe, but South Park is my favorite park. The jumps and rails are the perfect size for me to have fun if I've been riding pipe a lot."

OFF-MOUNTAIN ACTIVITIES *Backcountry splitboarding or cross-country skiing at Tamarack Cross-Country Ski Center*

"Tubing is family-friendly and a lot of fun. Split-boarding or even trying something like cross-country skiing can be an adventure."

CROSS-TRAINING *More board sports*

"Surfing is my favorite. My cardio stays up, and I get to be outside and stand sideways! In Mammoth, the Volcom Brothers Skate Park is a classic."

FUEL UP *The Stove for a classic breakfast and Mammoth Brewing Co. or Mammoth Tavern for dinner*

"I love the banh mi at Mammoth Brewing for a quick bite, or the oysters and shepherd's pie at Mammoth Tavern."

DON'T MISS *Summertime in Mammoth*

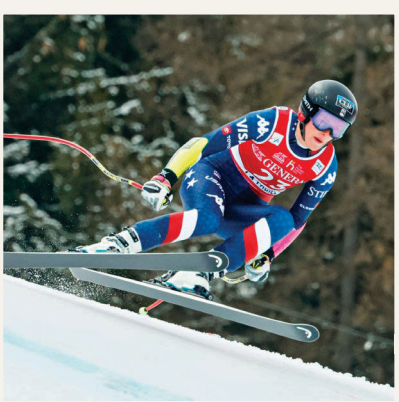
"There are just as many activities, and the views are equally beautiful."

FROM TOP: COURTESY MAMMOTH MOUNTAIN; CODY MATHISON/COURTESY MAMMOTH BREWING; MADDIE MEYER/GETTY IMAGES

KEELY CASHMAN

HOME TURF
Dodge Ridge, Palisades Tahoe

EVENT
Alpine skiing



Cashman is a 2022 Winter Olympian who has been representing Team USA in downhill, super-G, giant slalom, and slalom since 2018. From her early years at Dodge Ridge Mountain Resort to training on the world-class terrain at Palisades Tahoe, the giant slalom national champion and overall North American Cup circuit winner credits her skills to her California ski resort roots.

WHY YOU'LL LOVE HER HOME MOUNTAINS *Beginner-friendly, small-mountain feel at Dodge Ridge and expansive terrain at Palisades Tahoe*

"I got to experience a rare combination of starting in such a nurturing, small-mountain environment and then training at the highest level of competition."

TOP TERRAIN PICKS *Palisades' Granite Chief Peak and Headwall*

"The terrain is steep, technical, and absolutely incredible on a powder day."

OFF-MOUNTAIN ACTIVITIES *Lake days and riverside hangs*

"I love spending time with friends at Pinecrest Lake or fishing along the Truckee River. Both are relaxing ways to unwind and enjoy the outdoors."

CROSS-TRAINING *Road biking steep mountain trails*

"Sonora Pass is a grueling climb, but the incredible views at the top are completely worth the effort."

FUEL UP *Her family's coffee shop, Serene Bean, located at Pinecrest Lake near Strawberry*

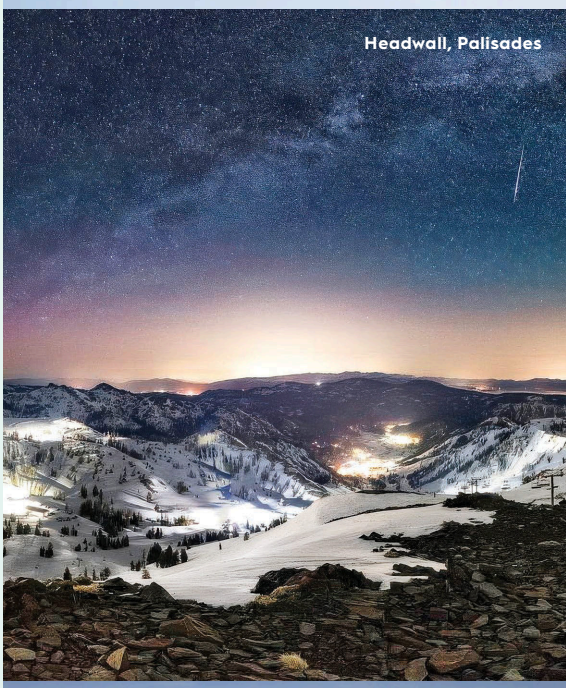
"I might be biased, but I truly believe Serene Bean serves some of the best coffee and breakfast burritos in the world."

DON'T MISS *The welcoming environment of Dodge Ridge*

"Dodge Ridge has no high-speed chairlifts, which gives it a slower, more old-school ski feel you don't often find anymore. It's a mountain that makes learning to ski an affordable and accessible option for families. That sense of inclusivity is a big part of what makes it special."



Dodge Ridge



Headwall, Palisades



Dodge Ridge

FROM TOP: COURTESY DODGE RIDGE; COURTESY PALISADES TAHOE; CHRISTOPHE PALLOT/AGENCE ZOOM/GETTY IMAGES; COURTESY DODGE RIDGE

ROBBY BURNS



HOME TURF
Mt. Shasta

EVENT
Alpine snowboarding

Now in his 13th year of competitive snowboarding, Olympian Robby Burns has been training with Team USA since 2022. After more than a decade on the world stage, the 2023 FIS NorAm Cup champion can't imagine anywhere better to train than the slopes of Mt. Shasta.



Mt. Shasta Ski Park



Mt. Shasta Nordic Center

WHY YOU'LL LOVE HIS HOME MOUNTAIN *Small ski park feel with big mountain terrain*

"Local access to the ski hill is very streamlined... A serious athlete looking for quality training would be able to have a conversation with the staff at the ski park."

TOP TERRAIN PICKS *North Saddle groomers; off-piste at Pumpkin Patch*

"For groomers? North Saddle to Highland Glide—no stops, full carving the whole way down. When the powder is deep, head straight over to Pumpkin Patch. The new lift on Grey Butte offers some immense terrain upgrades!"

OFF-MOUNTAIN ACTIVITIES *Snowtubing, snowmobiling, or ice fishing at Castle Lake*

"Tubing at Mt. Shasta Ski Park can be a wonderful intro to being on snow. They also have great snowmobile opportunities on and around the mountain. Ice fishing at Castle Lake can be a fun day outside as well."

CROSS-TRAINING *Nordic skiing at Mt. Shasta Nordic Center, hiking to waterfalls and lakes*

"My fiancée competes professionally in biathlon, so we spend a lot of time on Nordic skis in the winter and roller skis in the summer. During the summer months, I am a sucker for the McCloud Falls. There is a dirt trail that takes you to all three falls and shows you a gorgeous stretch of river. A hike up to and a dip in Heart Lake or Castle Lake are also great options."

FUEL UP *Seven Suns for a.m. eats and Baldovinos Wine Bar and Kitchen for special occasions*

"My first stop is by Seven Suns for a morning coffee and a Sevens Suns Meat Lovers' Breakfast Burrito. Their salsa is wonderful and fresh, and the thought of that burrito is pure nostalgia. You'll also need to experience a Tiger Tail from Papa's Donuts and a burger from Drizzle. If you're in town for a special occasion, go to Baldovinos Wine Bar and Kitchen. Chef Clint has a worldly pedigree and just knows how to curate a delicious menu. Get a Widow Burger and duck-fat fries at Pipeline. Tri-tip sandwiches from the Mt. Shasta Supermarket on Fridays are an experience."

DON'T MISS *Discovering the natural beauty; connecting with locals*

"Within the surrounding area in Siskiyou County, there are sleeper hikes to beautiful waterfalls, high alpine lakes, gorgeous rivers, beautiful sunrises—and they are all true gems. From the outside our little town might just look like a one-stop shop for a picture of a beautiful volcano, but it is so much more. The community is truly unique."

FROM TOP: BEN STANSALL/GETTY IMAGES; COURTESY MT. SHASTA SKI PARK; COURTESY MT. SHASTA NORDIC CENTER

KT-22, Palisades

HOME TURF
Palisades Tahoe

EVENT
Alpine skiing



AJ HURT

The daughter of a Palisades Tahoe ski patroller, Olympian AJ Hurt has been skiing at the resort her entire life. Her foundational training on Palisades' renowned terrain propelled her to two World Cup podium finishes—one in slalom and one in giant slalom—since she joined Team USA in 2018.

WHY YOU'LL LOVE HER HOME MOUNTAIN
Diverse, challenging terrain

"The mountain has been my playground forever. The terrain is challenging and there's lots of it."

TOP TERRAIN PICKS
KT-22 and Headwall all day!

OFF-MOUNTAIN ACTIVITIES *Year-round walks in the woods, sledding in the winter, and summer beach days at Waterman's Landing in Carnelian Bay*

CROSS-TRAINING
Staying active outdoors and playing pickleball

FUEL UP *Wildflour Baking Company, plus Fire Sign Cafe, Wild Cherries, and La Mexicana*

"I always go to Wildflour at the base of the mountain. Get the pizza bagel and a chocolate chip cookie. For breakfast, I love Fire Sign Cafe on the West Shore. Everything they serve is so good. My coffee and snacks stop is Wild Cherries in Truckee. In Kings Beach, La Mexicana is a must."

DON'T MISS *Tahoe's year-round natural beauty*

"I live in a beautiful mountain town. In the winter, we ski and in the summer we play in the lake."



Fire Sign Cafe

FROM TOP: KATE ABRAHAM/COURTESY PALISADES TAHOE; SEAN M. HAFFEY/GETTY IMAGES; COURTESY FIRE SIGN CAFE



DYLAN MARCELLINI

Up-and-coming athlete Dylan Marcellini joined Team USA in 2022. The Bay Area native grew up training with the "incredibly supportive and close-knit" community at Palisades Tahoe. In the 2024/25 season, Marcellini landed a double victory in moguls and dual moguls at the NorAm Cup, held at his old stomping grounds—the Red Dog moguls course at Palisades Tahoe.

HOME TURF
Palisades Tahoe

EVENT
Moguls skiing

WHY YOU'LL LOVE HIS HOME MOUNTAIN
Celebrated skiing, exceptional snowfall, and an Olympic heritage

"The varied, challenging runs provide an unmatched training environment, while the legacy of hosting the 1960 Winter Olympics adds a sense of pride and inspiration."

TOP TERRAIN PICKS
The moguls off Red Dog, plus The Fingers off KT-22

"Red Dog holds so many memories from my ski team days. But you can't talk about Palisades Tahoe without mentioning the iconic KT-22 and sending it off The Fingers knowing everyone on the chair is watching."



Bridgetender Tavern

OFF-MOUNTAIN ACTIVITIES *Sledding and other snow play activities*

"I love heading outdoors with friends, building things like a jump or an igloo in the snowbank next to my house, or racing down one of Tahoe City's many great sledding hills."

CROSS-TRAINING
Road biking, weightlifting, and water ramp training

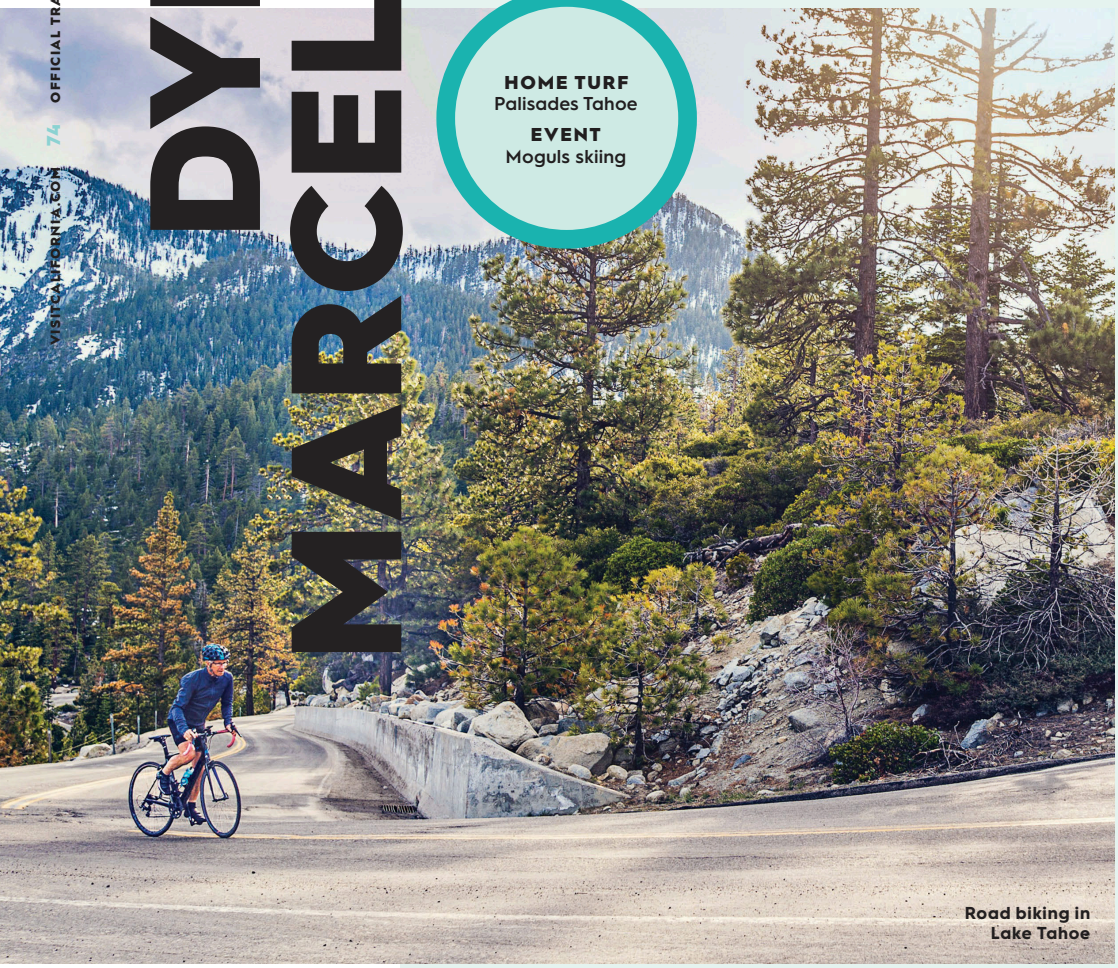
"Road biking has become my favorite low-impact workout that still builds endurance and leg strength. Offseason, I spend a lot of time dryland training on the water ramp. It's fun flying through the air and working on technique, but it's definitely a grind—cold water, early wake-ups, and lots of repetition. Still, it all pays off when the season starts."

FUEL UP *Bridgetender Tavern & Grill or Front Street Station Pizza*

"Off the mountain, Bridgetender Tavern and Front Street Station Pizza are true locals' spots where the atmosphere is laid-back and the food consistently hits the mark."

DON'T MISS
Taking the scenic route on Mountain Run

"After hours of shredding with the fellas, there's nothing better than cruising down that long, scenic trail to wrap up the day."



Road biking in Lake Tahoe

FROM TOP: COURTESY BRIDGETENDER; DUSTIN SATLOFF/GETTY IMAGES; JUSTIN PAGET

MORE CALIFORNIA RESORTS WITH OLYMPIC TIES

BIG BEAR MOUNTAIN RESORT

Home to the first and only halfpipes in Southern California, Big Bear Mountain Resort is the perfect place for terrain park–curious riders to test the waters. It's no wonder the resort has served as a launchpad for top California snow sport athletes including Chloe Kim, Maddie Mastro, and Dusty Henricksen (snowboard slopestyle), who spent time dialing in their tricks on the slopes at Big Bear.

WHY YOU'LL LOVE THIS MOUNTAIN
With more than 678 acres of skiable terrain across three mountains—Bear Mountain, Snow Summit, and Snow Valley—Big Bear has the most on-the-snow access in Southern California. Plus, Snow Valley and Snow Summit offer something rare: California night skiing.

OFF-MOUNTAIN ACTIVITIES Explore a different Olympic sport at the quarter-mile bobsled track at Alpine Slide.

WHERE TO FUEL UP Chow down on barbecue at Skyline Taphouse, the only mountaintop restaurant in Big Bear. Off-resort, opt for Barrel 33, where fondue and wine tastings bring peak ski-trip vibes.

NORTHSTAR RESORT

Northstar California has an Olympic legacy of its own. During the 2011/12 season, the resort debuted a 22-foot superpipe designed by snowboarding legend Shaun White. This behemoth feature served as training grounds for White and fellow athletes, including Olympian David Wise (freeski halfpipe), leading up to the 2014 Games in Sochi. Chinese-American athlete Eileen Gu (freeski) also started her training at Northstar. She competed for China in 2022 and was the first woman to medal in all three freeski disciplines (slopestyle, halfpipe, big air).

WHY YOU'LL LOVE THIS MOUNTAIN
Today, you can ride fun features, including an 18-foot pipe and a mini pipe, in the resort's nine distinct terrain parks. If natural features are more your style, head to Lookout Mountain for endless tree skiing.

OFF-MOUNTAIN ACTIVITIES
The picturesque ice rink at Northstar Village is the ultimate spot for an après-ski hang. Grab a beverage from the rink-side bar and cozy up by the outdoor firepits to watch the action, or rent a pair of skates for a session on the ice.

WHERE TO FUEL UP
For a healthy, hearty meal, choose from the fresh salads and bowls made with rotisserie meats at Wild Pine Kitchen and Bar.



Sierra-at-Tahoe

COURTESY SIERRA-AT-TAHOE

BY THE NUMBERS

CALIFORNIA SNOW

Athletes aren't the only ones racking up the accolades. See all the ways California overdelivers during ski season and even tops the charts in the world of winter sports.

451 inches
Depth of the **deepest snowpack on record** in the U.S. measured in Tamarack, California, in March 1911

11,053 feet
Altitude of the **highest chairlift-accessed ski terrain** in California at Mammoth Mountain

6,000 acres
Amount of **skiable terrain at Palisades Tahoe,** California's largest ski area

310 days
Length of California's **longest ski season** on record during the 1994/95 winter at Mammoth Mountain

5.5 miles
Distance of **Heavenly Ski Resort's Olympic Downhill run,** the longest continuous ski run in California

1960
Year the **Olympic Games**—held at present-day Palisades Tahoe—were first televised in the U.S.

43
Number of **chairlifts at Palisades Tahoe** and the highest number of lifts at any ski resort in the U.S.

SIERRA-AT-TAHOE

Known for its laid-back atmosphere, Sierra-at-Tahoe feels like a local secret among South Lake Tahoe resorts. But don't let this unassuming mountain fool you. With excellent terrain for freestyle riders and top-notch access to backcountry terrain, it's easy to see why Olympic gold medalists Jamie Anderson (snowboard slopestyle and big air) and Maddie Bowman (freeski halfpipe) proudly rep Sierra as their early career stomping grounds.

WHY YOU'LL LOVE THIS MOUNTAIN
From nationally recognized terrain parks to tight tree skiing and access to backcountry terrain in Huckleberry Canyon via five in-bounds gates, the resort offers plenty of room to push your boundaries.

OFF-MOUNTAIN ACTIVITIES
South of the resort, Kirkwood Cross Country Ski and Snowshoe Center offers nearly 50 miles of groomed trails to explore at a slower pace.

WHERE TO FUEL UP
Enjoy mountaintop dining with a side of Lake Tahoe views at 360 Smokehouse BBQ. Or try Solstice Eatery's produce-heavy bowls and salads.

HEAVENLY MOUNTAIN RESORT

Located in South Lake Tahoe, Heavenly Mountain Resort offers expansive terrain—including the Olympic Downhill run, the longest continuous ski run in the state—paired with unbeatable views of Lake Tahoe. Beyond the postcard-worthy scenery, Heavenly has a legacy of producing top-tier talent. Olympian Jonna Mendes (alpine skiing) rose through the ranks of Heavenly's ski racing program in the '90s. More recently, decorated athlete Sho Kashima (freeski moguls)—who won a Junior Olympics moguls title at 17 and narrowly missed Olympic showings in 2010 and 2014 due to injuries—also came out of Heavenly's program.

WHY YOU'LL LOVE THIS MOUNTAIN
Explore an exciting mix of wide-open bowls, glade runs, and unreal views of Lake Tahoe.



Heavenly Mountain Resort

OFF-MOUNTAIN ACTIVITIES Heavenly has prime access to a vibrant nightlife scene, with live music, comedy performances, and other events throughout the winter.

WHERE TO FUEL UP For a quick bite, grab a soup and sandwich on homemade bread from Sprouts Natural Cafe.

UPCOMING EVENTS

U.S. REVOLUTION TOUR
Mammoth Mountain
March 10–14, 2026
Halfpipe, slopestyle, and big air events for snowboarders and freeskiers

U.S. MOGUL FREESTYLE CHAMPIONSHIPS
Palisades Tahoe
March 27–29, 2026
Single and dual mogul events

WANT MORE SNOW?
Find endless ways to play in the mountains, from cozy alpine getaways to powder-filled slopes and après-ski fun

COURTESY HEAVENLY/VAIL RESORTS

VISIT YOSEMITE MADERA COUNTY

THE PERFECT CALIFORNIA ROAD TRIP DESTINATION!

VISIT YOSEMITE MADERA COUNTY CELEBRATING AMERICA'S 250TH 1776 - 2026

YosemiteSteamtrains.com

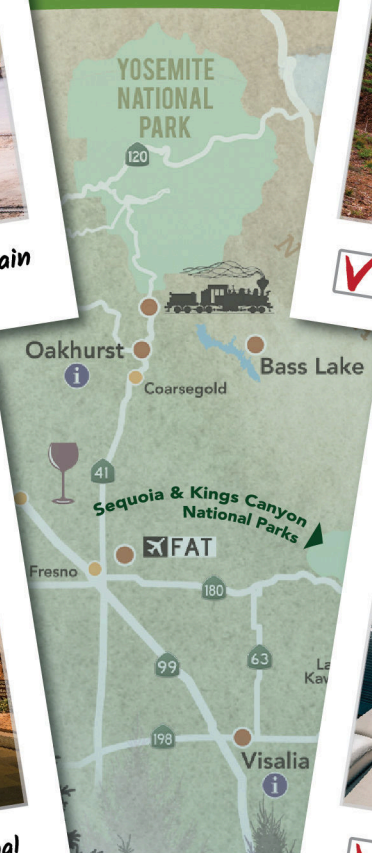


All aboard the Yosemite Mountain Sugar Pine Railroad

MajesticMountainLoop.com



Visit 3 National Parks in as little as 3 days along the Majestic Mountain Loop



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Stay, play & explore beautiful Bass Lake

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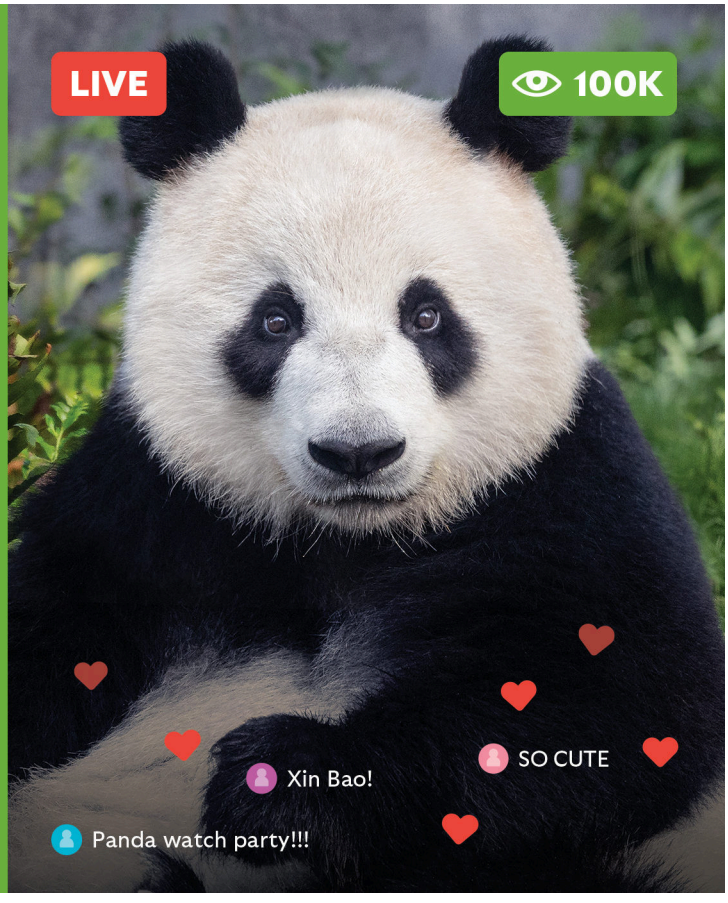
Visitor Center (559) 683-4636

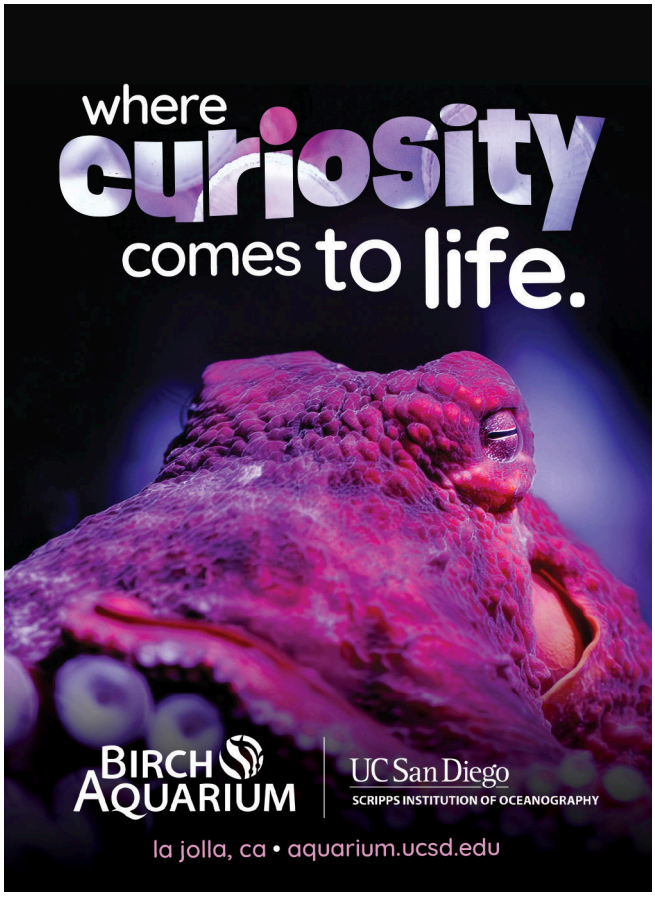
PANDAS ARE BACK.

San Diego Zoo

Plan Your Visit







SAN DIEGO COUNTY

Discover fine dining, epic surf, and endless good times in this SoCal paradise

DENNIS LINT/GETTY IMAGES

NEW AND NOTEWORTHY


Balboa Park

CULTURE

Immerse yourself in the art of the mirage at the new Museum of Illusions. Is there anything more satisfying to the senses than a full-body-sized 3D pin-art board? For natural wonders, the newly restored Botanical Building in **Balboa Park** features an intricate redwood archway encasing a stunning array of 2,000-plus plants. Or visit **Escondido**'s San Diego Zoo Safari Park to explore the new Denny Sanford Elephant Valley. The largest project in the park's 50-year history invites visitors to commune with its namesake majestic mammals as they frolic in recreated waterholes and African grasslands.

ACCOMMODATIONS

With 1,600 rooms, eight restaurants, two bars, and a 4.25-acre waterpark, the new Gaylord Pacific Resort & Convention Center is the biggest thing ever to happen to San Diego's hotel scene—literally. The $1.3 billion **Chula Vista** compound is one of the largest resorts in the United States. From soaring indoor atriums to high-energy wave pools, a stay at the Gaylord is like visiting a luxury cruise ship on land.

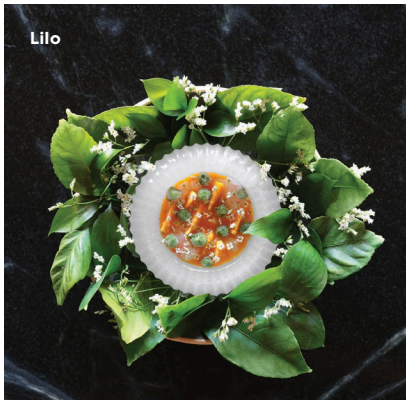
For something more intimate, reserve one of the 39 rooms at The Bower, the new midcentury-meets-boho hideaway on **Coronado Island**. Built in the footprint of a former Japanese tea garden, the property also plays host to The Dive, the island's first and only rooftop bar.

FOOD & DRINK

No one does high-low quite like San Diego—and the county's newest bars and restaurants put that mix on full display. Snag a seat under the cascading indoor waterfall at the critically adored Leila, a new Persian fine-dining destination in **North Park**. Or sip on mango milk punch at Roma Norte in **Seaport Village**, a James Beard finalist for best new bar.

Prefer flip-flops and fried chicken? Head to Chick & Hawk, Tony Hawk's new laid-back **Encinitas** spot. Or get your '80s on at the funky new auto shop-turned-pizza joint Sonny's in **University Heights**.


Gaylord Pacific Resort & Convention Center

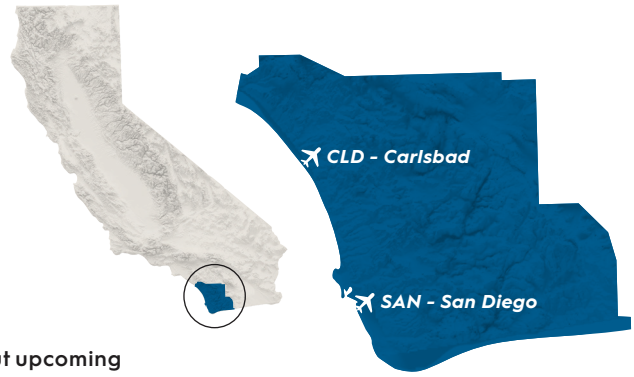

Lilo

DON'T MISS

Reserve a coveted spot at Lilo's 24-seat chef's counter in Carlsbad for a 12-course, Michelin-starred tasting menu—featuring highlights like Kaluga caviar and dry-aged Japanese kinmedai. The experience begins with small bites on the garden patio before moving into counter seating around an open kitchen.



Comic-Con International



Check out upcoming events across the region and explore must-see attractions to extend your stay.

EVENTS

DISCOVER MORE
Scan the code to find more upcoming events

APRIL 24–26

LA JOLLA CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE

La Jolla

Ogle rare automobiles while sipping bubbly and listening to live music at this event held on oceanfront lawns.

MAKE IT A WEEKEND
Soak up more beauty at the nearby Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, which showcases paintings, photography, and video created after 1950. Don't miss the ocean-view sculpture garden.

Stay at La Valencia, the Mediterranean-style "pink lady" hotel that celebrates its centennial in 2026. Enjoy a nightcap in its reborn Whaling Bar: The legendary Whaler is made with cognac, coffee liqueur, and ice cream.

JULY 22–26

COMIC-CON INTERNATIONAL

San Diego

The once-plucky small festival for comic book fans is now a pop culture juggernaut—and typically features a high-wattage lineup of creators and Hollywood A-listers.

MAKE IT A WEEKEND
Escape the crowds with a beach trip to Hodad's, a beloved burger shack in Ocean Beach. The mile-high floats are worth waiting in line for.

Head over to the official Comic-Con Museum in Balboa Park to check out exhibits celebrating all things sci-fi and fantasy.

SEPT

MCAS MIRAMAR AIR SHOW

San Diego

Channel *Top Gun* at this annual three-day air show at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, featuring eye-popping aviation by the iconic U.S. Navy Blue Angels and the Air Force F-22 Raptor Demo Team.

MAKE IT A WEEKEND
Stay in Oceanside, a longtime military community, where the luxe Mission Pacific Beach Resort has an ocean-view rooftop bar and neighbors the beach house featured in *Top Gun*.

Delve into military history by exploring the USS Midway Museum, the retired aircraft carrier permanently docked on the edge of downtown San Diego.

Sip acclaimed craft beers at Stone Brewing World Bistro & Gardens, housed in the former mess hall at Liberty Station, once a Naval training center.

EVEN MORE EVENTS

JAN.
HOLIDAY BOWL
San Diego

JAN.–FEB.
FARMERS INSURANCE OPEN
La Jolla

MAY
WONDERFRONT MUSIC & ARTS FESTIVAL
San Diego

JUNE
NASCAR SAN DIEGO WEEKEND
Coronado

JUNE–JULY
SAN DIEGO COUNTY FAIR
Del Mar

JULY
SAN DIEGO PRIDE
San Diego

AUG.
BAZAAR DEL MUNDO LATIN AMERICAN MARKET
Old Town

OCT.
KIDS FREE SAN DIEGO
San Diego

NOV.
SAN DIEGO FOOD + WINE FESTIVAL
San Diego

NOV.–JAN.
LIGHTSCAPE AT SAN DIEGO BOTANIC GARDEN
San Diego

FROM TOP: LUIS GARCIA; COURTESY GAYLORD PACIFIC RESORT; COURTSEY LILO. NEXT: GILBERT FLORES/GETTY IMAGES

SPLURGE vs. SAVE

LA JOLLA

Unwind in this sophisticated seaside enclave, where experiences at every price point can feel indulgent

STAY

SPLURGE

Two bedrooms surround a luxe presidential parlor in The Lodge at Torrey Pines' Gamble Suite, a Craftsman-style space providing access to the 18th green of the Torrey Pines South course. *From $4,500/night with optional second bedroom*

SAVE

Just a few blocks from the beach, Sands of La Jolla offers newly renovated rooms, each with balconies or patios for sunset viewing (from under $150/night). Parking is included, or public transit stops in front of the hotel every 15 minutes.

DINE

SPLURGE

Put your fate in the hands of experts with the six-course "Mercy of the Chef" tasting menu from Michelin-recognized Nine-Ten ($205 per person with wine pairings). Each course highlights hyper-local ingredients, and the seasonal pastries are not to be missed.

SAVE

Feast on a bowl of clam chowder ($6) and a seafood sandwich on sourdough (starting at $14) at El Pescador Fish Market, where the catch is fresh and the portions are hearty. Peep the specials board to discover that morning's deliveries.

SPA

SPLURGE

Rejuvenate your skin with a 100-minute Grand Facial at Estancia La Jolla Hotel & Spa (starts at $599). Or enjoy side-by-side massages in an outdoor couples' bungalow, complete with a champagne toast and house-made truffles (starts at $896).

SAVE

Get your glow back at Birdie Day Spa in downtown La Jolla, open by appointment only. A 35-minute mini facial delivers a quick pick-me-up after a long day of travel. *$70*

SEA

SPLURGE

Get fitted for a helmet and gear before launching your vessel into the ocean under the guidance of a La Jolla Kayak and Snorkel guide. Paddle past cliffs and sea caves, then dive in to swim alongside garibaldi, leopard sharks, and other marine life. *Single kayaks from $99; double kayaks from $149*

SAVE

During extreme low tide, head to Shell Beach for some free ocean exploration. This tiny sliver of shore near Ellen Browning Scripps Park is home to small marine life like hermit crabs, sea anemones, sea stars, and the occasional two-spot octopus.

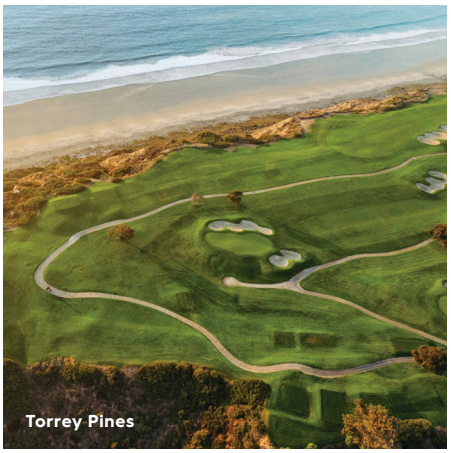
GOLF

SPLURGE

Torrey Pines, one of the best public golf courses in the nation, has 36 challenging holes with striking coastline views. Play like the pros on the South Course, known for its more difficult layout where precision is rewarded. *$246 on weekdays; $306 on weekends*

SAVE

Practice your swing at Del Mar Golf Center just north of La Jolla. The high-tech Toptracer bays provide precise data on distance, speed, and launch. Engage in interactive games like "closest to the pin." *Rentals from $35/hour with unlimited balls*



Torrey Pines



Estancia La Jolla Hotel & Spa

La Jolla is a coastal village known for beaches and a vibrant art scene.



Nine-Ten

FROM TOP: COURTESY THE LODGE AT TORREY PINES; COURTESY ESTANCIA LA JOLLA HOTEL & SPA; COURTESY NINE-TEN









COURTESY LEGOLAND (4)

LEGOLAND

DRIVING SCHOOL

Start your engines! The LEGO Driving School at LEGOLAND California has reopened the Fun Town area of the Carlsbad theme park with cool new features.

This longtime LEGOLAND favorite still features two tracks: The Junior Driving School, for ages 3–5, gives little drivers a simple oval path without any traffic jams. The main LEGO Driving School, for ages 6–13, features a new route with lanes, intersections, roundabouts—and even a "drive-thru" car wash area with motion-activated bubbles. (There are no height requirements for either track.) Both courses feature colorful details and LEGO Minifigure characters. At the Junior track, look for a girl throwing a frisbee to her dogs and a magician making balloon toys. At the big-kid track, check out the skateboarder and someone taking a bubble shower. Why is one wearing a chicken suit? Cue the joke—"why did the chicken cross the road?"

After the drive, families can purchase a personalized driver's license—with the child's photo, name, and a lanyard—at the Driving School DMV.

The attraction sits across from the new space-themed land, scheduled to open in 2026. The LEGO Galaxy area will have an indoor coaster, two more rides, and a toddler play zone.

IN THE MIDDLE OF
NOWHERE
YOU'D RATHER BE.









Experience North America's true desert oasis. Discover two unique hotels nestled in a lush desert oasis: the historic four-diamond Inn at Death Valley and the adventure-focused Ranch at Death Valley, surrounded by the largest national park in the lower 48, with 3.4 million acres to explore. Learn more at **OasisAtDeathValley.com**

THE OASIS
AT DEATH VALLEY

XANTERRA TRAVEL COLLECTION®

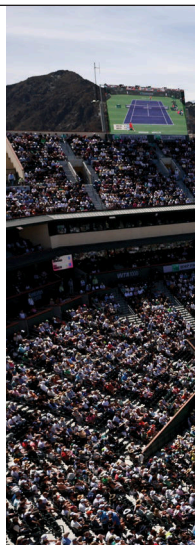
Joshua Tree National Park



DESERTS

Surreal rockscapes to bohemian escapes—the desert is full of contrasts

SCHROPTSCHOP/GETTY IMAGES



NEW AND NOTEWORTHY

ACCOMMODATIONS

If you've ever wondered what a hotel on Mars would look like, then **Twentynine Palms**' Reset Hotel might be the right place for you. Spread out over 180 acres, this boutique stay's 65 rooms feature a sleek, minimalist design—all within five minutes of **Joshua Tree National Park**.

For the spa enthusiast, Terra Palm Springs is as intimate a stay as it gets. This 13-room retreat is devoted to wellness. Also in **Palm Springs**, Casa Oliver Hotel & Resort is a vibrant addition catering to the LGBTQ+ community. Experience poolside parties, go-go dancers, and a 6,000-square-foot heated indoor maze.

Road-trippers rejoice: The historic Oasis at **Death Valley** will add 50 luxury RV campsites in 2026, complete with full hook-ups and unobstructed views of the Panamint Mountains.

FOOD & DRINK

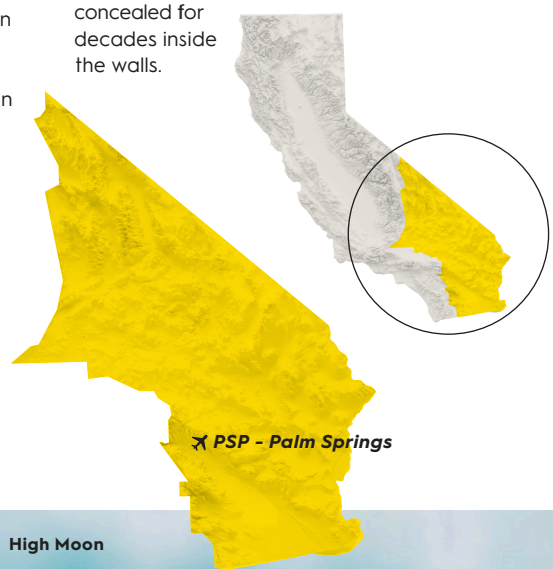
1970s glamour meets desert cool at Mojave Gold, **Yucca Valley**'s newest hot spot—a swanky live music venue, restaurant, and bar. Sip on a signature cocktail or drift into the aptly named Gold Lounge while local bands do their thing.

In neighboring **Palm Desert**, the Red Barn—once frequented by Frank Sinatra and Lucille Ball—reopened in 2025 after a massive renovation. Expect high-voltage acts, a jungle-themed outdoor lounge, and cocktails. Palm Springs' dining scene also welcomes Bar Issi, a *White Lotus*–inspired coastal Italian eatery at the Thompson Palm Springs, and High Moon, a rooftop lounge at the Royal Sun Hotel flanked by the San Jacinto Mountains.

THINGS TO DO

The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens in Palm Desert, known for its wandering wallaby habitat, debuted their Oasis Splash Pad along with a new café offering prime views of the desert bighorn sheep.

In downtown Palm Springs, the landmark 1936 Plaza Theatre reopened following a meticulous restoration that unearthed a stunning stage proscenium concealed for decades inside the walls.




Terra Palm Springs


High Moon

DON'T MISS Looking for a cool drink to beat the desert heat? Try Reset's signature Purple Sky Lemonade or the Liquid Swords spritz, which mixes gin, white wine, elderflower liqueur, and a splash of club soda. Served poolside.


BNP Paribas Open

EVENTS

Check out upcoming events across the region and explore must-see attractions to extend your stay.

DISCOVER MORE
Scan the code to find more upcoming event

MARCH 1–15

BNP PARIBAS OPEN

Indian Wells

Watch top tennis players compete at the largest international tournament outside of the four Grand Slams. Your seat in the state-of-the-art Indian Wells Tennis Garden offers close-up views of the players as well as the Santa Rosa Mountains.

MAKE IT A WEEKEND
Stay next door at the Grand Hyatt Indian Wells, which has its own tennis and pickleball courts along with a huge pool complex with water slides.

Grab a date shake at Shields Date Garden and drive to the northern edge of the Salton Sea Continue south to the Sonny Bono Salton Sea. National Wildlife Refuge to spot white pelicans and burrowing owls (binoculars recommended).

APRIL 10–12 & 17–19

COACHELLA VALLEY MUSIC & ARTS FESTIVAL

Indio

This two-weekend festival has become legendary not only for its mix of emerging and crowd-pleasing acts, but also for art installations and top-tier people watching.

MAKE IT A WEEKEND
Go thrifting for some last-minute festival looks. Browse vintage shops such as The Frippery, Gypsyland, and Revivals in Palm Springs.

Sample tamales at Arriola's Tortilleria in Indio, which dates to 1935 and serves the masa-based treat year-round, topped with cheese sauce and chili.

Catch a show at Pappy and Harriet's Pioneertown Palace, a former faux saloon turned legit live music venue.

OCT.

NIGHT SKY FESTIVAL

Joshua Tree

Stargazers gather at Joshua Tree National Park to make the most of this officially designated International Dark Sky park. All ages can take part in art activities, gold panning, and talks during the day.

MAKE IT A WEEKEND
Broaden your horizons with a nocturnal mammals or sketching class from the Desert Institute, which hosts guided classes in the park.

Fuel up with the stack of buttery buckwheat pancakes from Kitchen in the Desert in 29 Palms.

Take a detour to Desert Hot Springs. Soak in the mineral pools or book a Watsu Water Massage at Miracle Springs Resort & Spa.

EVEN MORE EVENTS

JAN.
PALM SPRINGS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
Palm Springs

JAN.–FEB.
KING OF THE HAMMERS
Johnson Valley

FEB.–MARCH
RIVERSIDE COUNTY FAIR & NATIONAL DATE FESTIVAL
Indio

FEB.
MODERNISM WEEK
Greater Palm Springs

APRIL
RUN WITH THE BURROS
Indian Wells

APRIL
STAGECOACH
Indio

SEPT.
WASTELAND WEEKEND
Edwards

NOV.
PALM SPRINGS PRIDE
Palm Springs

NOV.
INDIO BBQ FESTIVAL
Indio

NOV.
HOT-AIR BALLOON FESTIVAL
Cathedral City

DEC.
INDIO INTERNATIONAL TAMALE FESTIVAL
Indio


Coachella

FROM TOP CLOCKWISE: COURTESY BNP PARIBAS OPEN; SCOTT DUDELSON/GETTY IMAGES; SAMUEL DI LEO/COURTESY HIGH MOON; COURTESY TERRA PALM SPRINGS









PALM SPRINGS

SURF CLUB

Located smack dab in the desert, this sleek, sun-soaked oasis delivers perfectly engineered waves, along with waterslides, a lazy river, and poolside lounging

The Palm Springs Surf Club is making a big splash out of the old Wet 'n' Wild water park, transforming its original 1986 wave pool into a state-of-the-art surf destination—with the San Jacinto Mountains at your back. If the setting looks familiar, it's because the pool was featured in the opening scenes of the 1987 surf classic *North Shore*.

Powered by Surf Loch technology, the pool now produces up to 450 waves per hour, with customizable heights from mellow 2-foot rollers to challenging 7-foot peaks. Surfers of all levels can find their perfect ride—whether that's long rights and lefts, smooth tubes, heavy slabs, or launch-ready air sections. Wetsuits and boards are available to rent, and private sessions include exclusive access to the pool along with VIP locker rooms, a private cabana, and full food-and-beverage service.

The fun isn't limited to surfers, either. Visitors can also enjoy multiple twisting waterslides, a lazy river, a splash pad for kids, and a relaxing lounge pool. Two massive jumbotrons broadcast the surf action live and, during the season, screen football games and special movie nights.

LEFT: COURTESY PALM SPRINGS SURF CLUB (4).NEXT PAGE: FROM TOP: COURTESY THE COPPER ROOM; DAVID MIKAL PHOTOGRAPHY/COURTESY ALL ROADS; COURTESY THE END

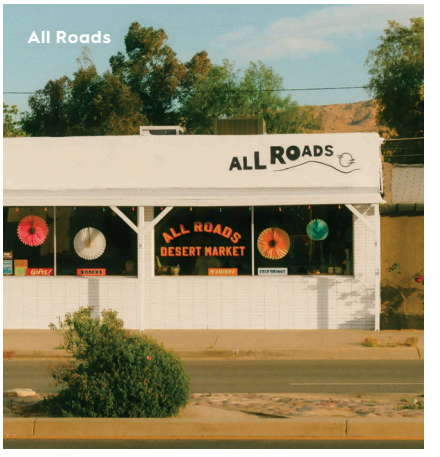

The Copper Room



KIME BUZZELLI

YUCCA VALLEY INSIDER

Vibrant and undeniably whimsical, The End is a technicolor vintage boutique in the heart of Yucca Valley. The shop's psychedelic murals, hand-painted by owner and artist Kime Buzzelli, is just a preview of what you'll find inside: an eclectic, well-curated mix of retro clothes, original art, and Buzzelli's infectious energy. After moving to Yucca Valley in 2011, Buzelli opened The End the following year. Since then, she's found endless inspiration in the landscape and its rhythms. "I've lived here for 14 years," Buzzelli says. "You would think I've seen every kind of sunset, but I am constantly amazed—almost weekly—by a quail family with little babies crossing the road or a beautiful king snake in my yard."



All Roads


The End

DINNER AND DANCING

"I love The Copper Room. You can actually sit at the bar and watch a plane land." Buzzelli's hot tip? Go on Tuesdays. "They have this old-timey band called the Melancholy Babies that plays while couples dance. It's like you're in a David Lynch film."

OUTDOOR GEMS

"Pioneertown Mountains Preserve is one of our favorites, and it's free! It's right past Pappy and Harriet's. It's desert-y but also tends to be a little bit cooler than some of the hikes that are in the valley below."

"The Big Morongo Canyon Preserve is a gem. It's very lush. There's a bird-watching group that meets at the preserve because there are so many rare-bird sightings."

ROMANTIC STAY

"The 29 Palms Inn is one of the most romantic, beautiful places you can stay. There's an insane garden that they make all the soups and salads from. It's one of the reasons I moved here."

OFFBEAT ART

Another favorite is The Station in Joshua Tree, an old gas station turned souvenir shop. "That's such a fun tourist store," gushes Buzzelli. "They have amazing merch and an unmissable statue outside. It's almost like if your older brother who's super cool let you shop at his house."

SHOPPING

For the vintage fanatics, Buzzelli recommends Black Luck Vintage in the Morongo Valley. "The store is so fun and desert-weird. The owner has everything from pottery to magazines, to records, to costumes, to things she reworks and remakes."

"All Roads opened across the street from us a few years ago, which we were so excited about. It's almost like a general store with snacks and homemade items and artisan things. They do a lot of fun pop-ups for motorcycle riders. The owner makes amazing bags, textiles, tablecloths, and picnic items."

SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

San Bernardino County

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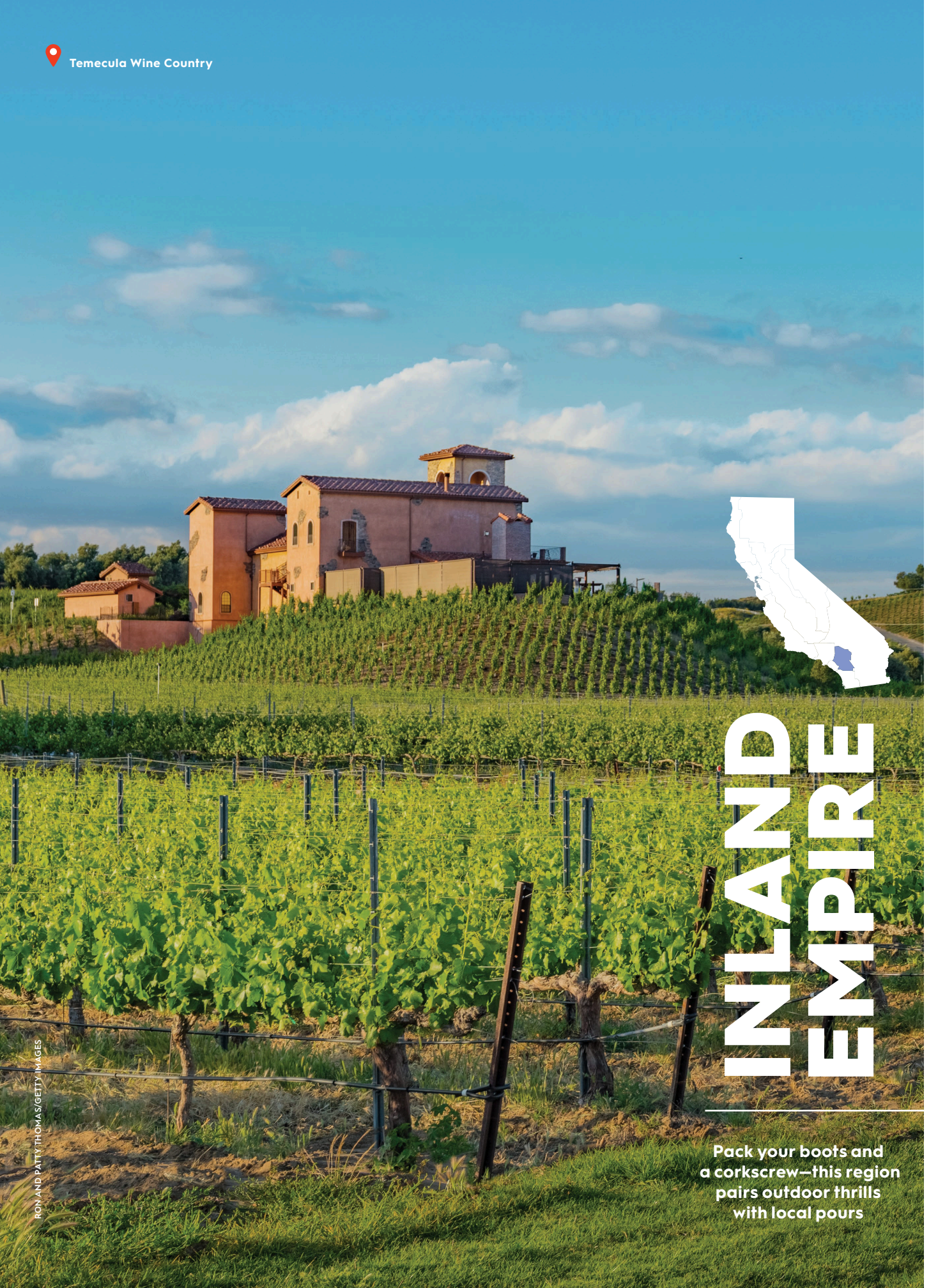
FIND OUT WHY

Temecula Wine Country



INLAND EMPIRE

Pack your boots and a corkscrew—this region pairs outdoor thrills with local pours

RON AND PATTY THOMAS/GETTY IMAGES


Native Falls Campground



SPORTS & ENTERTAINMENT

The Dodgers Single-A minor league affiliate team moves into the new **Ontario** Sports Empire for its debut season in 2026. At 190 acres, it's the largest sports complex of its kind west of the Rockies.

For more kid fun, head to Pennypickle's Workshop in Old Town Temecula, a whimsical museum packed with hands-on science experiments and quirky inventions.

NEW AND NOTEWORTHY

ACCOMMODATIONS

Sanctity Hotel is a bold new addition to **Rancho Cucamonga**. Guests can open their drapes for a glimpse of the snowcapped San Gabriel Mountains or head upstairs for a cocktail at the city's first rooftop bar.

Get close to nature at the revamped Native Falls Campground, a **Temecula** gem featuring a spring-fed lake, pickleball courts, cozy cabins, and campsites under the stars. If you're hitting the slopes, settle into the modern lodge vibes at **Big Bear**'s Hotel Marina Riviera, which debuted in 2025 with wellness-focused amenities like a barrel sauna, cold plunge, and lakeside pool.

FOOD & DRINK

A former 1950s-era motor court motel in **Riverside** has been reinvented as the Farm House Collective, a food hall where you can feast on Filipino cuisine and fried chicken alongside acai bowls and wood-fired pizzas. A landmark citrus packing house was recently transformed into the **Redlands** Public Market, a culinary hub with more than 20 vendor options, including a '90s-themed speakeasy. More beer can be found at Hendo's Barrel House in Temecula, where UFC fighter Dan Henderson opened a steakhouse, brewery, distillery, coffee shop, and butcher shop all under one roof. Connoisseurs can also enjoy elevated pours in **Yucaipa Valley**, California's newest American Viticultural Area, home to more than 30 high-elevation vineyards and two tasting rooms.





Farm House Collective



Festival of Lights
Mission Inn Hotel & Spa

Riverside's Mission Inn transforms into a festive holiday wonderland.

Check out upcoming events across the region and explore must-see attractions to extend your stay.

EVENTS

JULY 22–26

SUMMER SUNSET TASTE OF OLD TOWN

Temecula

More than 25 restaurants and tasting rooms participate in this annual tradition, where attendees follow a self-guided tour of local wine and food.

MAKE IT A WEEKEND

Spend the night at Carter Estate Winery and Resort, where private bungalows offer vineyard views.

Grab a bite of locally sourced fare at the popular EAT Marketplace.

Wrap up a weekend stay by hitting the greens at Temecula Creek Inn, which features 27 holes of championship golf.

SEPT.–NOV.

OKTOBERFEST

Big Bear Lake

On fall weekends, sample German beers with mountains as your backdrop while Bavarian bands, folk dancers, and stein-holding competitions provide entertainment.

MAKE IT A WEEKEND

Fuel up with a good old-fashioned breakfast at Grizzly Manor Cafe. The Fat Pat biscuits and gravy dish will satisfy even the heartiest appetites.

Book a cozy cabin retreat at N+P. If you feel like you've just entered your grandma's super-cool living room, that's because each lodge is named and themed after a beloved family member.

Stop by Big Bear Alpine Zoo to visit 85 species of high-altitude animals like grizzly bears and great horned owls.

NOV.–JAN.

FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS MISSION INN HOTEL & SPA

Riverside

The Mission Inn hosts one of the nation's top holiday displays, featuring millions of twinkling lights, horse-drawn carriages, holiday-themed dining, and gingerbread house–making.

MAKE IT A WEEKEND

Explore The Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Art & Culture, just across the street. It features rotating exhibitions and striking mixed-media works the actor gifted to the museum.

Sample from a diverse collection of good eats at Riverside Food Lab, the Inland Empire's first food hall. Fourteen vendors offer everything from hot chicken and burgers to craft beer and creamy boba.

EVEN MORE EVENTS

FEB.
RIVERSIDE DICKENS FESTIVAL
Riverside

APRIL
NATIONAL ORANGE SHOW FAIR
San Bernardino

APRIL
RIVERSIDE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
Riverside

MAY–AUG.
LAKE ARROWHEAD VILLAGE SUMMER CONCERT SERIES
Lake Arrowhead

JUNE
UPLAND LEMON FESTIVAL
Upland

JUNE
NATIVE AMERICAN ARTS FESTIVAL WEEK
Idyllwild

JULY
FOURTH OF JULY PARADE AND FUNFEST
Moreno Valley

SEPT.
SAN MANUEL POW WOW
San Bernardino

SEPT.
THE GREAT TASTE OF EUROPA WINE & FOOD FESTIVAL
Temecula

OCT.
ONTARIO REIGN OPENING NIGHT
Ontario

COURTESY MISSION INN HOTEL & SPA. PREVIOUS PAGE, FROM TOP: COURTESY NATIVE FALLS CAMPGROUND; COURTESY FARMHOUSE COLLECTIVE



SAMANTHA DOFFO

TEMECULA INSIDER

Samantha Doffo has called the sprawling valleys and rolling hills of Temecula's wine country home for 14 years. "I love the small-town feel, the friendly people, and the simple beauty the area offers," she says. Since joining her father and two siblings in running the family business, Doffo Winery has become an award-winning boutique destination offering tours, tastings, and a decadent patio brunch. Doffo loves the customers as much as the views, which she enjoys at sunset from the winery's hilltop—one of her favorite spots in town to see the valley bathed in golden light.

TOUR TIME

Before you embark on the Cork n Torque Tour at Doffo Winery, which includes a walk through the vineyards, Doffo suggests getting an aerial perspective with A Grape Escape. Soar above wine country on a hot-air balloon ride at sunrise, which ends with a glass of champagne.

MARKET NIGHTS

Held monthly on the last Friday from May through October, Moonlight Markets at Vail Headquarters is a gathering of local artisans, musicians, street performers, and artists doing live paintings. Temecula Carriage Co. offers horse-drawn rides that are free for kids under 3 with an adult ticket.



The Gambling Cowboy

DINE OUT

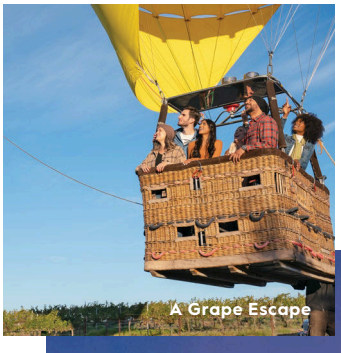
At The Gambling Cowboy, Doffo's favorite spot for a special occasion meal, order a prime New York steak and a glass of Doffo Syrah (the restaurant's recommended pairing). The restaurant is in Old Town Temecula, so ask for a table on the third-floor deck for views of the Western-style storefronts below.

SCENIC THRILLS

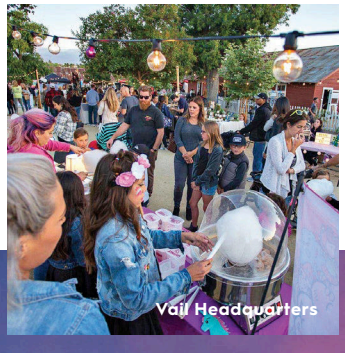
Doffo's favorite way to experience the valley's natural beauty is on a motorcycle ride through wine country. For a carefree twist on the experience, Sidecar Tours offers a chauffeured ride that can accommodate two passengers.

DATE NIGHT

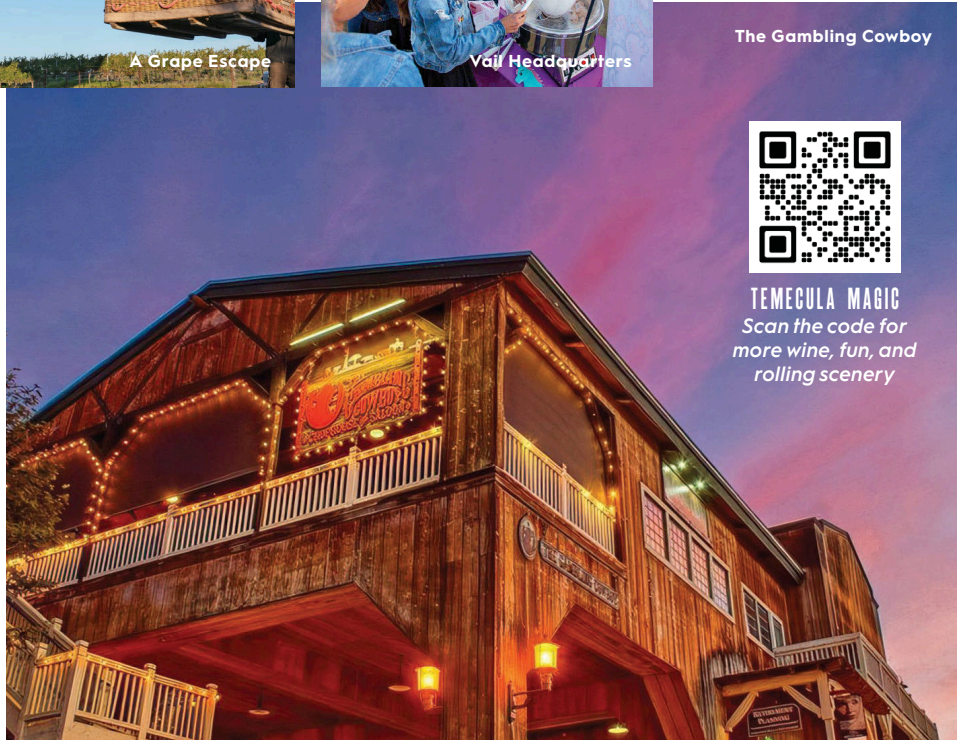
"[Go to] Pechanga Casino and stroll for people watching," she suggests. As one of the largest casinos in the Western United States, it's open 24 hours a day for gaming. There's also live music and comedy acts, as well as 13 restaurants.



A Grape Escape



Vail Headquarters



The Gambling Cowboy

TEMECULA MAGIC

Scan the code for more wine, fun, and rolling scenery

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: COURTESY THE GAMBLING COWBOY (2); COURTESY VISIT TEMECULA VALLEY; COURTESY VAIL HEADQUARTERS. NEXT PAGE: KESTERHU/GETTY IMAGES





Desert canyons fade into alpine forests across this rugged California wilderness.

SAN BERNARDINO NATIONAL FOREST

OUT THERE

Explore this vast wilderness in Southern California's backyard, home to endless adventures

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

LOCATION
East of Los Angeles

BEST TIME TO GO
Year-round, but plan ahead for seasonal trail and mountain closures

PERMITS
$5 Daily Adventure Pass required to park at most recreation sites, with additional wilderness permits required on a site-by-site basis

CAMPGROUNDS
There is a mix of first-come, first-served campgrounds and ones that are reservable through *recreation.gov*

Perched on a Jeffrey pine 145 feet above the ground, two bald eagles named Jackie and Shadow have a bird's-eye view of the placid lake stretching across Big Bear Valley. For years, the world has watched via webcam as the pair hatch eggs and send their eaglets away from the nest. The duo inhabit a richly diverse landscape where skiers and snowboarders carve the slopes at Snow Summit, Bear Mountain, and Snow Valley, while desert flora gives way to alpine forest—creating a rare sanctuary where both people and wildlife thrive.

INTO THE WILD

Covering more than 811,000 acres, the forest includes eight wilderness areas, making it a playground for adventure seekers. Nowhere is its biodiversity more striking than at Sand to Snow National Monument, where desert scrub transitions into the alpine peaks of the San Gorgonio Wilderness—home to Southern California's tallest mountain. The forest also holds deep cultural significance for Indigenous tribes, including the Cahuilla, Serrano, and Tongva peoples, who have lived on and stewarded this land for generations.

There's opportunity for year-round recreation at popular destinations like Big Bear Mountain Resort as well as off-the-beaten-path gems such as Black Mountain Fire Lookout, which rewards hikers with views of a little-known giant sequoia grove. Wildlife watchers may spot elusive black bears, mule deer, bobcats, and hundreds of bird species that call the forest home.

HIT THE TRAILS

More than 300 miles of trails wind through the San Bernardino National Forest, including a short segment of the famed Pacific Crest Trail. Two of Southern California's tallest waterfalls are within its boundaries: the 500-foot Big Falls off Highway 38 and the three-tiered Bonita Falls tucked away in the San Gabriel Mountains near the Lytle Creek community.

HORSEBACK RIDING

Horseback riders can explore more than 100 miles of trails that meander through pine forests and wildflower-dotted meadows. Serrano Family Campground, about 20 miles from Big Bear Lake, offers dedicated horse facilities and direct access to backcountry riding.



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Panerai · Patek Philippe · Prada · Rolex | Bucherer 1888 · Saint Laurent · Tag Heuer · Thom Browne
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The LAB Anti-Mall, Costa Mesa

AMANDA FRIEDMAN

ORANGE COUNTY

Explore this coastal playground perfect for families, foodies, and fashionistas

NEW AND NOTEWORTHY


Vaquera

ACCOMMODATIONS

Cruise to **Newport Beach** to check out the four latest cottages to open on North Beach in Crystal Cove State Park. Part of the seaside colony built between 1920 and 1940, the restored cottages are charming with views of the ocean from the living room windows.

Keep driving to find the recently renovated Surf & Sand Resort in **Laguna Beach**, which completed a luxury transformation in 2025 that included refreshed guest rooms with private balconies and an open-air lobby lounge.

FOOD & DRINK

Tucked inside Bacchus Bar and Bistro in **Irvine**, the intimate new speakeasy Cozy Pine offers an adventurous, camping-themed culinary experience for those in the know. Think cocktails topped with flaming marshmallows and tomato bisque served in a camp-style mug.

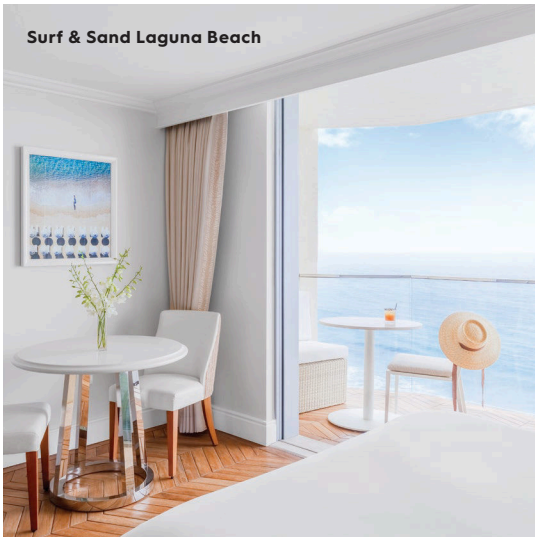
Find more variety down in **San Juan Capistrano**, where the Los Rios Historic District welcomes River Street Marketplace. Built around a communal square, the expansive gathering space features boutiques and buzzy restaurants like wood-fired Vaquera and Western-inspired Capo.

Costa Mesa has added Ospi, a new hot spot from *Top Chef* alum Jackson Kalb. The restaurant specializes in Southern Italian cuisine with a coastal California sensibility, bringing house-made pastas and craft cocktails to 17th Street.

ATTRACTIONS

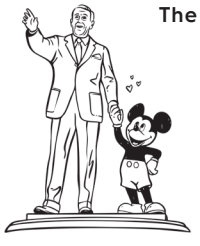
A dynamic new destination is taking shape in **Anaheim**. The sprawling 100-acre OCVibe entertainment district will celebrate the opening of Market Hall in 2026, which will feature global culinary concepts, an updated stadium (home to the Anaheim Ducks), and bars. It's a prelude to more exciting things to come, including the reimagining of O.C.'s legendary Golden Bear music venue, 20 acres of open green space, and a riverfront park.

In Newport Beach, the historic Balboa Island Ferry—now California's first 100-percent zero-emission fleet—continues its long tradition of transporting visitors to the tiny island known for its famous frozen banana stands.


Surf & Sand Laguna Beach

HOW TO: SIGN THE DISNEYLAND GUEST BOOK

The first guest in line at the Storybook Land Canal Boats gets to sign the secret visitor's log



- **STRATEGIZE** Arrive at the Disneyland hub (the circle outside of Sleeping Beauty's Castle) for rope drop before 8 a.m.



- **HUSTLE** Once the park is open, powerwalk (running is strictly frowned upon in Disneyland) to the right, heading straight between the Mad Tea Party and Matterhorn rides.



- **SPOT** Look for Monstro the Whale and the red-and-white lighthouse that marks the entrance to the Storybook Land Canal Boats. Head to the line and secure the front boat.



- **SIGN** If you're the first guest of the day, a cast member will invite you to sign the ride's official guest book—forever etching your name into the history of Disneyland.



- **RIDE** Even if you miss the moment, you're still in for a treat—just sit back and enjoy a charming cruise through miniature landscapes inspired by Disney's most beloved films.

EVENTS

Check out upcoming events across the region and explore must-see attractions to extend your stay.

DON'T MISS During OC Restaurant Week, the county's top chefs craft creative prix fixe menus—it's your ticket to culinary discoveries across one of California's hottest food regions.

MARCH–MAY

SEASON OF THE FORCE AT DISNEYLAND RESORT

Anaheim

Celebrate all things *Star Wars* at this limited-time event featuring galactic eats, nighttime shows in Galaxy's Edge, and immersive workshops.

MAKE IT A WEEKEND

Choose from nearly 100 delectable flavors at Joe's Italian Ice.

Discover restaurants and shops at Anaheim GardenWalk, a two-story outdoor center across the street from the parks featuring a House of Blues, Mission Escape Games, and a Flightdeck Simulation Center.

JULY–SEPT.

PAGEANT OF THE MASTERS, FESTIVAL OF ARTS

Laguna Beach

Iconic works of art come alive at the Pageant of the Masters in Laguna Beach, where "living paintings" are modeled in stunning detail.

MAKE IT A WEEKEND

Breathe in the calming ocean breeze from a room at the new Casa Loma Beach Hotel. Perched on a cliff overlooking Main Beach, it's got a rooftop bar made for sunsets.

Go below street level to Brussels Bistro for specialties like moules-frites. Stick around to hit the dance floor on Friday and Saturday evenings.

SEPT.

MARITIME FESTIVAL

Dana Point

Tall ships make port at Dana Point's Ocean Institute for the Maritime Festival. Live music and a pirate adventure show are free for all, but don't miss premium experiences like a chance to sail for a mock cannon battle at sea.

MAKE IT A WEEKEND

Spot blue whales, dolphins, and sharks from one of Capt. Dave's underwater viewing pods in Dana Point. Whale watching peaks May through October.

Splash, paddle, and play at Baby Beach, a family favorite with sheltered, waveless waters perfect for swimming, paddleboarding, and kayaking.



FROM TOP: VIBY CREATIVECOURTESY YAQUERA; COURTESY SURF & SAND LAGUNA BEACH. NEXT PAGE: QUINN TUCKER/COURTESY OHANA FESTIVAL

EVEN MORE EVENTS

MARCH
OC RESTAURANT WEEK
Orange County

MARCH
RETURN OF THE SWALLOWS CELEBRATION
San Juan Capistrano

MARCH–APRIL
KNOTT'S BERRY FARM BOYSENBERRY FESTIVAL
Buena Park

MAY
GARDEN GROVE STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL
Garden Grove

JULY–AUG.
OC FAIR
Costa Mesa

JULY–AUG.
U.S. OPEN OF SURFING
Huntington Beach

AUG.
ORANGE INTERNATIONAL STREET FAIR
Orange

SEPT.
OHANA FESTIVAL
Dana Point

OCT.
IRVINE GLOBAL VILLAGE FESTIVAL
Irvine

DEC.
NEWPORT BEACH CHRISTMAS BOAT PARADE
Newport Beach

SPLURGE vs. SAVE

ANAHEIM

From once-in-a-lifetime tours to hole-in-the-wall taquerias, Orange County's biggest city offers magical experiences for all budgets

DISCOVER MORE
Scan the code for additional Anaheim details

STAY

SPLURGE
See fireworks from the extended balcony of the Westin Anaheim Resort's 2,030-sq. ft. Presidential Suite—complete with a live-edge wood dining table, fireplace, walk-in primary closet, and fully equipped kitchen for a private chef dining experience. *From $7,000/night*

SAVE
The rooms are airy and modern at Candlewood Suites Anaheim, a 15-minute walk from Disneyland Resort. Each suite comes equipped with a full kitchen and free onsite laundry and coffee in the lobby (starting at $169).

DINE

SPLURGE
Begin your meal at Anaheim White House with a royale Oscietra caviar service ($320). Book a private chef's table for six in the restaurant's wine cellar. The five-course, wine-paired menu features seasonal Italian dishes. *$215 per person*

SAVE
Have cash on hand for Taqueria Los Gueros, a strip-mall gem where lines stretch out the door and three tacos cost just over $5. Locals swear by the asada and tripa, topped your way at the self-service salsa bar.

SIP

SPLURGE
Strong Water Anaheim delivers nautical-inspired decor and drinks. Stop by the award-winning tiki bar for an original cocktail like the Serpent's Grasp, a bold spiced agave liqueur sipper served in a flaming bowl for the table ($150).

SAVE
Build your own tasting flight at Bottle Logic Brewing, where limited releases are poured alongside a selection of IPAs, stouts, strong ales, and sours on draft. *4-oz. tasters starting at $2*


Westin Anaheim Resort



Angel Stadium

PLAY

SPLURGE
Take a VIP tour of Disneyland Park or Disney California Adventure Park with a private guide who handles everything—front-of-the-line access, dining reservations, and prime fireworks seating. *$500–$800 per hour, seven-hour minimum*

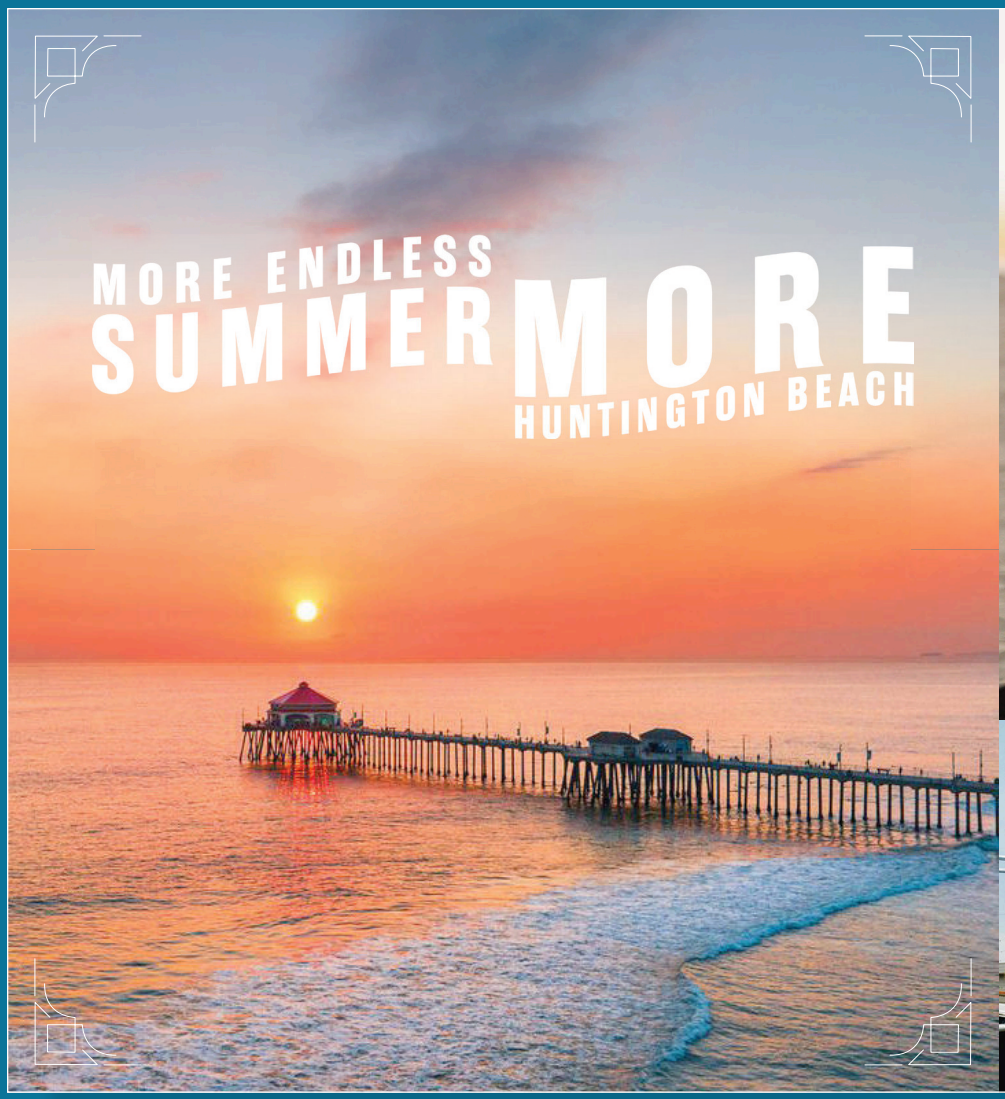
SAVE
A 75-minute tour of Angel Stadium goes behind the scenes of Orange County's only MLB ballpark. Access areas off-limits to the public like the Angels' dugout, broadcast booth, visiting team clubhouse, and press conference room. *$24 adults; $19 children*

LISTEN

SPLURGE
Treat yourself to table service at Heat Ultra Lounge (up to $3,000 food and beverage minimum, depending on the table), where weekend throwback parties set the vibe. Premium tables come with a server to pour glasses of Veuve Clicquot Yellow Label ($3,000 per magnum) all night long.

SAVE
Wear your cowboy hat and boots for a Wild West experience on The Ranch Saloon's dance floor, where live country music and line dancing classes take center stage Thursday through Saturday nights. *$10–$15 cover charge*

FROM LEFT: RONALD MARTINEZ/GETTY IMAGES; DON RIDDLE/COURTESY WESTIN ANAHEIM RESORT









The Waterfront Beach Resort, a Hilton Hotel



Paséa Hotel & Spa

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HUNTINGTON BEACH
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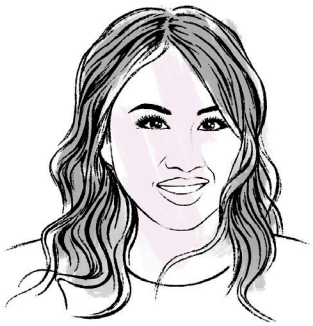

KIM LE PHAM

TUSTIN INSIDER

Morning Lavender owner Kim Le Pham has lived in Orange County for more than 30 years. Her childhood in Tustin convinced her it was the ideal place for her unique store, a tea house nestled alongside a women's boutique. "[Old Town Tustin] has a very inviting, small-town appeal to it," Pham says, "where the streets and shops are walkable."

The popularity of Tustin's Morning Lavender fueled its expansion to two additional locations, including nearby Huntington Beach. Pham loves showing visitors what makes these Southern California communities so special.

Known as the "City of Trees," Tustin grew around orange, lemon, and avocado orchards.



Old Town Tustin

MARKET MORNINGS

"We love going to farmers' markets together as a family," she says. "We love learning about local craftsmen and artists who have special products." Old Town Tustin hosts a certified farmers' market every Saturday featuring crafts and farm-fresh items like fruits, nuts, and vegetables.

GIFTING SEASON

"If you are looking for special gifts from Orange County, I love walking around all the shops in Old Town Tustin," Pham shares. "[Find] something unique from each business, like special coffee beans from our local roaster Owlverick's, or make a special pottery piece at our neighbor Mud Hen Clay and Art Studio."

NIGHT ON THE TOWN

"A great date night activity in Huntington Beach is just taking a stroll at sunset along the pier and beach," Pham says. It's one of the longest piers on the West Coast and is open until midnight daily, making it a great spot to watch the waves. Fire rings along the sand are available for after-dark bonfires and s'mores, while nearby Main Street offers plenty of restaurants and bars.

DINING OUT

The family-run Chaak Kitchen, down the street from Morning Lavender's Old Town Tustin location, is a favorite of Pham's for a celebratory dinner. She recommends the octopus and branzino at the Michelin Bib Gourmand spot, known for its cuisine hailing from the Yucatán Peninsula. For breakfast, she suggests the chilaquiles from El Camino Cafe.

EXPLORE OUTDOORS

"We like going to the beautiful parks in Tustin and doing a small hike," Pham says. Start at Citrus Ranch Park, which connects via a granite path and paved bikeway to the south trailhead of Peters Canyon. The popular hiking loop stretches north into the hills of Orange, offering glimpses of wildlife, rare black willows, and coastal sage scrub.

CULINARY OUTING

On Tuesdays, Pham likes going to downtown Huntington Beach for its night market (also known as Surf City Nights) with live music and local goods, including hand-cut flowers, honey, specialty food booths, gourmet spices, and pastries.



Chaak Kitchen

FROM LEFT: COURTESY CHAAK KITCHEN; MATT GUSH/GETTY IMAGES

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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.**



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!**



YES TO COTTON CANDY COSMOS & PEANUT BUTTER PIZZA

Grab a Beef Dip at Portillo's, famous fried chicken at Mrs. Knott's, unique cocktail concotions 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 tiramisu donuts from Old Ferry Donut. **Local Tip: Choose from over 60 craft beers at Rock & Brews.**

YES TO SEASONS OF FUN

Each season offers a new experience including Knott's Scary Farm, Vampirate'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 our events at VisitBuenaPark.com/Events**

YES TO AFFORDABLE HOTELS

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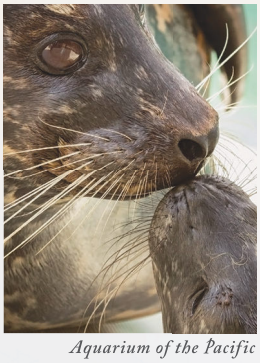


Aquarium of the Pacific



5.5 Miles of fun and sun



Queen Mary


Walt Disney Concert Hall
LOS ANGELES COUNTY
This sun-soaked entertainment capital offers endless ways to explore
AMANDA FRIEDMAN

NEW AND NOTEWORTHY

ACCOMMODATIONS

The latest openings in the City of Angels each offer a unique take on hospitality and glamour. Hotel Lucile, a 1930s-built former church, is being reimagined as a 25-room boutique hideaway in the hip **Silver Lake** neighborhood. The property will feature a vibrant French-leaning New America restaurant, original stained-glass windows, and a sun-soaked pool with panoramic city views.

In **Long Beach**, Fairmont Breakers Hotel is a top-to-bottom restoration of a 1926 landmark. The 207 rooms and suites are a fusion of timeless elegance and modern amenities, and the hotel houses an exquisite, rooftop bar. Later in 2026, Public Hotel, from famed designer Ian Schrager, will debut on the Sunset Strip in **West Hollywood** as the brand's second property.

FOOD & DRINK

TV personality Phil Rosenthal and chef Nancy Silverton's Larchmont diner, Max & Helen's, serves breakfast all day—but don't sleep on the patty melt and milkshakes at this charming throwback. Over in **Century City**, a trio of openings will help establish the area as an epicenter of fine dining: the Greek seafood restaurant Estiatorio Milos, the two-Michelin-starred Sushi Noz, and the pan-Asian barbecue spot Kyu. It's all part of the $2.5 billion Century Plaza development, which includes the renovated Fairmont Hotel.

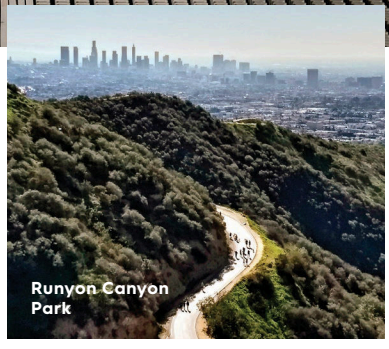
Don't skip going east in L.A., either. In **Chinatown**, Firstborn opened in 2025 as a modern take on traditional Chinese classics—and the cocktails are just as inventive. (Think: a mandarin negroni or paloma with Sichuan peppercorn and mezcal.)

ATTRACTIONS

Meow Wolf, the arts and entertainment company behind acclaimed immersive experiences, will open a **West Los Angeles** location in a former movie theater complex. The kaleidoscopic exhibit will be the home of Meow Wolf's sixth permanent installation.

The David Geffen Galleries at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) in **Mid-Wilshire**, designed by Peter Zumthor and featuring 110,000 square feet of gallery space, will open in April 2026.


Firstborn


Runyon Canyon Park


Meow Wolf

HOW TO: HIKE RUNYON CANYON

The best place to check out the Hollywood Sign, people-watch, and break a sweat is located smack dab in the middle of the city



- **PARK** There are three entrances to Runyon: two on the south end (Fuller Avenue and Vista Street) and one on Mulholland Drive.



- **PICK** Hike the paved road with the strollers and influencers for a 3.3-mile trek. Or traverse to the top for a 3.5-mile loop in the sky.



- **CLIMB** Be wary of loose gravel, take it one step at a time, and move to the side should you need to catch your breath.



- **HYDRATE** Stay hydrated and consider bringing a small bag or pack to carry your reusable bottle and sunscreen.



- **SMILE** Pause at the top for a selfie—you did it! Now you just have to get down before the park locks up at sunset.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: RON DE ANGELIS; CHARLES HARKER/GETTY IMAGES; KATE RUSSELL





Check out upcoming events across the region and explore must-see attractions to extend your stay.

EVENTS

DISCOVER MORE
Scan the code to find more upcoming events

JAN. 1

ROSE BOWL

Pasadena

The New Year's Day college football game is paired with a gorgeous parade known for its floral floats.

MAKE IT A WEEKEND
Nearby, the Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens is a sprawling estate featuring a 1911 Beaux Arts mansion-turned-art gallery and 130 acres of grounds with 12 unique gardens.

Looking for family-friendly fun? Check out Kidspace Children's Museum, next-door to the Rose Bowl Stadium. It even has a tiny river kids can wade.

Pasadena is home to top-tier Asian cuisine—don't miss dim sum at NBC Seafood, a classic spot with pushcart service.

SEPT.–NOV.

UNIVERSAL STUDIOS HALLOWEEN HORROR NIGHTS

Universal City

Each year, Universal Studios transforms into a playground of immersive haunted houses, scare zones, and live shows, all inspired by countless horror legends.

MAKE IT A WEEKEND
Spend a day at the Warner Bros. Studio in Burbank, a relaxed, behind-the-scenes experience where you can sit on the *Friends* couch, explore backlot streets, or see Batman movie props.

Catch a screening at L.A.'s venerable video store Vidiots, housed in the historic 1920s Eagle Theatre. Insider tip: Pinball haven Walt's Bar is only a few blocks away.

OCT.

OFF THE HOOK SEAFOOD FESTIVAL

Santa Monica

Held on the Santa Monica Pier, the sustainable seafood celebration has tastings and live music.

MAKE IT A WEEKEND
Just a short drive north, Malibu offers a secluded beach day. Explore the tide pools and sea caves at El Matador State Beach.

See world-class art—from Van Gogh to modern photography—as well as manicured gardens and panoramic city views at the Getty Center.


Universal Studios Halloween Horror Nights

COURTESY UNIVERSAL STUDIOS HOLLYWOOD

EVEN MORE EVENTS

FEB.
NBA ALL-STAR WEEKEND
Inglewood

FEB.
THE GOLDEN DRAGON PARADE
Chinatown

MARCH
LOS ANGELES MARATHON
Downtown L.A. to Century City

MARCH
ROLLING LOUD CALIFORNIA HIP-HOP FESTIVAL
Inglewood

APRIL
BOB BAKER DAY
Downtown L.A.

APRIL
LACMA'S DAVID GEFFEN GALLERIES OPENING
Mid-Wilshire

APRIL
FESTIVAL OF BOOKS
University Park

JUNE–JULY
FIFA WORLD CUP
SoFi Stadium

JUNE
U.S. WOMEN'S OPEN GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP
Riviera Country Club
Pacific Palisades

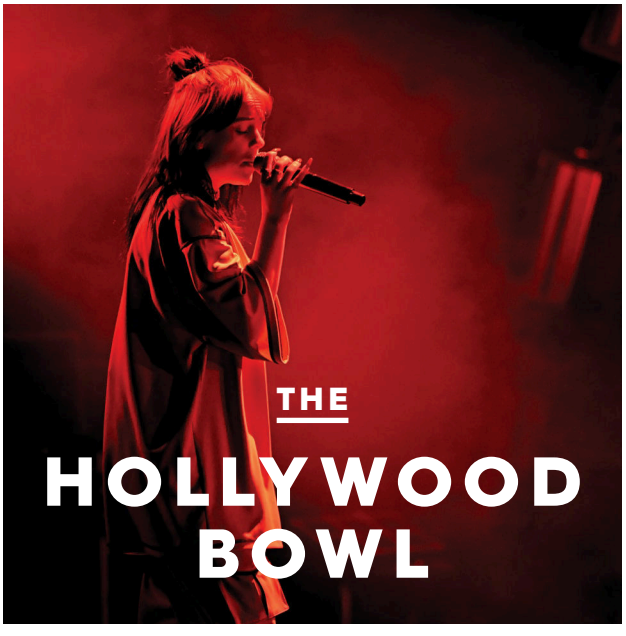
JULY
ANIME EXPO
L.A. Convention Center

AUG.
VINYLCON
Downtown L.A.

OCT.
AFI FEST
Hollywood









Los Angeles' Hollywood Bowl has more than a century's worth of history reverberating throughout the mountains. This magnificent outdoor concert venue has hosted all the musical greats, including Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald, Tina Turner, Lady Gaga, and even the British comedy troupe Monty Python. Here are a few key things to know before attending a show at The Bowl.

Nestled in the Hollywood Hills, the venue received its name from the bowl-shaped ridge and valley that creates its natural acoustics. Originally a wooden stage surrounded by picnickers, today the permanent amphitheater can seat more than 17,000 people.

The landmark has been immortalized in films like *Beaches*, illustrated in *Tom and Jerry* cartoons, while also serving as the backdrop for memorable moments in pop culture, including the Beatles' 1964 show, where screaming fans could allegedly be heard a mile away on Hollywood Boulevard.

In February, The Bowl announces its summer lineup, offering fans a mix of concerts, performances by the Los Angeles Philharmonic, film screenings, and more. Select shows still offer one-dollar seats, a nod to the venue's early days. Box seats can accommodate up to six guests and include a small folding table and wait service.

Fourth of July Fireworks at The Bowl with the Los Angeles Philharmonic is a longstanding city tradition. Past guests accompanied by lit-up skies include Earth, Wind & Fire, The Beach Boys, Randy Newman and The Go-Go's.

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: DUSTIN DOWNING/LA PHIL; GETTY IMAGES; KEVIN WINTER/GETTY IMAGES; ROBERT GAUTHIER/GETTY IMAGES



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MORE THAN A COLLEGE TOWN

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DISCOVER
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Beach Oasis

SPLURGE vs. SAVE

SANTA MONICA

Coastal luxury meets a laid-back beach scene in this vibrant city, where farmers' markets are as at home as five-star resorts

STAY

SPLURGE

At the Regent Santa Monica Beach, floor-to-ceiling windows bathe the two-level Atrium Grand Villa in light and offer oceanfront views. The upstairs suite features a soaking tub, walk-in closet, and private terrace (from $16,500 per night).

SAVE

The family-owned Sea Shore Motel is just two blocks from Santa Monica State Beach. Standard rooms are airy, parking is free, and the rooftop sundeck is perfect for unwinding after a day at the pier. *$185/night*

DINE

SPLURGE

Hidden inside California cuisine mainstay Citrin is another fine-dining destination, Mélisse—Santa Monica's only two-star Michelin restaurant. The 14-seat spot combines French opulence with California-fresh ingredients and classic wines during a 2.5-hour tasting experience. *$399 per person*

SAVE

Soak up the retro diner vibes at Rae's Restaurant, which has served up classic diner fare like corned beef hash ($12.25) and biscuits and gravy ($3.75) since 1958.

RELAX

SPLURGE

Let the warmth of hot stones relax your muscles at One Spa, located inside Shutters on the Beach. A 90-minute full-body massage ($350) pairs well with a coastal glow facial ($550).

SAVE

Recharge after shopping on bustling Montana Avenue with a 30-minute, full-body massage at Cha Spa ($50). For $30 more, add a classic manicure that includes nail shaping, cuticle cleaning, and polish.


Main Street Farmers' Market

PLAY

SPLURGE

Let The Beach Oasis set you up in style with a private beach cabana, complete with chairs, tables, and loungers for up to 20 people. *$1,500 for eight hours*

SAVE

Find all-day fun at the Annenberg Community Beach House, where a splash pad keeps little ones entertained (adults $10; children $4). Enjoy beach access, volleyball courts, a playground, and free tours of the historic Marion Davies Guest House.

SHOP

SPLURGE

Santa Monica Place at the Third Street Promenade is three levels of open-air luxury. Visit the Rolex Boutique at Gearys to discover models ranging from the entry-level Oyster Perpetual 36 in Oystersteel ($6,350) to the platinum Cosmograph Daytona 40 ($79,300).

SAVE

There's more than just produce at the Main Street Farmers' Market, open Sundays year-round. Enjoy live entertainment while browsing a selection of local wares like artisanal hot sauces ($12) and handmade pottery from Creative Fire Kiln & Kitchen.

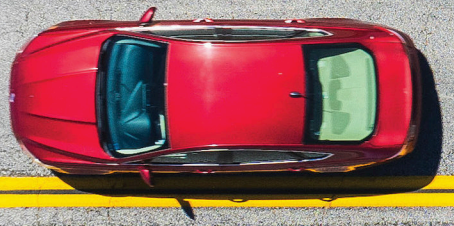

Rae's Restaurant

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: BLAKE RUSS/COURTESY THE BEACH OASIS; MERCH MOTEL; COURTESY SANTA MONICA TRAVEL & TOURISM

CRUISE THROUGH HISTORY ON CALIFORNIA'S ROUTE 66

PLAN YOUR ROUTE 66 ADVENTURE

visit California







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Sensorio, Paso Robles



CENTRAL COAST

This coastal escape blends world-class wine, dramatic cliffs, and serene shores

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NEW AND NOTEWORTHY

FOOD & DRINK

With an inviting brick courtyard and delectable wood-fired pizzas hot out of an authentic Valoriani oven, Pinyon **Ventura** has added a deliciously soulful dining destination to downtown. Parchetto means "little park" in Italian, and the hyperlocal, hyper-seasonal Cal-Italian restaurant pays tribute both to the landmark **Paso Robles** downtown city park across the street and to the bounty available from area farms. **Monterey**'s much-anticipated Oystertown boasts that its "menu changes with the tides," and you'll definitely want to try dressed oysters such as the Trout Fishing in America (smoked trout, roe, crème fraiche, and chives).

ACCOMMODATIONS

The romance of early California comes to life at Hotel El Roblar, a 1919-vintage hotel that has been beautifully restored in the historic heart of **Ojai**. The Ritz-Carlton Bacara in **Santa Barbara** is celebrating 25 years with a multimillion-dollar remodel, upgrading its extensive 78-acre property with a new pool deck and three new restaurants, including the waterfront Italian eatery Marisella from chef Danny Grant. Built in 1950 as an apartment building before becoming **Solvang**'s first motel, The Marlo is now a boutique hotel with modern rooms that blend Danish and Californian stylings. An ideal base for exploring the surrounding wine country, The Ava Hotel Paso Robles brings contemporary luxury to the city's downtown—not to mention a rooftop saltwater pool perfect for Paso's warm summer nights.

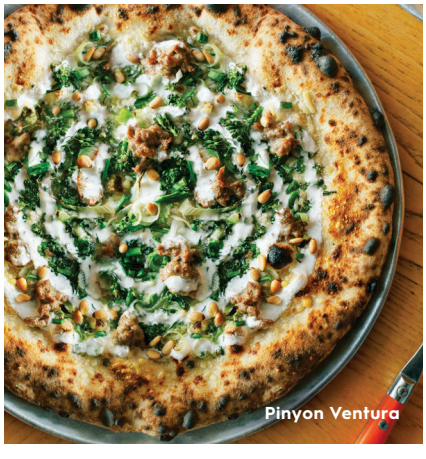
Located in the small wine town of **Templeton**, the three-story Cambria Hotel Templeton-Paso Robles offers stylish rooms and spacious suites for up to 10 guests. With Western-inspired art, cabanas, and an outdoor bar, it reflects co-owner Doug Filipponi's ranch and winery roots.

ENTERTAINMENT

Talk about a win-win: Ventura's improved Surfers Point Bike Path opens up new coastal views while helping to protect both the fragile dune habitat and the iconic surf break. A blend of traditional and contemporary design elements, the **Santa Ynez** Chumash Museum and Cultural Center celebrates thousands of years of tribal heritage. Its 3.5-acre cultural park is landscaped with native plants long used by the Chumash in daily life, and you can also see an authentic tomol, a traditional Chumash redwood plank canoe.



The Ritz-Carlton Bacara



Pinyon Ventura

FROM TOP: RON STARR; @WAYOUTVISUALS





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Check out upcoming events across the region and explore must-see attractions to extend your stay.

EVENTS



Santa Barbara International Film Festival

FEB. 4–14

SANTA BARBARA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Santa Barbara

Catch showings of Academy Award contenders and spot Hollywood stars at this festival, which also features panels with screenwriters, producers, and directors.

MAKE IT A WEEKEND

Live out your own Nancy Meyers movie fantasy at the Montecito Country Mart. Browse for children's apparel, fashionable resort wear, and housewares at this immaculately curated shopping center.

Ride into the sunset on horseback adventures with Los Padres Outfitters. The guided 90-minute rides begin above Summerland before leading to the beach, where you can even arrange picnics.

Step into a world of classic Spanish romance on a guided tour of landmark Casa del Herrero, an 11-acre Montecito estate built in 1925 and designed by Santa Barbara architect George Washington Smith.

APRIL 26

BIG SUR INTERNATIONAL MARATHON

Big Sur to Carmel

Run though redwood forests and along rugged stretches of coastline on this stunning journey from Big Sur, which draws nearly 10,000 runners each year (there are also 5K and 12K options).

MAKE IT A WEEKEND

Enjoy good food and vibes at The Village, a rustic complex that once housed Big Sur's post office. Take a recovery yoga class, hang out over coffee and in-house baked pastries at Big Sur Bodega, and savor locally sourced four-course dinners at Solstice.

Take in the grandeur of Point Lobos State Natural Reserve's rare Monterey cypress forest and craggy headlands and coves, where you'll spot sea otters and harbor seals.

Explore the coast's creative side at the landmark Hawthorne Gallery, a dramatically modern and light-filled space designed by acclaimed Big Sur architect Mickey Muennig.

AUG. 16

PEBBLE BEACH CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE

Pebble Beach

Dream big at the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance, a celebration of automobiles as high art. The 10-day event also features seven-figure auctions and expert panels at Concours Village.

MAKE IT A WEEKEND

Cruise along the scenic 17-Mile Drive and you won't need a million-dollar car to appreciate the stunning coastal views between Carmel and Pacific Grove.

Drive your own classic car with a rental of a 1965 Ford Shelby Cobra or 1956 Porsche 356 Speedster from Monterey Touring Vehicles.

COURTESY SANTA BARBARA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

EVEN MORE EVENTS

MAY
CALIFORNIA STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL
Ventura

JUNE
LOMPOC FLOWER FESTIVAL
Lompoc

JUNE
OJAI MUSIC FESTIVAL
Ojai

JUNE
SALINAS RODEO
Salinas

JULY
CALIFORNIA MID-STATE FAIR
Paso Robles

SEPT.
MONTEREY JAZZ FESTIVAL
Monterey

OCT.
CALIFORNIA AVOCADO FESTIVAL
Carpinteria

OCT.
CLAM FESTIVAL
Pismo Beach

OCT.
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ON THE TRAIL



SLO VINYL TRAIL

MILES: *75*
WHAT TO EXPECT:
Vinyl, vino, and vibes

Searching for the perfect pairing of vinyl and vino? Look no further than the San Luis Obispo Vinyl Trail. Crafted by Jan's Vinyl Bar (more on the beloved, high-fidelity lounge below), follow this hand-picked list for hi-fi bars, stores filled with LPs, and sit-and-spin destinations.

San Luis Obispo: Downtown SLO's Boo Boo Records opened in 1974. With its cosmic rooster logo, walls festooned with album covers, and crates of LPs, it's still SLO's go-to vinyl destination. Tucked away in the Railroad District, Jan's Vinyl Bar takes requests from the record collection amassed by owners Jeff and Lisa Root—everything from French pop to outlaw country. Inspired by Japan's kissa bar tradition, the cozy listening spot hosts appreciation nights (from Bob Seger to Taylor Swift) and open-deck days when guests are encouraged to "BYO records."


Jan's Vinyl Bar

Morro Bay: Head northwest to Vinyl Isle, which is stocked floor to ceiling with records. (Note: the store is closed on Mondays.) A few blocks west is the delightfully curated vintage clothing shop Divers, which also houses a collection of archival tableware, magazines, comic books, and (of course) records.

Atascadero: Next up is Traffic Records, a store known for its customer service and robust library of tunes (both old and new). Conveniently located next door is Decades HiFi Lounge, which offers themed music nights and cold beer on tap.

Paso Robles: Airstreams, vinyl, and wine: Talk about an unbeatable combination. And that's just what you'll find at Vinyl Vineyards, where restored trailers named for music legends are outfitted with turntables and records. Glamping has never been so glam as a night in a David Bowie–inspired Airstream. Reservations for tastings and overnight stays available online.

INSIDER TIPS

- The driving distance from one store to another on this list is less than 20 miles.
- Check out the official **SLO Vinyl Trail** on Jan's website for more Central Coast vinyl destinations, including Santa Maria's **Paradise Records and Trading Post** and Solvang's **Off the Record Vinyl & Vintage**.


Vinyl Vineyards

FROM TOP: @HEATHERGRAYPHOTOGRAPHY; EMILY & JAKE GLENNON/ADVANTURE WITH US/COURTESY VINYL VINEYARDS

UNLOCK CALIFORNIA'S BEST-KEPT HIDDEN GEMS

visit California



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SOLVANG

SMALL TOWN

Solvang has a charming, timeless quality maintained by its famous windmills, traditional half-timbered architecture, holiday shops, and countless bakeries. Founded by Danish immigrants in 1911, the town, thanks to its Old World atmosphere, earned the nickname "Little Denmark."

Today, there are still *æbleskiver* aplenty (try the round, sugary pancake-like treats at Solvang Restaurant) and even a half-scale version of Copenhagen's Little Mermaid statue. But with a prime Santa Ynez Valley location, Solvang has added a contemporary culinary scene and evolved into a California wine country staple.

Three of the town's restaurants earned inclusion in the prestigious Michelin Guide. First & Oak lets diners build their own multicourse tasting experience from a menu that makes creative use of the local bounty.

Best known for delectable wood-grilled steaks and seafood, Coast Range has also won acclaim for its Wagyu stroganoff and a crispy chicken sandwich that Michelin named one of California's best. In addition to delicious salads and sandwiches (don't miss the pastrami-smoked salmon), a sense of community is always on the menu at Peasants Feast. Chef-owners Sarah and Michael Cherney are strong supporters of area farmers and ranchers.

DISCOVER MORE
Explore this charming, windmill-filled town

Although Solvang makes an ideal base for exploring nearby wineries, you'll find plenty of fine wine right in town. Leading local winemakers, including Alma Rosa Winery & Vineyards (founded by Santa Barbara County wine pioneer Richard Sanford) and the small-lot, garagiste-style Crawford Family Wines, operate tasting rooms. Clean Slate Wine Bar pours 50 wines by the glass that can be paired with items from chef Melissa Scrymgeour's ever-changing small-plates menu.

For grab-and-go options, check out Cailloux Cheese Shop and Peasants Deli & Arcade, which offer picnic-ready spreads and artisanal sandwiches (don't sleep on the Pickle Beer). Also worth a midday bite is The Solvang Bakery, famous for its elaborate gingerbread houses.

To experience the cultural side of town, visit the California Nature Art Museum which showcases a room-sized troll sculpture made from recycled materials. And the intimate outdoor Solvang Festival Theater is the place to catch concerts and productions by the PCPA Pacific Conservatory Theatre, the Central Coast's acclaimed repertory company.



Solvang Festival Theater

PLACES TO STAY

HOTEL YNEZ
The 1952 motor lodge is now a serene, contemporary country retreat.

THE LANDSBY
A charming Scandinavian-style boutique spot.

VINLAND HOTEL & LOUNGE
This chic hotel also welcomes pets.

CRAFT & CLUSTER/COURTESY VISIT SANTA YNEZ VALLEY

CENTRAL COAST
California

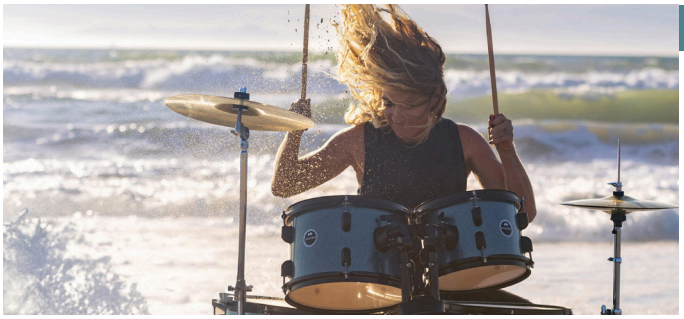
CENTRAL COAST CALIFORNIA

It's about time and worth every second

theoriginalroadtrip.com



PHOTO: VENTURA COUNTY COAST



OXNARD

OX Marks the Spot :) in Oxnard, California—where Highway 101 meets PCH, just 60 miles north of LA. Epic golden duned beaches, rich culture, and a gritty music legacy collide in this place with a rhythm and personality all its own.

VisitOxnard.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



CENTRAL COAST
California



VENTURA HARBOR VILLAGE

Catch seaside playground vibes all year-round at Ventura Harbor Village to vacay, relax & unwind! Fresh seafood, waterfront dining, beachy boutiques, sweet 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

VENTURA

Run wild, play freely, and tap into the child-like wonder inside of you. Let spontaneous adventure find you as you explore our walkable Downtown or as you hop on a boat to a different world at the Channel Islands National Park. Ventura is calling—are you in?

VisitVenturaCA.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 travelers of all ages.

SolvangUSA.com

SANTA YNEZ VALLEY

No matter how you choose to explore the Santa Ynez Valley, you can't go wrong. From 100+ wineries and 5 Michelin-rated restaurants, to outdoor adventure and the Danish capital of America, the #SYVibes are real.

VisitSYV.com | @VisitSYV

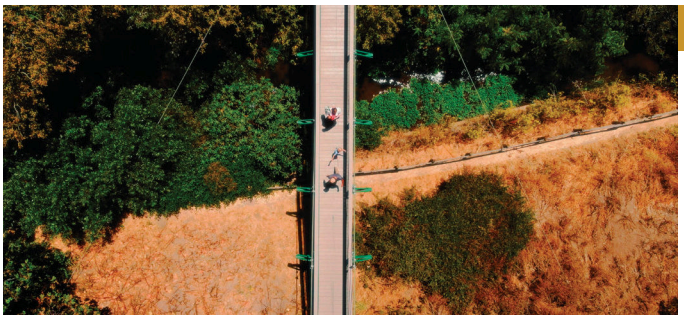




LOMPOC

Blast off in Lompoc, the best vantage point for rocket launches on the West Coast! Surrounded by rolling vineyards, larger-than-life murals, and a fully restored mission, this is a destination that inspires. Sip bold wines, hike dramatic hillsides, surf uncrowded waves, golf world-class courses, or even skydive. With space to explore, Lompoc is where Highway 1 meets Route 246 and excitement takes flight.

ExploreLompoc.com



ARROYO GRANDE

Small town charm meets world-class dining and entertainment in Arroyo Grande. Make our historic town your feels-like-home base for wine weekends and relaxing nature getaways close to the beach—but without the beach prices. Save now on midweek stays at Arroyo Grande hotels and vacation rentals.

VisitArroyoGrande.org

PISMO BEACH

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.

ExperiencePismoBeach.com





SAN LUIS OBISPO

Come live the SLO Life in the city of San Luis Obispo. Here, you'll enjoy the best parts of California all in one homebase away from home. Sip Chardonnays and Pinot Noirs at world-class wineries. Stroll our famous Downtown SLO Farmers' Market every Thursday. Hike our rolling green hills. Live like a local. Live the SLO Life.

VisitSLO.com

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!

PortolaHotel.com | 1-855-292-1772





MONTEREY COUNTY

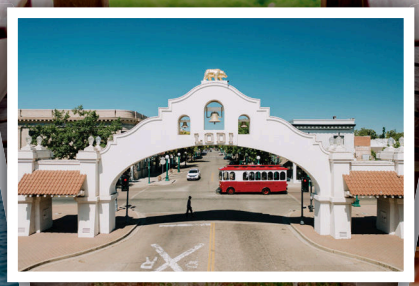
From majestic redwoods to pristine coastline, Monterey County is where adventure, flavor and relaxation meet. Explore wellness retreats, championship golf and world-class dining—every path leads to inspiration.

SeeMonterey.com | 888-221-1010

The Spirit of REAL CALIFORNIA.

SIP AWARD-WINNING WINES, PADDLE CALM WATERS, AND STROLL STREETS WHERE EVERYONE SAYS HELLO.







VISIT LODI CALIFORNIA

Here in Lodi, you'll find the heart of California — vineyards rooted in generations, rivers that invite reflection, and a downtown alive with warmth and welcome. Discover wine country that still feels like home.

Experience authentic California in Lodi.

VISITOR CENTER HOURS: 25 N. School St. Lodi, CA 95240
Weekdays: 10am to 5pm • **Weekends:** 10am to 4pm
Phone: **209.365.1195** • Website: **www.visitlodi.com**

follow us on...

SCAN CODE TO REQUEST A GUIDE
VISITLODI.COM



Almond blossoms, Fresno

RACHID DAHNOUN

CENTRAL VALLEY

Wide-open landscapes and farm-fresh flavors beckon in the valley


Appellation Lodi

NEW AND NOTEWORTHY





FOOD & DRINK

A medical complex in **Bakersfield** might seem an unlikely place to find nationally acclaimed northern Indian food. But that's where Punjabi Dhaba, a onetime food truck, now serves its celebrated stuffed paratha and butter chicken in a new restaurant on Stockdale Highway.

Chill out at **Madera**'s Quady Winery with an Electra Moscato slushy, an irresistible treat made with Italian-style sweet wine.

Explore the **Suisun Valley** wine country, a laid-back region between San Francisco and Sacramento that's celebrated for outstanding Petite Sirah. Check out new tasting rooms at Ryan Darrall Wine and Sentivo Vineyards & Winery.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Appellation Wine & Roses Lodi Resort and Spa has taken a century-old property in **Lodi** and reimagined it as a contemporary wine country retreat—complete with two signature Charlie Palmer restaurants, yoga classes, and culinary workshops. The renovations also extend to the spa, which offers seasonal specials, aromatherapy, and treatments for two.

ATTRACTIONS

With food trucks serving teppanyaki, Hawaiian shave ice, and Tijuana-style tacos, Bakersfield's Southwest Market (held most Saturday nights) is the place to hang with the locals and find unexpected treasures.

OUTDOORS

Dos Rios, California's newest state park, has opened two self-guided hiking trails that give visitors additional ways to explore this 1,600-acre area outside **Modesto**.

Discover the California of centuries past at the Solano Land Trust's Patwino Worrtla Kodoi Dihi Open Space Park, a 1,500-acre spread outside **Fairfield** that's sacred to the Patwin people. Fourteen miles of trails lead through oak forests and to ridgelines with panoramic views. The park's name, which means "Southern Rock Home of the Patwin People" was given by the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation.

HOW TO: SHOP A CV FARMSTAND

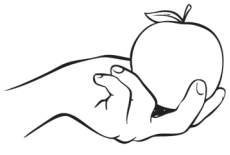
California's Central Valley turns roadside produce shopping into a peak-season adventure—here's how to stop, shop, and savor like a local



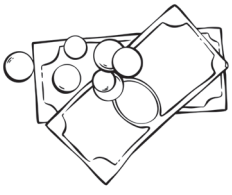
- **SPOT** Pull over when you see hand-painted signs boasting fresh, in-season bounty. Look for crates brimming with vibrant stone fruits, winter greens, and bright citrus through spring.



- **CHAT** Strike up a conversation with the farmers or vendors. They're full of local tips and can point you to the best picks or unique varieties you won't find at the grocery store.



- **PICK** Choose produce that feels firm and fragrant, and handle it gently to keep everything perfect for the trip home—if it even makes it that far.



- **BUY** Some farm stands operate on the honor system, so bring small bills for cash boxes, read the signs for pricing, and come prepared with a sturdy bag or berry-safe container.



- **ENJOY** Snack on a sun-ripened peach, slice up those tomatoes, or pack up your haul for a picture-perfect picnic.


The Big Fresno Fair

EVENTS

Check out upcoming events across the region and explore must-see attractions to extend your stay.

APRIL 11–12

OAKDALE RODEO

Oakdale

Here in the "Cowboy Capital of the World," people take their rodeo seriously, and the Oakdale Rodeo is like a local World Series and Super Bowl rolled into one.

Explore the Central Valley's Western traditions at the Oakdale Cowboy Museum, which displays rodeo memorabilia, saddles, and a barbed wire collection.

Nothing goes better with rodeo than a cold beer, so raise a glass of Oakdale-brewed craft IPA at Last Call Brewing Company and Dying Breed Brewing.

"Reata" means lariat in Spanish, and Reata on 3rd ropes in regulars to its beautiful contemporary Western interior with everything from ahi poke nachos to juicy filet mignon.

APRIL 24–26

SAN JOAQUIN ASPARAGUS FESTIVAL

Stockton

Here in "America's Salad Bowl," they know a thing or two about preparing this prized vegetable. During the event's 40th anniversary, try asparagus in burritos and even ice cream.

Look for Delta-grown asparagus at farm stands in and around Stockton. Good bets include Moon Dust Farms, Weberstown Farmers' Market, Golden Villa Farmers' Market, and, despite its name, Strawberry King.

Take yourself out to a Stockton Ports minor league baseball game. On Foodie Fridays, they serve hot dogs topped with asparagus.

THIRD SUNDAY IN MAY

MODESTO PORCHFEST

Modesto

A combination of Lollapalooza and a giant, old-fashioned block party, Modesto Porchfest celebrates music and community. Porches, patios, and driveways in the La Loma, College, and Downtown neighborhoods transform into stages where more than 100 bands of all genres perform for the town.

Check out Modesto's grandest porch on tours of the McHenry Mansion, an 1883 Victorian Italianate home built by banker Robert McHenry and his wife Matilda.

Catch classical music concerts, ballet, and performances by the likes of Academy Award–winning actor Morgan Freeman in a grand, playfully named venue known as The Fruit Yard

Enjoy Central Valley nights and concerts under the stars by such top performers as Ringo Starr and Darius Rucker.


Oakdale Rodeo

EVEN MORE EVENTS

FEB.
WORLD AG EXPO
Tulare

MARCH
LODI WINE FESTIVAL
Lodi

APRIL
JAZZAFFAIR
Three Rivers

APRIL
CLOVIS RODEO
Clovis

MAY
VACAVILLE FIESTA DAYS
Vacaville

MAY
KINGSBURG SWEDISH FESTIVAL
Kingsburg

JUNE
DAVIS MUSIC FEST
Davis

SEPT.–OCT.
KERN COUNTY FAIR
Bakersfield

OCT.
THE BIG FRESNO FAIR
Fresno

DEC.
WINTERS TRACTOR PARADE
Winters

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: JILL MEANS PHOTO; COURTESY VISIT FRESNO COUNTY; ZUMA PRESS INC/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

WINTERS

SMALL TOWN

Roughly halfway between Napa Valley and Sacramento sits the picturesque town of Winters. Offering "Albariño wine strolls," summer concerts at the Gazebo, and live music under twinkling lights every Friday night on their historical Main Street (from April to October), Winters blends wine country sophistication with enduring small-town charm.

Orchards and cropland surround Winters, so the farm-to-fork journey is a short one. Putah Creek Café is where many locals start their day with such favorites as the carnitas huevos rancheros and a brioche French toast. In a onetime hotel built in 1889, the Buckhorn Steakhouse uses a proprietary aging process and employs an in-house butcher to ensure the tenderest ribeye and filet.

The restaurant Preserve serves its own takes on American standards like fried chicken and shrimp 'n' grits; don't miss their Southern-style crawfish boils. Ficelle touts the randomness of its menu, which is an intriguing way to describe an eclectic array of Spanish, Mexican, and American tapas that's ever-changing but always delicious.

Winters is also adjacent to a growing wine region (hence the wine walks). Both Berryessa Gap Vineyards and Turkovich Family Wines operate downtown tasting rooms, or you can go to the source at their wineries, less than 10 minutes from Winters. The family-owned and -operated craft distillery, Patio 29 Spirits Co., uses local grains and fruit to produce premium gin, rum, whiskeys, and even a seasonal green chile vodka. Its tasting room is open Thursday through Sunday and offers cocktails, four different types of fries, and multiple flatbreads on the menu.



Park Winters Inn



Preserve



Bondolio Olive Oil Estate

CHECK IN

Stay a block away from Main Street at the luxurious boutique Hotel Winters, home to the Italian restaurant Carboni's and the ZenTerra Spa. The Abbey House Inn is another option; the restored 1905 home is loaded with charm.

Just outside Winters, Bondolio Olive Oil Estate leads tours—by reservation—with stops in its gorgeous olive grove, mill, and tasting room for sampling the certified organic oils that have earned top honors at prestigious international competitions.

The Park Winters Inn is a destination worth a side trip all its own. The beautifully restored 1865 mansion offers a pool, firepit, three-bedroom private tower suite, and sprawling gardens. Time it right and you can pair your stay with a seasonal workshop held on the property's flower farm. Pick your own bouquets, arrange dried florals under a ceiling of preserved flowers, or take a garden tour.

Putah Creek flows out of the nearby Coast Range and along Winters' southern edge, where you can explore trails and stroll across a 1906 steel-truss railroad bridge at Putah Creek Nature Park. Farther upstream at the Putah Creek Wildlife Area, hike the slopes or test your casting skills on an outing with Goodwater Fly Fishing.

PLAN A TRIP

Scan the code to learn more about Winters

BAT TOUR
BAT COUNTRY, YOLO COUNTY

OUT THERE

Witness hundreds of thousands of bats take to the sky in an awe-inspiring flight

Freeway overpasses aren't typically considered prime wildlife habitat, but 250,000 bats have turned a bridge along Interstate 80 between Davis and Sacramento into their unlikely bat cave.

The Yolo Causeway is home to California's largest urban colony of Mexican free-tailed bats. Especially in summer, the migratory mammals hang out (quite literally) underneath the highway before emerging at dusk to feed. The Yolo Basin Foundation leads three-hour Bat Talk and Tour outings, where viewers can behold the amazing wildlife spectacle.

HOW DID A CAUSEWAY BECOME BAT HEAVEN?

These tiny voyagers found nearly perfect conditions on the underside of the highway.

The bridge's expansion joints create warm, cave-like environments where females bear a single pup. The abundance of moths and mosquitoes in the area provides the bats with a bounteous, buggy buffet.

BAT WATCH

The family-friendly Bat Talk and Tour kicks off with a presentation about the flying mammals' natural history, then visitors get close-up looks at a few live bats while learning about aspects of the species' life cycle and the beneficial role the animals play in our ecosystem.

Participants then caravan to the causeway along the dirt roads in the 16,000-acre Yolo Basin Wildlife Area to get into position to watch the bats fly from their roost. As you drive past the wildlife area's wetlands and marshes, you'll listen to your guide's narration through a walkie-talkie provided to tour participants.

The magic happens when the bats emerge. The colony flies in a loose formation, creating dark undulating ribbons against the sky, a view made even more beautiful by the remarkable hues at sunset. There's drama too, as Swainson's hawks and peregrine falcons sometimes swoop in and prey on the bats.

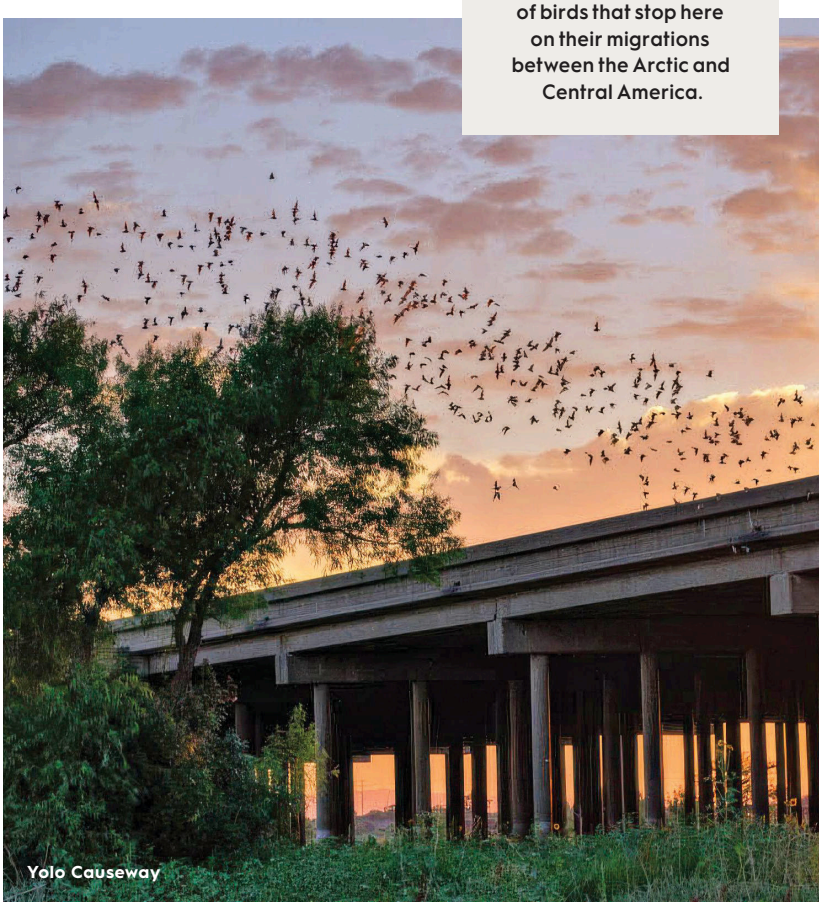
But the bats are remarkable flyers and, given a good tail wind, can hit speeds of up to 100 mph, making them the world's fastest mammal. They climb 2 miles into the sky while ranging as far as 50 miles during their nightly feeding forays.

BAT FACTS

The Mexican free-tailed bat is one of 25 known bat species in California, and the pallid bat is the official state bat.

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- **The Bat Talk and Tour begins in late June and continues through September, when most of the bats start their journey south.**
- **Participants meet in Davis at the wildlife area's headquarters before heading to the causeway.**
- **Reservations are required and tours cost $17 for adults, $5 ages 6-17.**
- **From October–June, the Yolo Basin Foundation also leads birding and wildlife tours to see the thousands of birds that stop here on their migrations between the Arctic and Central America.**



Yolo Causeway

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: COURTESY PARK WINTERS; MARY HENWOOD; COURTESY BONDOLIO; COURTESY PRESERVE

CALIFORNIA'S

Central Valley

visitcentralvalley.com/middleground













California's heartland awaits! Hike giant sequoias, taste the Valley's produce, and sample old-vine wines. Twelve unique destinations, one unforgettable California experience.

FIND THE MIDDLE GROUND

IN THE HEART OF CALIFORNIA

Visit Stockton
visitstockton.org

Visit Lodi
visitlodi.com

Visit Modesto
visitmodesto.com

Visit Oakdale
visitoakdale.com

Visit Fairfield
visitfairfield.com

Visit Bakersfield
visitbakersfield.com

Visit Visalia
visitvisalia.com

Discover the Sequoias
discoverthesequoias.com

Yosemite Mariposa County
yosemite.com

Visit Fresno County
visitfresnocounty.org

Yolo County
visityolo.com

Yosemite Madera County
yosemitethisyear.com

SCAN TO PLAN

YOUR TRIP

visitcentralvalley.com/middleground



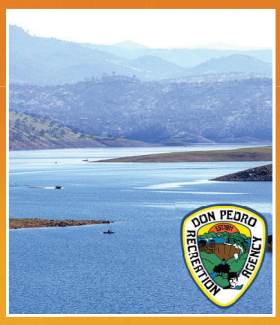
THIS IS YOUR *Getaway* TO ENDLESS ADVENTURE



Visit TUOLUMNE county CALIFORNIA

Endless adventure awaits where the iconic wonders of Yosemite National Park, the authentic history of California's Gold Country, and the rugged beauty of the High Sierra come together. Trade your to-do list for a trail map, lace up your boots, and let your wild spirit lead the way. Good times are calling—answer in Tuolumne County.

VisitTCToday.com/CAVisitorsGuide



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!

DONPEDROLAKE.COM

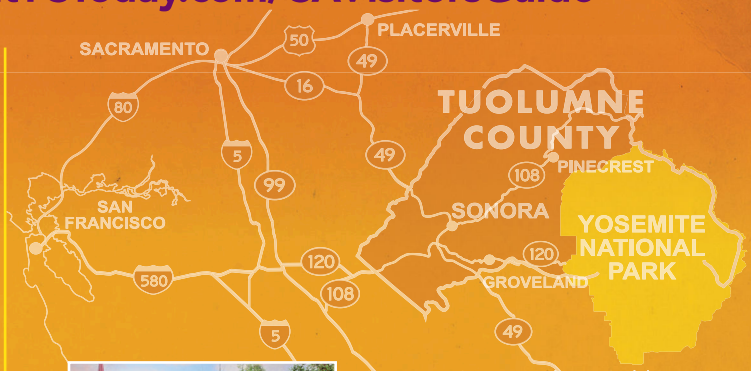
DON PEDRO RECREATION AREA

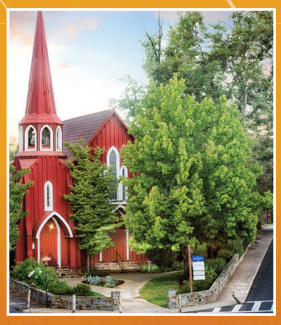


Located in the heart of California's Central Sierra off Highway 108, Dodge Ridge Mountain Resort is a year-round resort that's been in operation since 1950. Access to 1600 vertical feet, 67 trails and 11 lifts across 862 skiable acres with an average snowfall of 350" each season.

DODGERIDGE.COM

DODGE RIDGE MOUNTAIN RESORT





Step into Sonora, where Gold Rush charm meets modern energy. Stroll historic streets filled with locally-owned shops and eateries, tasting rooms, and a welcoming brewery scene. With comfortable accommodations and golden discoveries at every turn, Sonora invites you to wander, explore, and stay awhile.

VISITSONORACA.COM

CITY OF SONORA

HIGH SIERRA - - - - - GOLD COUNTRY - - - - - YOSEMITE


Yosemite National Park
HIGH SIERRA
From granite peaks to alpine lakes, this region delivers dramatic views
GEORGE ROSE/GETTY IMAGES

NEW AND NOTEWORTHY

ACCOMMODATIONS

Mammoth's newest lodging, Limelight Mammoth Hotel & Residences, opened in late 2025. The 150-room, all-electric hotel has a prime location just steps from Mammoth Village and its ski gondola, plus a chic cocktail lounge.

Curated by pro snowboarder Jeremy Jones, the new Evo Hotel in **Tahoe City** caters to sporty types with 48 guestrooms featuring Tahoe-themed artwork and clever gear storage. Onsite restaurant Sierra Surf Club serves a gastropub menu with sweeping lake views.

The Ritz-Carlton Lake Tahoe in **Truckee** unveiled a $20 million renovation in 2025, updating 170 guest rooms and redesigning its restaurants and sports facilities. Perched on the slopes of Northstar California, the five-star resort offers ski-in/ski-out access, a full-service spa, and exceptional dining at Manzanita.

FOOD & DRINK

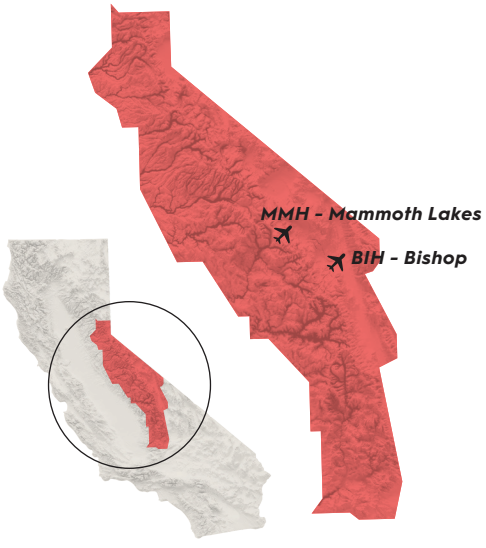
South Lake Tahoe's first food hall, Cascade Kitchens, sits in a modern-rustic space just west of the "Y." It hosts seven vendors—including Moon's Korean Kitchen, Tacomer Traditional Mexican Cuisine, and Lil Beans Creamery & Deli—plus indoor and outdoor dining areas, the Thirsty Bear bar, and a grab-and-go market.

Sylva is **Tahoe City**'s hip new bistro with a seasonal, locally sourced menu focused on shareable plates and wood-fired cooking. Tahoe native Andrew Shimer runs the kitchen, and his staff makes everything in-house, including pickled vegetables and cured meats.

On Tahoe's **West Shore**, Homewood's new eatery has a short-but-sweet menu that radiates "Tahoe summer." Dockside Trading Company, run by legendary Tahoe restaurateur Rick Brown, sits adjacent to Obexer's Boat Company. Order a Wagyu burger or a peach-and-prosciutto pizza, then wash it down with an original Chambers Punch.

South Lake Tahoe Airport's Flight Deck Grill & Golf opened in 2025 with a sleek remodel, a golf-simulator lounge, and a comfort-food menu. The awesome runway-and-mountain view remains the same.

Steve and Tracie Shatkin of Mammoth Roasting Company opened Ursa Kitchen in Mammoth Lakes in 2025. The corner shop now has a dual identity, serving coffee and donuts by day and epicurean entrees by night, like seared short ribs, lamb chops, and miso-glazed eggplant.





HOW TO: HIKE MOUNT WHITNEY

What you need to know to summit the tallest peak in the Lower 48



- **APPLY** Enter the Forest Service lottery (held each spring). Day hikes and overnights both require this.



- **TRAIN** Build endurance by going on long hikes with plenty of elevation gain. Practice with a loaded backpack if you plan to camp overnight.



- **PACK** Bring layers, snacks, a headlamp, water, and a bear canister (required for overnights). Altitude meds if needed.



- **START** Hit the trail by 3–4 a.m. to avoid afternoon storms and make the 22-mile round trip in daylight.



- **CELEBRATE** Soak in the accomplishment and snap a photo at the 14,505-foot summit before descending.

DYLAN LANGILLE/COURTESY SYLVA

MONO COUNTY CALIFORNIA

CALIFORNIA'S GREAT BEYOND





SILVER LAKE, JUNE LAKE LOOP

Journey to Mono County along Scenic Byway 395 and discover a land of lava and ice, sparkling waters and rock formations from another world. Explore Gold Rush ghost towns and walk among the planet's oldest living trees. You'll also find genuine hospitality, like a welcome from another era. Welcome to **California's Great Beyond.**



BRIDGEPORT WINTER RECREATION AREA



JUNE LAKE LOOP



BODIE GHOST TOWN

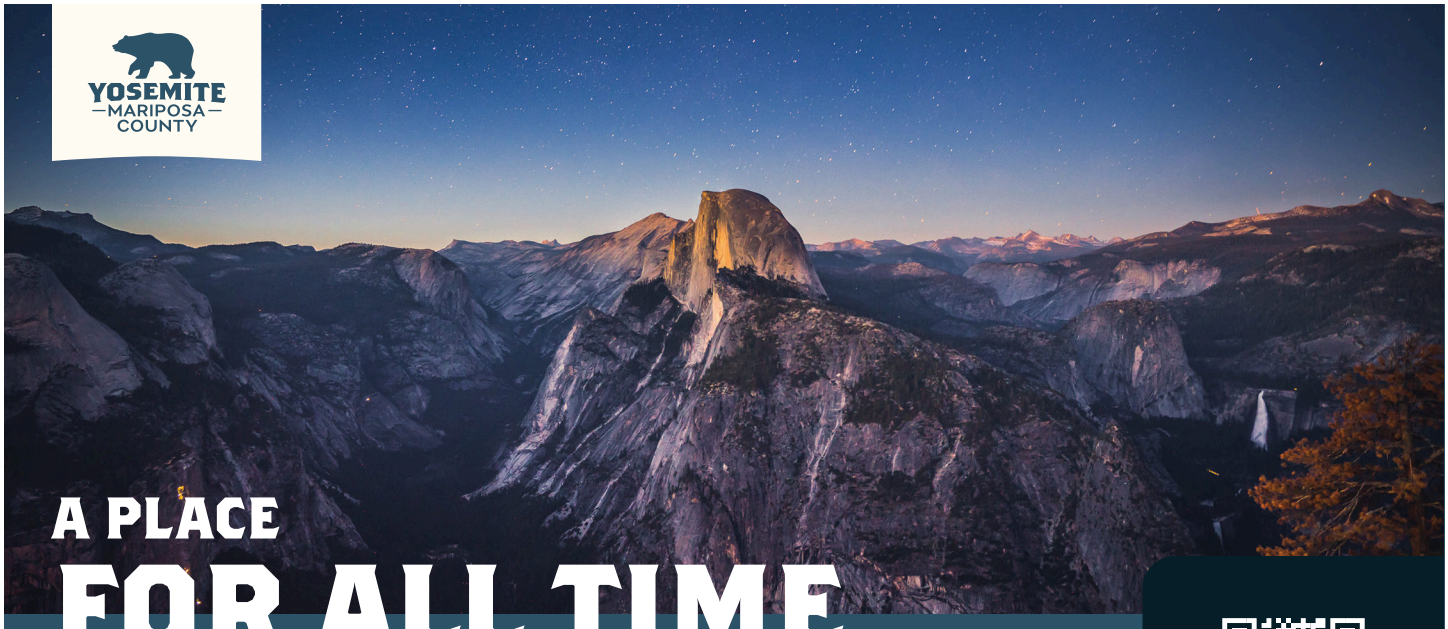


MONO LAKE

VISIT EASTERN SIERRA

800-845-7922 | MonoCounty.org

YOSEMITE MARIPOSA COUNTY



A PLACE FOR ALL TIME

Whether you're adventuring in the shadows of granite giants, basking in the beauty of 3,000-year-old Sequoias, perusing through charming Gold Rush Era towns or resting your head in second-to-none lodging, there's no place in the world like Yosemite Mariposa County.

Plan your trip at

YOSEMITE.COM



North Lake Tahoe Snowfest

EVENTS

Check out upcoming events across the region and explore must-see attractions to extend your stay.

FEB. 25–MARCH 8

NORTH LAKE TAHOE SNOWFEST

Tahoe City

This 10-day winter extravaganza started in 1982 and has expanded to include 50-plus events throughout North Lake Tahoe's towns, from a frozen pickleball tourney and polar bear swim to snow golf and a snow-themed street party.

MAKE IT A WEEKEND

Pedal a fat-tire bike on snow-covered trails at Northstar California. Refuel with cheesy goodness at Rubicon Pizza Company in Northstar Village.

Cross-country ski on Tahoe Donner's 2,800 acres of snow-blanketed meadows. Grooming machines manicure 100 kilometers of trails for gliding and sliding.

Stroll through downtown Truckee. This 1860s railroad town flaunts its mountain style in rustic-chic boutiques, upscale eateries, and lively nightlife spots.

JULY 30–AUG. 2

MAMMOTH FESTIVAL OF BEERS AND BLUESAPALOOZA

Mammoth Lakes

Held outdoors among the pines, the four-day event attracts world-renowned musicians. More than 80 West Coast breweries pour their signature beers, and food vendors feed the happy crowd.

MAKE IT A WEEKEND

Head north to serene June Lake for a break from the action. Hike to Parker Lake (easy) or Fern Lake (challenging) or chill out on June Lake's expansive beach.

Rent a kayak or stand-up paddleboard at Convict Lake, then paddle in the hulking shadow of Laurel Mountain and Mount Morrison.

Drive northwest to Yosemite's Tioga Pass entrance. In Tuolumne Meadows you'll find alpine lakes, granite domes, and picnic spots overlooking sublime alpine scenery.

DEC.

BRACEBRIDGE DINNER

Yosemite National Park

Every winter since 1927, visitors dress up in tuxedos and gowns to attend a lavish 18th-century English Christmas pageant and seven-course feast in the Ahwahnee Hotel's magnificent dining room. The spectacle takes place for only eight evenings, so tickets sell fast.

MAKE IT A WEEKEND

Carve turns at Badger Pass Ski Area, which opens in mid-December (if the snow gods deliver). Or strap on a pair of snowshoes and shuffle to giant sequoia groves.

Enjoy an over-the-top holiday at Tenaya, where there's a glittering, 35-foot-tall fir tree and ice rink.

Board a North Pole–bound steam locomotive at Railtown 1897 State Historic Park. Pajama-wearing families sip hot cocoa and visit with Santa as the conductor tells the story of *The Polar Express*.

EVEN MORE EVENTS

MAY
MULE DAYS
Bishop

JUNE
TAHOE CITY FOOD & WINE CLASSIC
Tahoe City

JULY
TRAILS AND VISTAS ART HIKES
Soda Springs

AUG.
TAHOE BREWFEST
South Lake Tahoe

AUG.
LAKE TAHOE CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE
Homewood

SEPT.
YOSEMITE FACELIFT
Yosemite

SEPT.
COYOTEFEST
Coulterville

SEPT.
SAMPLE THE SIERRA FOOD & WINE FESTIVAL
South Lake Tahoe

OCT.
WINE, WALK & SHOP
Truckee

COURTESY WADE SNIDER MEDIA @WADESMEDIA



YOSEMITE'S SCENIC WONDERS



Yosemite's Scenic Wonders has over 130 properties to choose from, offering its guests four different locations that are unique to the Park. Each location offers a great starting point for adventuring in and around Yosemite's High Sierras. Experience the charm, space, privacy and intimacy of your very own vacation home. Established 1988.

Scenicwonders.com
888/YOSEMITE (967-3648)



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- Dr. Paul Piff,
Social Psychologist,
Expert on Awe





Come alive on the South Shore of Lake Tahoe. It's Awe and then Some. When you visit, help us protect the awe. Let's look out for the lake, the mountains, the trails, the trees, the critters and all the people here, too.

DESOLATION HOTEL
SOUTH LAKE TAHOE & HOPE VALLEY

DESOLATION HOTEL
Desolation Hotel: Born out of a love for the great outdoors and a desire to celebrate the wondrous area that surrounds us. Luxury amenities meet rugged adventure at our South Lake Tahoe and Hope Valley locations.

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Hope Valley: 530-694-2203
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SPLURGE vs. SAVE

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Experience the magic of this national park—one luxe suite or pepperoni slice at a time

Yosemite is California's largest national park, covering over 1,100 square miles.

STAY

SPLURGE

Sleep in the luxurious sixth-floor Library Suite at The Ahwahnee, home to a library lined with floor-to-ceiling shelves and a woodburning fireplace. *Around $1,500 per night*

SAVE

At Lee Vining's El Mono Motel, rooms come with views of a flower-filled garden and access to a shared bath. All-day breakfast starts at 7 a.m. *From $85 per night*

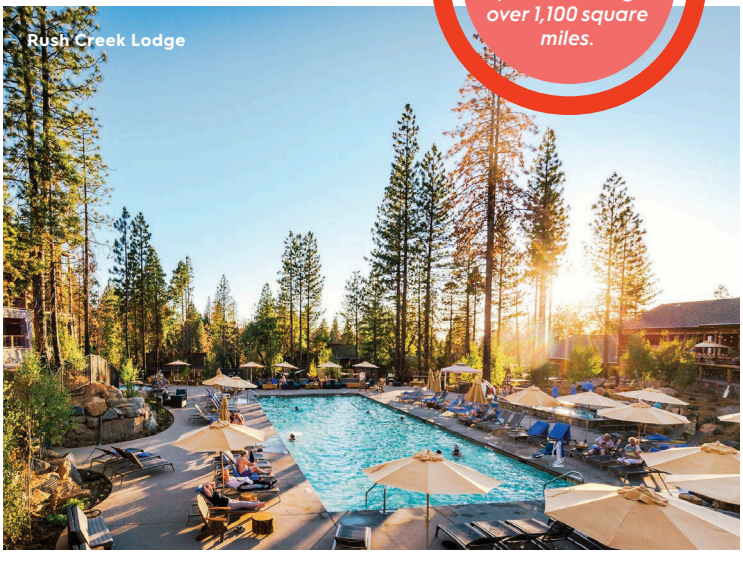
DINE

SPLURGE

Dress up for a swanky five-course dinner of French-California fare at The Elderberry House in Oakhurst, located within the Château du Sureau estate. *$175 plus $95 wine pairing per person*

SAVE

Split a large pepperoni pizza with friends on Curry Village's Pizza Deck with views of Glacier Point and Royal Arches ($25 for 3–4 people). Pair your slice with a frosty Half Dome Peach California Wheat beer.



Rush Creek Lodge



Merced River

PADDLE

SPLURGE

Challenge the Tuolumne River's whitewater on a guided rafting trip with OARS—navigate boulder gardens, narrow chutes, and plunging waterfalls. *$330–$390/person*

SAVE

Rent an inflatable raft at Curry Village and float down the Merced River. *$40 for 2–4 people*



The Ahwahnee

GROOVE

SPLURGE

Score a first-class caboose seat for a Yosemite Jazz Train concert at Yosemite Mountain Sugar Pine Railroad. *$265/person*

SAVE

Bring a blanket for Music on the Green in downtown Mariposa's Art Park. Concerts span genres from folk to reggae. *Fri.–Sat. in summer, free*

SOAK

SPLURGE

Book a stay at Rush Creek Lodge and dive into its 2,400-square-foot saltwater pool, complete with firepits and stunning mountain views. *$350 per night*

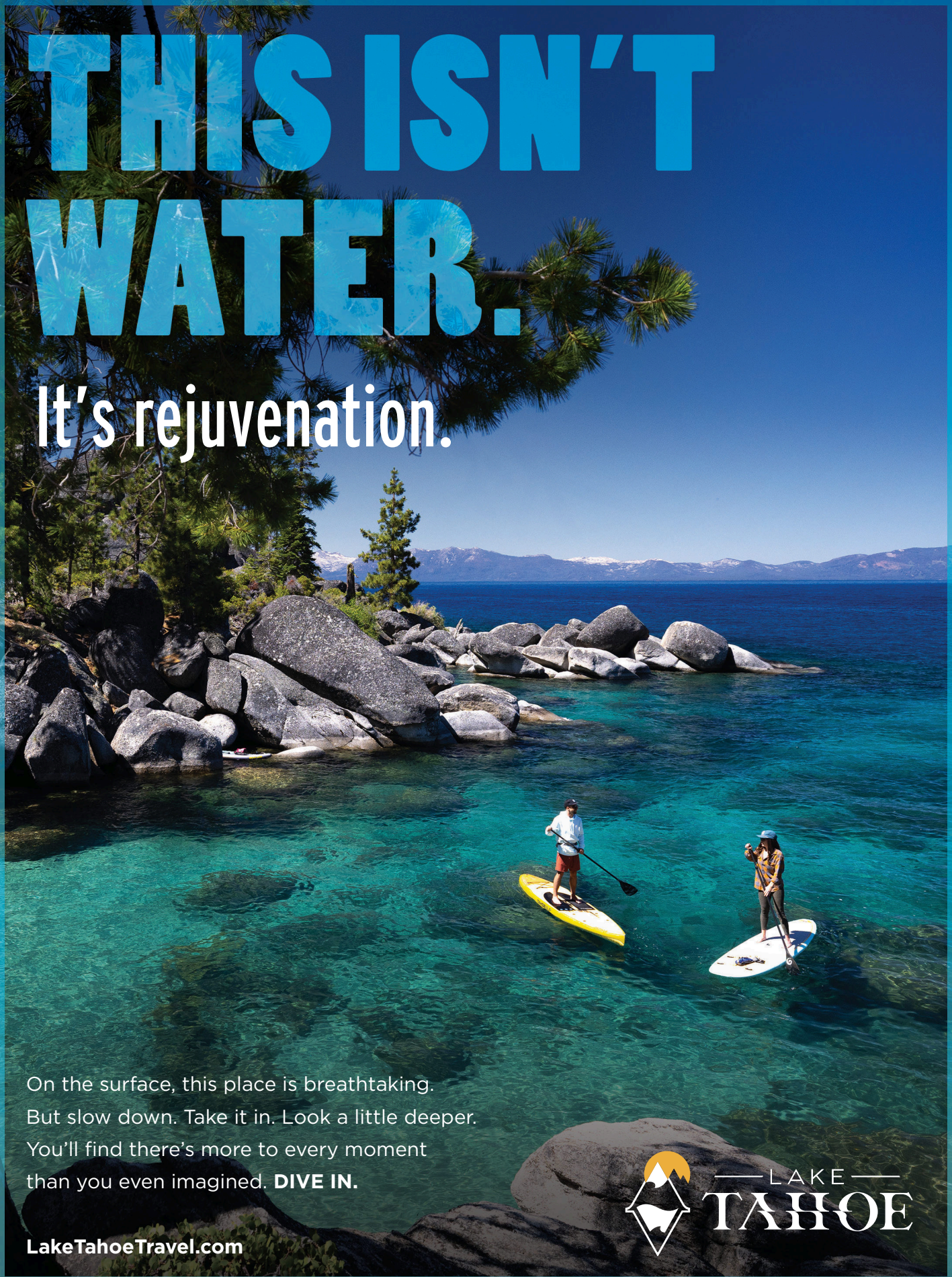
SAVE

Do the backstroke by the waterfall at Rainbow Pool, 15 miles east of Groveland. *$10 per car*

DISCOVER MORE

Scan the code for more national park tips and tricks

FROM TOP: COURTESY RUSH CREEK LODGE; COURTESY ARAMARK DESTINATIONS (2)


THIS ISN'T WATER.
It's rejuvenation.
On the surface, this place is breathtaking.
But slow down. Take it in. Look a little deeper.
You'll find there's more to every moment
than you even imagined. DIVE IN.
LakeTahoeTravel.com
LAKE TAHOE



Lone Pine

SIERRA AFTER DARK

OUT THERE

From stargazing and night skiing to ghost walks and glow-in-the-dark kayaking, this mountain region invites you to explore its wild side after hours

Noctourism—the art of exploring a destination by moonlight, starlight, or simply outside typical business hours—is on the rise. In the High Sierra, high elevation, low humidity, and minimal light pollution contribute to prime conditions for clear, dark skies and extraordinary nighttime experiences. See the High Sierra in a whole new light when you stay out past dark.

LIGHT SHOW SCHEDULE

The Perseid meteor shower, an annual display of shooting stars, peaks every August and is best viewed from high elevations with minimal light pollution—aka, the High Sierra.

OVERNIGHT EXCURSIONS

Camp anywhere in the High Sierra and you're bound to see some of the brightest stars you've ever witnessed. But if you want to take the stargazing up a notch, opt for a stay at the Eastern Sierra Observatory near Bishop.

Groups of up to 16 can camp at the 20-acre property overlooking the Owens Valley from April to October. Spot planets, galaxies, and nebulae in unbelievable detail with the help of the camp host and the observatory's massive telescope. An onsite hot tub and outdoor shower, high-end, heat-reflective tent accommodations, and communal grill further elevate this glamping experience.

ACTION SPORTS AT NIGHT

Outdoor exploration in the High Sierra doesn't stop when the sun dips below the ridgeline. At Truckee's Boreal Mountain, the lifts keep spinning well after sunset. Grab a Boreal Night Pass for unlimited skiing from 3–8 p.m. Or swap your skis for a snow tube at Palisades Tahoe in Olympic Valley—the resort has offered night skiing since the 1960s. Today, disco tubing and glow-in-the-dark fun continue that after-hours legacy.

For a low-key snow excursion, head to Tamarack Lodge in Mammoth Lakes, where you can explore the forest on a full-moon snowshoe while guides share stories about the local ecology and history.

In warmer months, relocate night adventures to the water, with evening kayak tours on Lake Tahoe. Take a see-through, LED-glow kayak from Clearly Tahoe for a spin, or go unplugged on a dark-sky stargazing paddle.

AFTER-DARK EVENTS

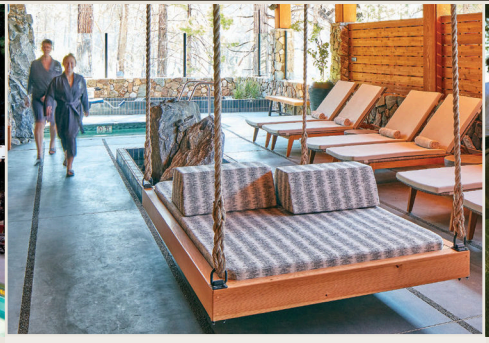
- **Level up your full-moon-shooting skills at workshops led by photographer Joshua Cripps, held in Lone Pine on summer weekends.**
- **Head to the ghost town at Bodie State Historic Park and hear stories of colorful lore during summertime-only Bodie Ghost Walks.**
- **Watch movies amid pine trees and under the stars at the Pinecrest Theater at Dodge Ridge Mountain Resort (season starts after Memorial Day).**
- **Learn about Yosemite's nocturnal habitats on a year-round 1.5-hour walking tour led by Yosemite Hospitality Naturalists.**

JOSHUA CRIPPS

Three Remarkable Lodges, Endless Yosemite Adventures

yosemitehotels.com







EST. 1921 EVERGREEN LODGE YOSEMITE

A classic Yosemite experience at an iconic mountain resort with 88 cabins and 22 Resort Glamping sites set in a majestic old-growth forest near Yosemite's western border and Hetch Hetchy entrance.

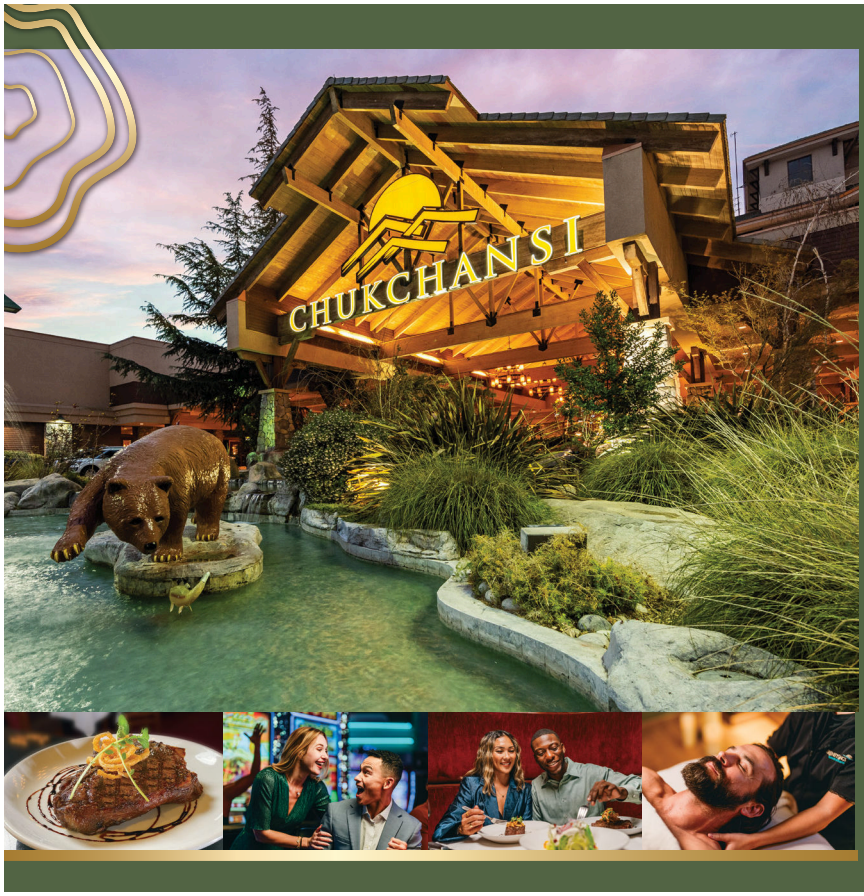
YOSEMITE RUSH CREEK LODGE & SPA

A relaxed yet sophisticated mountain resort in a stunning 20-acre hillside setting at Yosemite's Highway 120 West entrance, featuring a tastefully appointed mix of 143 rooms, suites and villas, plus an award-winning Spa.

FIREFALL RANCH YOSEMITE

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.

LODGING • DINING • RECREATION • TOURS • MEETINGS & EVENTS



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GOLD COUNTRY

Explore rugged foothills and wine country steeped in California's past

COURTESY OARS

NEW AND NOTEWORTHY



Restaurant DaKan



FOOD & DRINK

Pitmaster Matt Horn's Oakland restaurant earned him a Michelin Bib Gourmand award—plus thousands of devoted fans. Now, Horn Barbecue has landed in Old Town **Elk Grove**. The expansive new outpost features Horn's signature slow-smoked brisket, ribs, and more.



Horn Barbecue

In **Nevada City**, modern-rustic Restaurant DaKan combines global inspiration with hyperlocal ingredients from nearby farms. The Wagyu carpaccio and Hokkaido scallops are standouts.

Betty Wine Bar & Bistro in **Sacramento** is sporting a fresh look and a new menu. Chris Barnum-Dann, the executive chef and owner of Michelin-starred Localis, reinvented Betty's as a European-style wine bar with a dimly lit, cozy atmosphere.

In **Grass Valley**'s historic downtown, the Owl Tavern is set in a wooden building that dates back to the 1850s, when the space served drinks to Gold Rush prospectors. Its modern incarnation preserves the building's old-timey character and adds creative craft cocktails made with local ingredients, along with a steakhouse-inspired menu and elevated bar snacks.

The family-friendly Stepdad's in **Land Park** offers upscale pub fare including fish and a Sutterville Spritz.

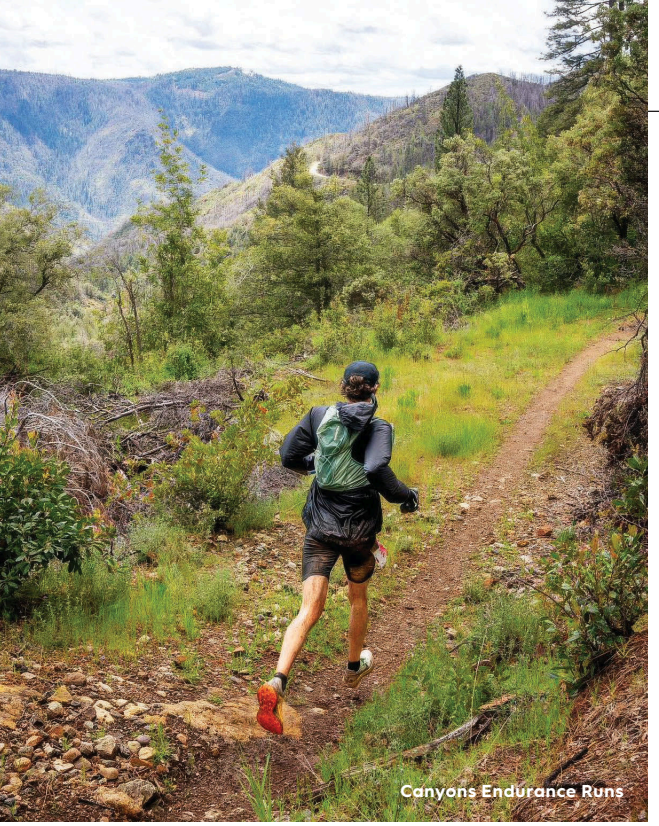
ENTERTAINMENT

Have fun learning about the Gold Rush town of **Placerville** on the Hangtown's Hidden Treasures Hunt. Download an app on your phone, then follow clues and solve puzzles that lead to landmarks like the Hangman's Tree, where Gold Rush–era vigilantes exacted their own brand of justice.

Soil Born Farms in **Rancho Cordova** has added new immersive and educational experiences for the whole family. Adults can join yoga sessions and guided bird walks while little ones learn about bees and flowers in the garden.

Channel 24 is Sacramento's newest live music spot. The buzzy **Midtown** venue accommodates just over 2,000 fans with standing and theater-style seating—plus a VIP room and patio. Acts span a wide range of genres, from indie bands to national touring artists.

FROM TOP: BAILEY WHITTHILL; COURTESY HORN BARBECUE. NEXT PAGE: COURTESY CANYONS ENDURANCE RUN; HALEY WRIGHT/NEVADA CITY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE


Canyons Endurance Runs

Check out upcoming events across the region and explore must-see attractions to extend your stay.

EVENTS

APRIL 23–25

THE CANYONS ENDURANCE RUNS

Auburn

This rugged series of 25K to 100-mile races in the "Endurance Capital of the World" winds through historic mountain trails in the Sierra Nevada foothills.

MAKE IT A WEEKEND
After pushing your body to extremes, treat yourself to a rejuvenating spa experience. Auburn's Natural Wellness Massage specializes in treatments that relieve sore muscles.

Sip your way through Placer County's emerging wine scene along the Placer Wine Trail. Hidden gem Casque Wines is known for Rhône varieties.

MAY 14–17

CALAVERAS COUNTY FAIR & JUMPING FROG JUBILEE

Angels Camp

Professional "frog jockeys" travel from all over the state to compete in this quirky event, inspired by Mark Twain's legendary tale. Didn't bring a frog? Rent a "ribbiter" for a chance at victory.

MAKE IT A WEEKEND
Calaveras Big Trees State Park in Arnold is filled with natural wonders, from majestic groves of giant sequoias to ancient volcanic formations.

Shop around Main Street in Murphys, an old mining town brimming with restaurants, shops, and tasting rooms.

OCT.

AFTERSHOCK

Sacramento

Metalheads unite at Discovery Park for the West Coast's biggest hard-rock music fest. Held over four days, the high-energy outdoor event hosts more than 100 bands—think Mötley Crüe and Korn—performing on four stages.

MAKE IT A WEEKEND
After the festival, head to the Jungle Bird for "Sabbath Sundays." The bar combines mai tais and metal music for a one-of-a-kind mashup.

Have a lazy—or exciting—day on the river. The nearby American River is the place for whitewater rafting, paddleboarding, and tubing. Summerlike weather typically lasts well into October.

EVEN MORE EVENTS

FEB.
CITY OF TREES PARADE AND MARDI GRAS FESTIVAL
Sacramento

MAY
MARIPOSA BUTTERFLY FESTIVAL
Mariposa

MAY
GOLDEN ROAD GATHERING
Placerville

JULY
STRAUSS FESTIVAL
Elk Grove

AUG.
BARBERA FESTIVAL
Folsom

SEPT.
FRANKLY BLUEGRASS MUSIC FESTIVAL
Plymouth

OCT.
CALAVERAS GRAPE STOMP
Murphys

OCT.
CALIFORNIA CAPITAL AIRSHOW
Rancho Cordova

DEC.
VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS
Nevada City


Victorian Christmas



ON THE TRAIL

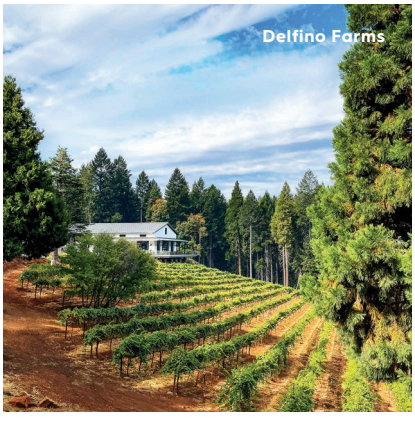
APPLE HILL HARD CIDER TRAIL

MILES: 8
WHAT TO EXPECT:
Orchard views and tastings

When autumn arrives in Gold Country, families flock to Apple Hill in Camino. Home to roughly 50 orchards and farms, the region is famous for apples—and a flourishing hard cider scene. From early September through early winter, cideries and farms along the Apple Hill Hard Cider Trail invite visitors to taste the season's bounty. Here are five of the trail's best stops.


Hidden Star Camino

Try Hidden Star Camino's Jimmy Hoppa cider infused with IPA hops and grapefruit.


Delfino Farms


Hidden Star Camino

Smokey Ridge Ranch and Winery: Start your tour in Placerville at this family farm, which grows 17 varieties of apples, many of which are pressed into "Prohibition-style" hard ciders. The farm also grows wine grapes, which means visitors can sample wines like Syrah, Sangiovese, and Grenache alongside its artisan ciders. Say hello to the farm's resident Babydoll sheep before your next location.

Delfino Farms: Take in hilltop views while sipping California-style ciders made from apples and blackberries. All ciders, including the Whiskey Barrel Arkansas Black and Heritage Hard Cider, are barrel fermented and bottle conditioned for a touch of carbonation. Definitely take a farmhouse apple pie to go.

North Canyon Cider Company: Located at the Barsotti Family Juice Company in Camino, North Canyon has been crafting pressed California apple ciders for nearly four decades. Visit the relaxed tasting room and grab a seat on the nearest hay bale to sample delicious ciders like the delicate Original Dry or lightly sweet Pomegranate.

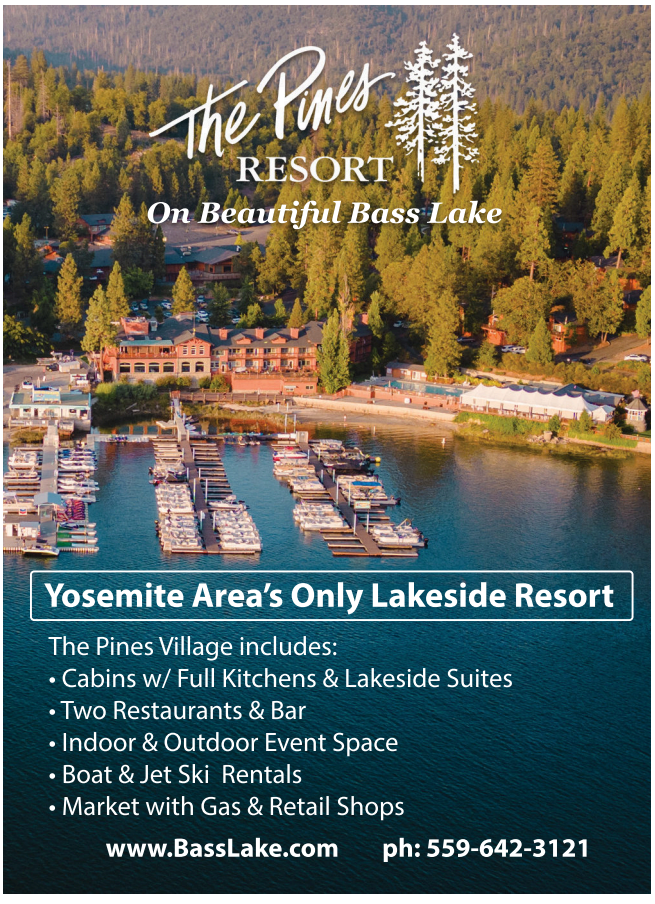
Jack Russell Farm Brewery: Stop by this large, family-friendly beer garden. Along with more than a dozen craft beers, the brewery makes several freshly pressed hard ciders—plus hard-cider slushies for those warm fall days.

Hidden Star Camino: Set in a quaint barn with picnic tables and a children's playground outside, Hidden Star serves up small-batch, unfiltered hard ciders. Choose from 24 varieties. For a delectable experience, pair a flight with the house-made cider donuts.

TRAIL TIPS

Check *applehill.com* for harvest schedules to plan your trip—whether you're looking for the perfect time to pick your favorite type of apple, savor juicy summer fruits, or wander a festive pumpkin patch.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: COURTESY HIDDEN STAR CAMINO (2); COURTESY DELFINO FARMS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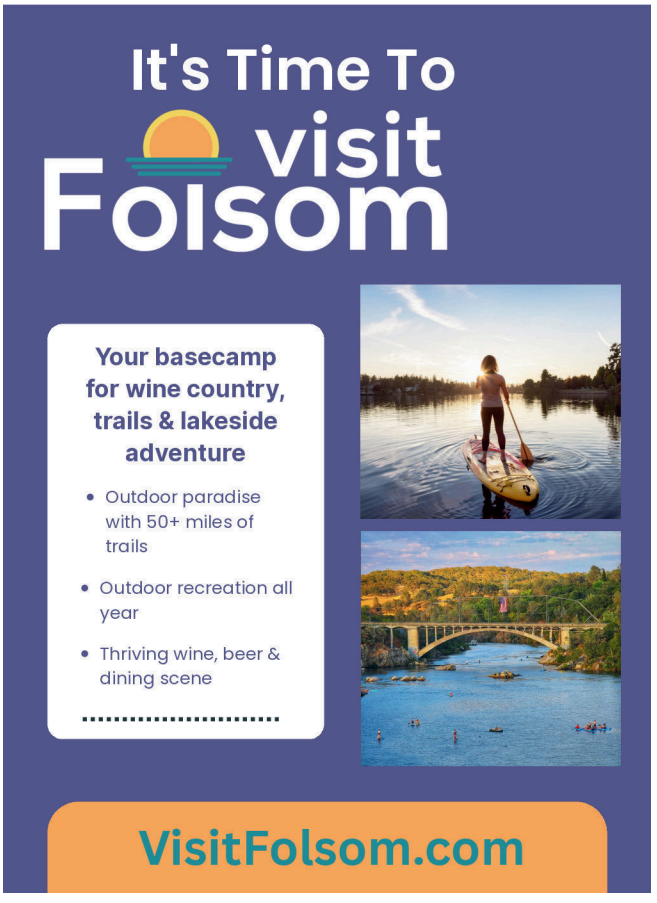
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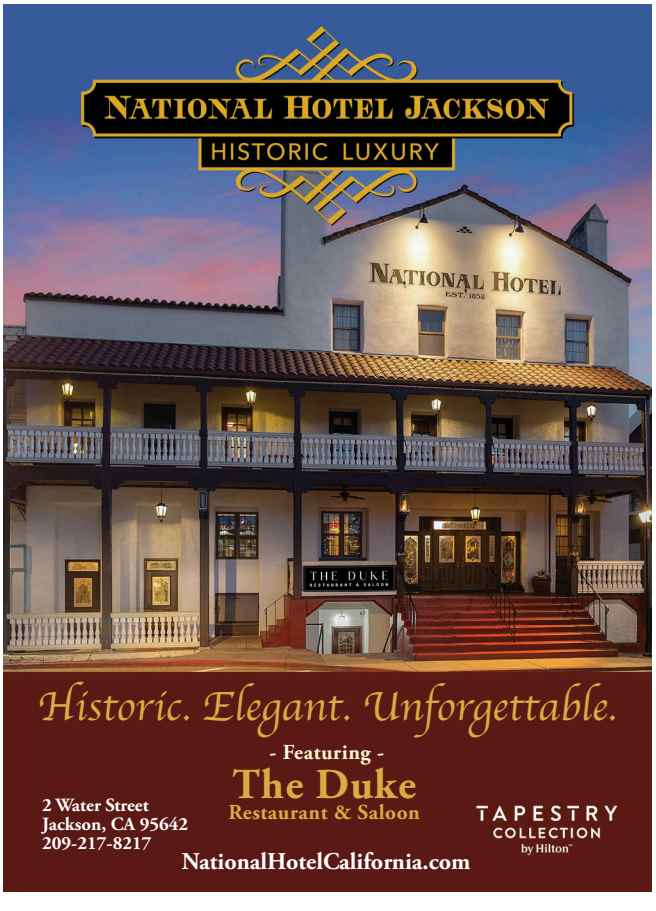
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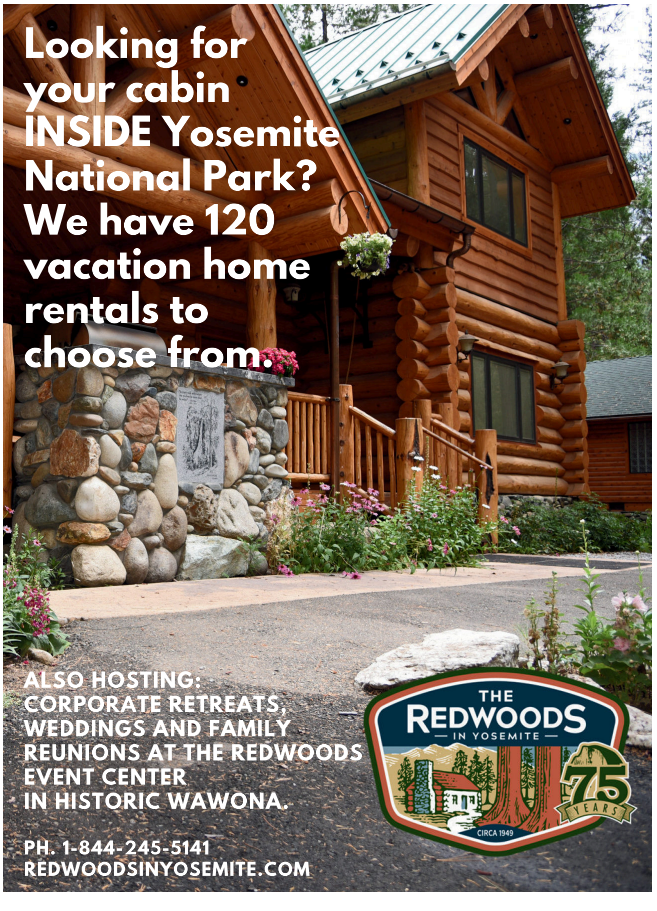
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JANEL INOUYE + ED ROEHR

SACRAMENTO INSIDERS


Magpie Cafe


Crocker Art Museum

Magpie Cafe founders and Sacramento natives Janel Inouye and Ed Roehr have been delighting locals with their seasonal, farm-fresh fare for two decades. In 2025, the couple's café landed a spot on the *L.A. Times'* list of the 101 Best Restaurants in California. Inouye says Sacramento has undergone a dramatic evolution in the past 20 years. "We are coming into our own," Inouye says. "We have such a diverse population and down-to-earth sensibilities, and I see that reflected in the restaurants and cafés."

MUNCH MOCHI

"Treat yourself to a traditional mochi-and-red-bean treat at Osaka-Ya," Inouye says. "I love their shiso or yomogi mochi with red bean. In the summertime, they make strawberry with white bean, and that's pretty great too. If you're less accustomed to beans for dessert, the shop also makes chocolate- and peanut-butter-filled mochi."

ADMIRE THE ART

For art lovers, "the Crocker Art Museum is unbelievable," says Roehr. The venue specializes in California art dating back to the Gold Rush, plus European paintings and one of the country's largest arrays of international ceramics. "There's easily two days' worth of art to check out—and that's just the permanent collection."

TAKE A DIP

Inouye's favorite way to spend a summer day is to pack a picnic and while away the afternoon at a local swimming hole. "At the Auburn State Recreation Area in Auburn, take the trail along the North Fork of the American River and within a mile or two you will come to some deep, wide, rocky spots perfect for a river day."

WINE DOWN

Inouye and Roehr are both big fans of Corti Brothers, a family-owned gourmet market that's been in business since 1947. "Take a tour of the wine section," Inouye says. "It will blow your mind. [Owner] Darrel Corti is a living treasure." The shop is also known for its imported delicacies, house-made sausages, and old-school charm.

DISCOVER MORE
Get more ideas for a trip to Sacramento

FROM TOP: COURTESY MAGPIE CAFE; COURTESY THE CROCKER ART MUSEUM



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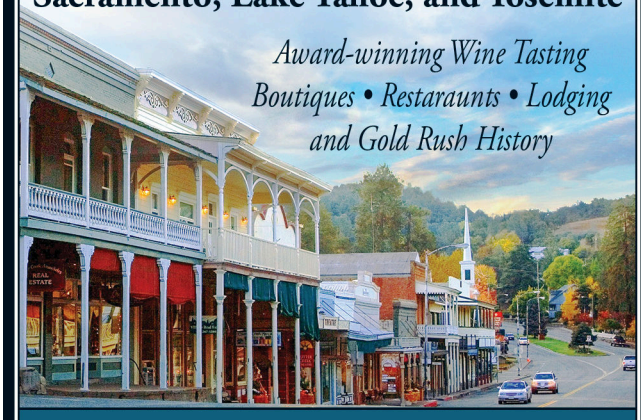

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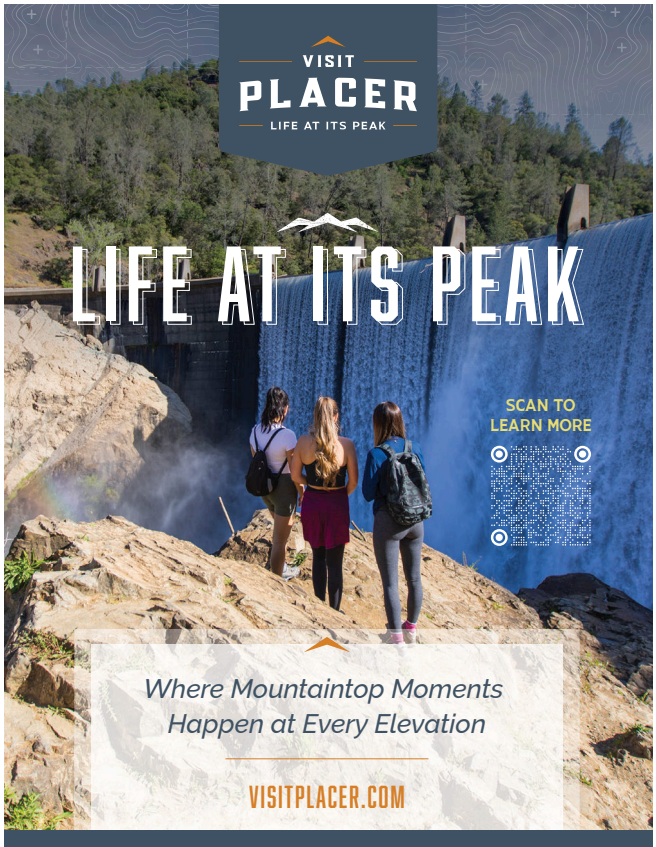

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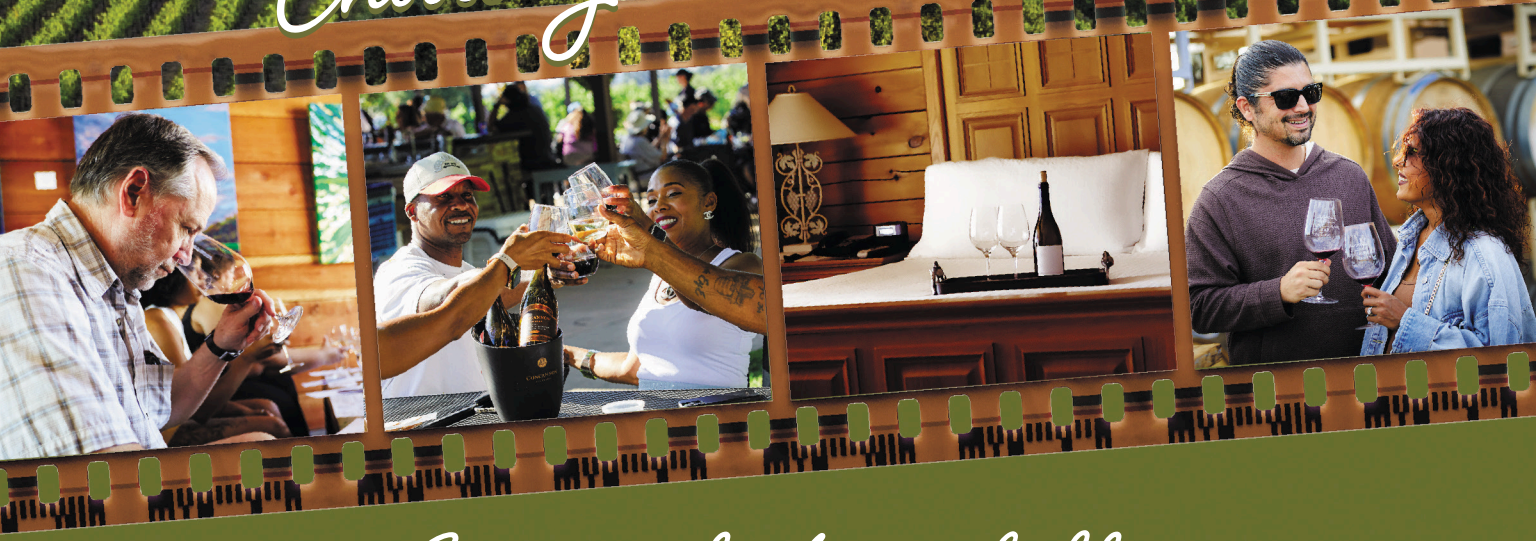

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TRI VALLEY
CALIFORNIA



SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

A dynamic hub of innovation, culture, creativity, and global cuisine

IMAGE SOURCE/GETTY IMAGES

NEW AND NOTEWORTHY



Sunset Dunes



Cubita

FOOD & DRINK

Two alumni of the Michelin-starred French Laundry have opened Carabao, a Filipino restaurant in **Napa** putting an elevated spin on the archipelago's classic cuisine. The restaurant's tropical vibe pairs perfectly with dishes like crispy sisig tacos and kare kare with oxtail croquette. In **Dublin**, Bodrum Mezze & Cocktails offers a taste of Turkey's Aegean Coast. Named for the Turkish seaside town, the cozy, nautical-themed restaurant features light and bright dishes like grilled whole fish and tender octopus. After closing in 2023, Michelin-starred Adega reopened in **San Jose**. The elegant spot's multicourse menus showcase modern Portuguese dishes and rare wines from Portugal.

In **San Francisco**'s lively Mission District, Cubita rooftop bar brings the Havana heat with vibrant Cuban flavors and colorful cocktails. The formerly private Honeycomb Cocktail Lounge in **Livermore** is now open to all. Sip bee-themed craft cocktails—try the Hive Mind made with honey gin—in a plush lounge.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Celebrity chef Charlie Palmer's long-anticipated Appellation Healdsburg hotel is a showcase for Sonoma's agricultural bounty. The 108-room property in **Healdsburg** features a rooftop bar, farm-to-table restaurant, two pools, and a spa. In **Sunnyvale**, the Treehouse Hotel Silicon Valley is all about playful, eco-forward design, with custom quilts, artisan-crafted furniture, and fun retro touches.

OUTDOORS

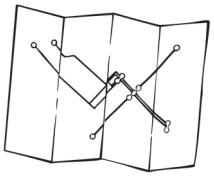
Two miles of San Francisco's Great Highway have been transformed into a pedestrian-friendly oceanfront park. Covering 50 acres, Sunset Dunes extends 2 miles along Ocean Beach—think windswept dunes, biking and walking paths, and a lounge for sunset viewing. In **Los Gatos**, located between San Jose and Santa Cruz, Bear Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve has opened 4 miles of new scenic trails. The paths wind through a redwood grove into a woodland with babbling creeks.



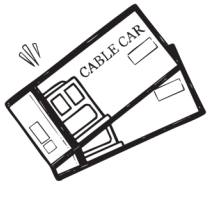
Treehouse Hotel Silicon Valley

HOW TO: RIDE A CABLE CAR

Master the art of riding this classic San Francisco mode of transportation



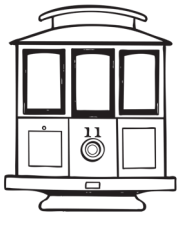
- **CHOOSE** Pick your route—Powell-Hyde, Powell-Mason, or California Street.



- **BUY** Get your ticket ($9) via the MuniMobile app, or at cable car turnarounds and ticket booths (riders 4 and under are free).



- **BOARD** Hop on (safely!) at a turnaround or a brown-and-white cable car stop sign.



- **RIDE** Take in iconic San Francisco sights; the right side (heading north) has the best views.



- **HOLLER** When you're near your destination, just call out "Next stop, please!" or give a polite wave to the gripman.





FROM TOP: ERIN KUNKEL/COURTESY TREEHOUSE HOTEL; COURTESY BIG WEST WINE FEST. PREVIOUS PAGE, FROM TOP: SORAYA MATOS; MICHELLE MIN/COURTESY CUBITA

EVENTS

Check out upcoming events across the region and explore must-see attractions to extend your stay.

JUNE 6–7

BIG WEST WINE FEST

Guerneville

Fans of natural wines flock to this festival set in a scenic redwood grove near Guerneville's downtown hub. The walk-around tasting highlights sustainability-minded Northern California wineries, often pouring experimental wines you won't find elsewhere.

MAKE IT A WEEKEND

Be a Russian River rat: Start at Steelhead Beach in Forestville, then float your way down to Sunset Beach.

Savor Southern-style barbecue at Saucy Mama's Jook Joint, as well as fried okra, plus next-level smoked ribs.

Settle in for the night at The River Electric. The new glamping resort and swim club is just the place to kick back poolside and snooze in comfy furnished tents.

AUG. 7–9

OUTSIDE LANDS MUSIC AND ARTS FESTIVAL

San Francisco

Golden Gate Park's lush green spaces host this three-day celebration of music and art. Groove to diverse acts, explore immersive art installations, and indulge in tasty treats from the Bay Area.

MAKE IT A WEEKEND

Stop and smell the roses—or maybe the "Dracula" orchids—at the Conservatory of Flowers. The Victorian-era glass greenhouse is home to a fascinating array of rare and exotic tropical plants.

Get cultured at the de Young Museum. Peruse world-class American works from the 17th to 21st centuries, and don't miss the extensive textile and costume collection.

OCT.

HALF MOON BAY ART & PUMPKIN FESTIVAL

Half Moon Bay

This two-day tribute to fall showcases Volkswagen-sized pumpkins competing for the title of World Pumpkin Weigh-Off champion, along with pumpkin-carving demos and harvest crafts.

MAKE IT A WEEKEND

Take a hike. The 1.8-mile loop trail at Pillar Point Bluff near Moss Beach is all about ocean views. Check out surfers at the Mavericks break as they attempt to ride monster waves.

Kick back with a cold autumn beer at Half Moon Bay Brewing Co. Pair the Pumpkin Harvest Ale with fresh seafood as you take in the coastal scenes of Pillar Point Harbor.

EVEN MORE EVENTS

MARCH
CHINESE NEW YEAR PARADE
San Francisco

MARCH
CINEQUEST FILM & CREATIVITY FESTIVAL
San Jose

APRIL
BUTTER & EGG DAYS PARADE
Petaluma

MAY
BODEGA BAY FISHERMAN'S FESTIVAL
Bodega Bay

MAY
HEALDSBURG WINE & FOOD EXPERIENCE
Healdsburg

JUNE
SAN MATEO COUNTY FAIR
San Mateo

SEPT.
CAPITOLA ART & WINE FESTIVAL
Capitola

SEPT.
WALNUT CREEK OKTOBERFEST
Walnut Creek

NOV.
DIA DE LOS MUERTOS FESTIVAL
Oakland

DEC.
CALISTOGA LIGHTED TRACTOR PARADE
Calistoga


Big West Wine Fest

ST. HELENA

SMALL TOWN

This quintessential Napa Valley town grew out of a 19th-century settlement founded on a Mexican land grant. With the arrival of the railroad in the 1860s, newcomers planted vineyards and launched local winemaking. Despite a population of just over 5,000, tiny St. Helena is known today as a sophisticated destination for wine and food lovers. The town will mark its 150th anniversary in 2026 with celebrations throughout the year.

Dotted with restaurants, upscale shops, galleries, and tasting rooms, St. Helena's charming downtown district is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Characterized by century-old buildings made from native stone, Main Street is the city's beating heart.

Stroll into Carter and Co. for dreamy ceramics made by local artist, potter, and sculptor Richard Carter. His minimalist dinnerware, in natural shades of granite and white, is all clean lines and functional beauty. For incredible, European-style confections, head for Woodhouse Chocolate. The artisan shop makes everything in-house, from dark chocolate peanut butter cups to gooey hazelnut caramel clusters.

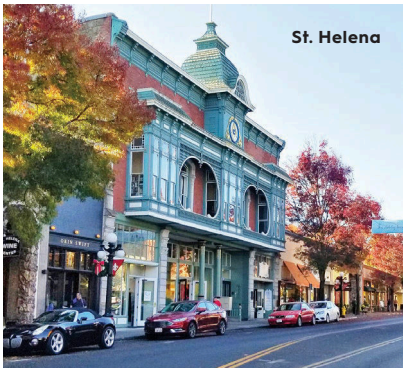
Just off the main drag on Spring Street, Lang & Reed's Spring House tasting salon is tucked inside a historic home built in 1902. Taste the winery's delicious Cabernet Franc and Chenin Blanc on the sweet front porch. Nearby, Under-Study, from the team at Michelin-starred Press, is the place to go for otherworldly pastries and playful bites like the signature Lobster Corn Dog topped with caviar. Next door, the new Napa Valley Museum of Art & Culture—known locally as "the MAC"—combines art, food, and culture in a bright, modern venue.



Carter & Co.



Farmstead at Long Meadow Ranch



St. Helena

Art Deco style meets unconventional whites and Cabernet Sauvignon–based blends at Bella Union Winery. Drop in at The Wren, its lively outdoor bar for a splash. For lunch or dinner, hit up longtime local favorite Farmstead at Long Meadow Ranch. Set in a rustic-chic barn amid culinary gardens, the restaurant serves seasonal farmhouse fare made with the ranch's own organic produce and heritage meats. Need a nature break? Take a 15-minute drive to nearby Angwin to see a secret waterfall along the Linda Falls hiking trail. Don't miss the golden brilliance of the annual mustard season when sunny blossoms blanket the vineyards, creating an irresistible photo destination.

EXPLORE MORE

Discover St. Helena's must-visit wineries, shops, and hidden gems

FROM TOP: EMMA KRUCH/EMMA K. CREATIVE; JANETTE MAACK/COURTESY VISIT NAPA VALLEY; COURTESY FARMSTEAD AT LONG MEADOW RANCH





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CHILDREN'S FAIRYLAND

OUT THERE

Step into Oakland's whimsical Children's Fairyland, the nation's first storybook theme park



Children's Fairyland


Children's Fairyland

Before there was Disneyland, there was Children's Fairyland in Oakland. The country's first storybook theme park opened in 1950, welcoming kids to step into an immersive fairytale world created just for them. The whimsical, 10-acre park features nearly 60 storybook sets, kid-size rides, a petting zoo, and acres of gardens. In celebration of Fairyland's 75th anniversary in 2025, the park added new exhibits and activities. Now, there's even more to discover at this magical destination.

EXPLORE STORYBOOK SETS

Designed with child-size proportions in mind, the park's wonderfully off-kilter Storybook Sets invite kids to slide down a dragon, climb into the belly of a whale, board a pirate ship, and wander a twisty path through the Alice in Wonderland–themed playing-card maze. For more fairytale fun, purchase Magic Keys ($4 each) at the park's entrance that "unlock" Talking Storybook Boxes scattered throughout Fairyland.

TAKE A RIDE

Unlike theme parks where kids must be "this tall" to join the fun, Fairyland's rides are sized especially for little ones. Take a spin on two colorful carousels, board the Jolly Trolly train, and ride Anansi's Magic Web—a kids-only, mini Ferris wheel based on the famous West African folk tale about a mischievous spider.

MEET FRIENDLY ANIMALS

Head to the petting zoo and meet Cookie the Nigerian dwarf goat, along with adorable miniature donkeys, Puff the "magic" bearded dragon, and Babydoll sheep.

CATCH A SHOW

Settle in at the Storybook Puppet Theater and watch fairytales come to life, or catch live music acts and storytelling on the Emerald City Stage. Check the online calendar for special events—including Summer Sleepovers, which allow families to camp overnight at Fairyland, complete with shows, dinner, and popcorn.

INSIDER TIP

In the gift shop, pick up a free Adventure Passport—newly introduced for Fairyland's 75th anniversary—and complete fun activities around the park. Collect stamps along the way and turn in your completed passport for the season's collectible button.

COURTESY CHILDREN'S FAIRYLAND

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WILD

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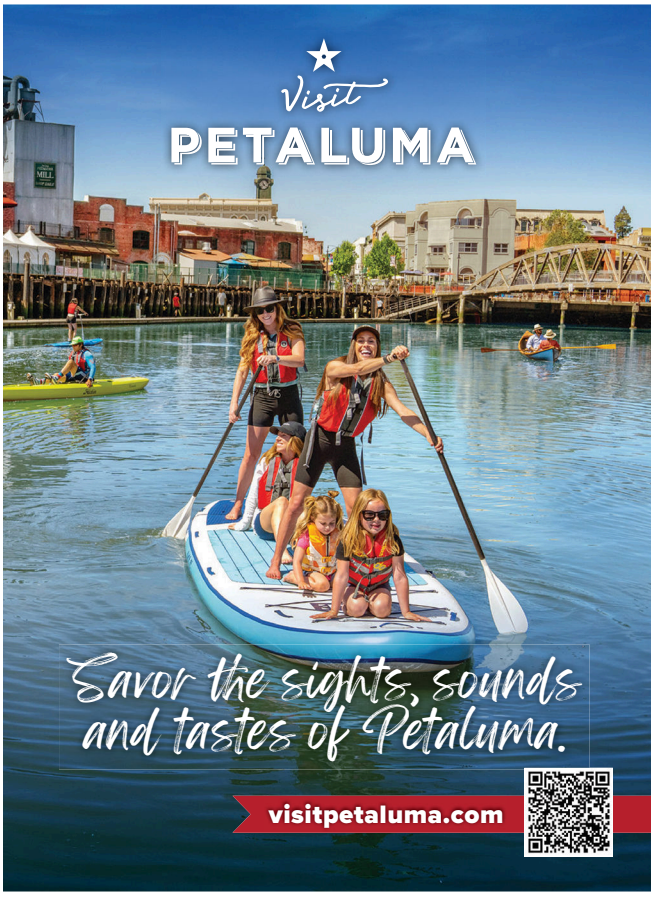



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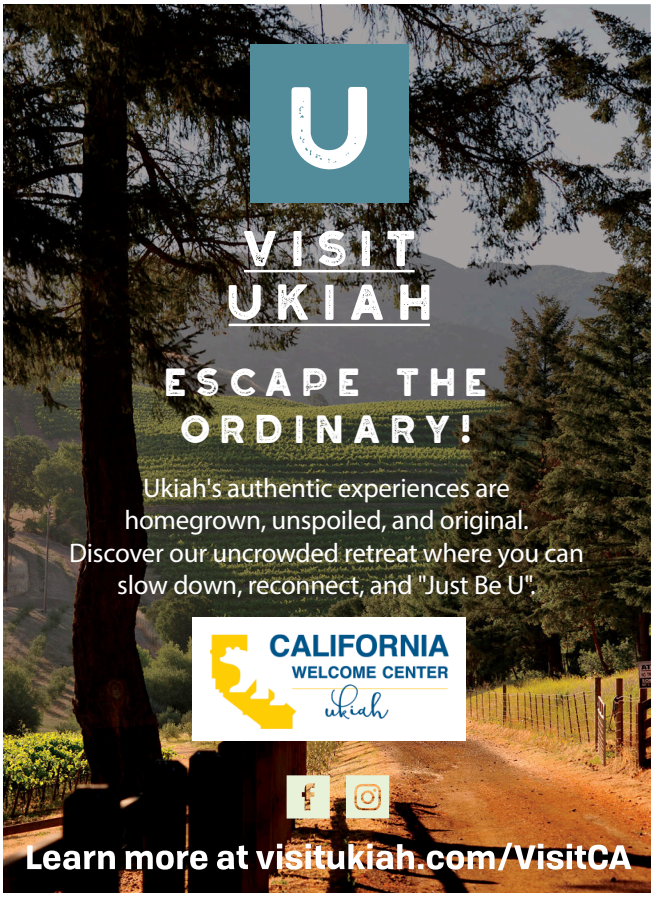
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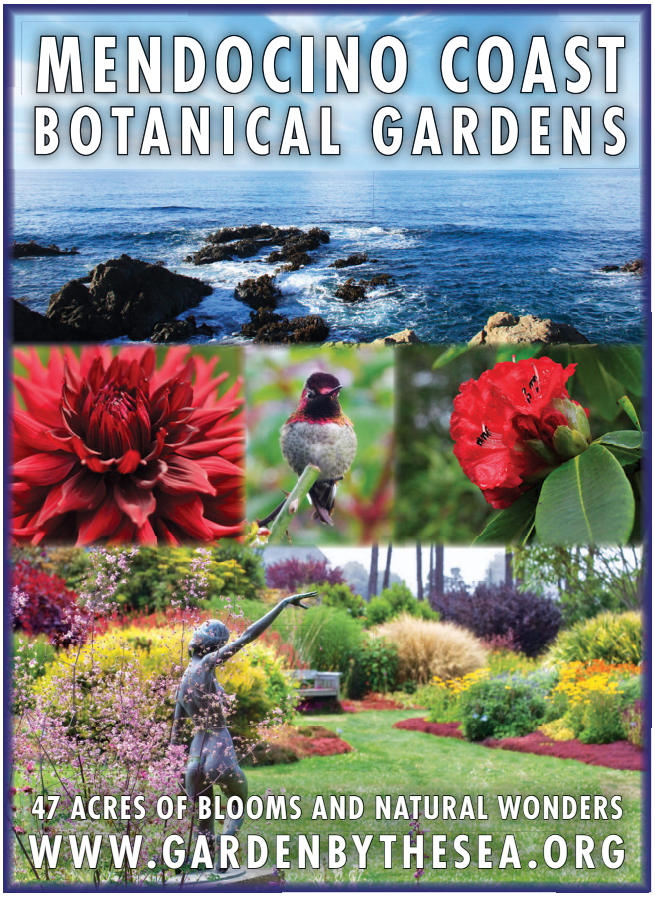
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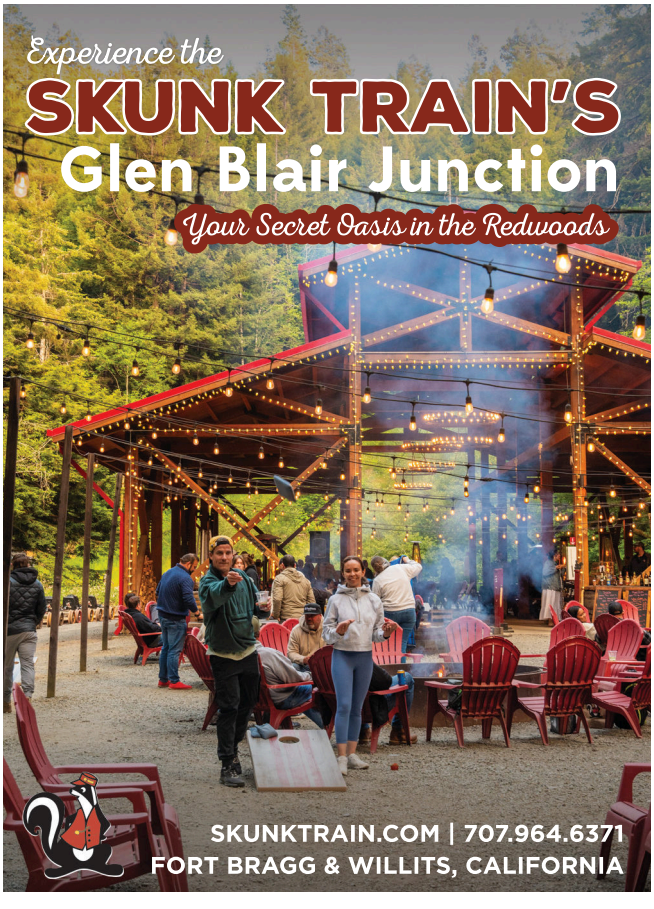
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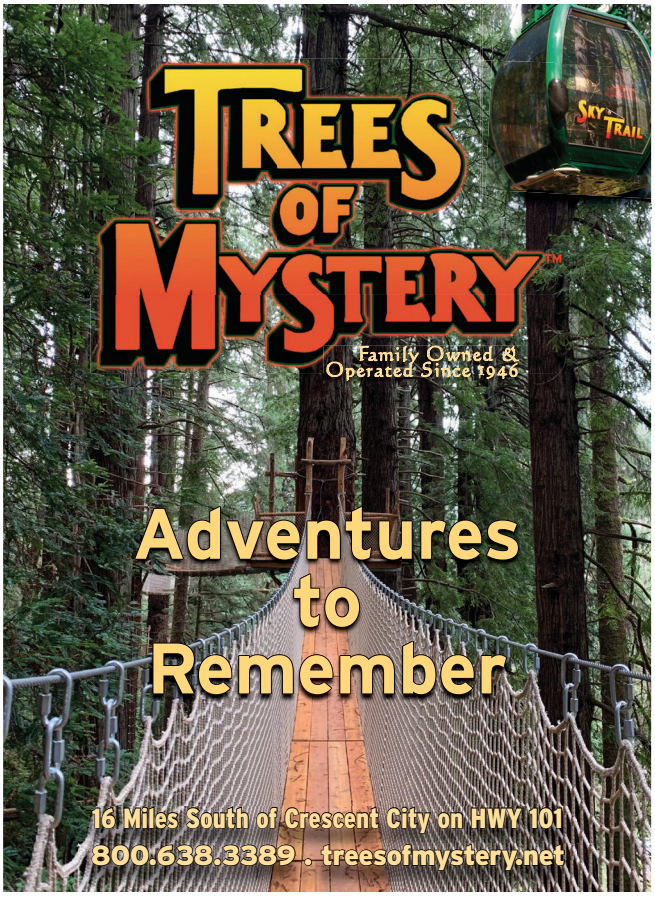
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NORTH COAST
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VISIT CALIFORNIA

NEW AND NOTEWORTHY

ACCOMMODATIONS

Hospitality brand Soul Community Planet (SCP) has revamped three hotel properties along the Mendocino Coast. In **Albion**, the oceanfront SCP Mendocino Coast Lodge offers 22 blufftop rooms and cottages with private garden entrances. Nearby in **Little River**, SCP Mendocino Inn and Farm combines a historic 1867 bed-and-breakfast with a modern lodge to create a farm- and nature-immersive retreat, where guests can pet llamas, feed chickens, or hike in neighboring Van Damme State Park.

Salmon Creek Farm in Albion started as a 1970s commune and is now a woodsy arts collective set on 33 acres of Mendocino County redwoods. Visitors seeking a quiet retreat can rent its cabins from November to March.

FOOD & DRINK

Fast food is cool again at Jumbo's Win Win. Here, in tiny **Philo**, the counter-service menu includes organic beef burgers and to-die-for french fries. Try the seasonal hand pies while they last.

Newly opened Maritime Café in **Elk** is a cozy, bistro-style restaurant serving farm-to-fork favorites. Score a table by the window so you can gaze at the ocean while you dine.

The Hotel Ivanhoe has been a fixture in **Ferndale** since 1875. After a five-year closure, it reopened in 2025 with a new look and a menu that includes the hotel's original-recipe Italian dishes.

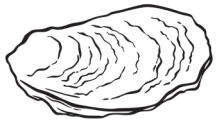
Kokoro Ramen is a fresh addition to Old Town **Eureka**'s dining scene. Chef-owner Joe Tan prepares tonkotsu and traditional ramen plus Japanese-style street food. Campette Roadhouse has revived The Olde Riverwood with live music and a rotating menu in **Phillipsville**.


Rhody's Garden Café

Rhody's Garden Café at **Fort Bragg**'s Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens has been designated an official Blue Zones Project–approved restaurant. The café features plant-forward meals made with produce grown in the onsite vegetable garden.

HOW TO: SHUCK AND EAT AN OYSTER

Master the art of shucking and savoring every briny, buttery bite of these addictive delicacies



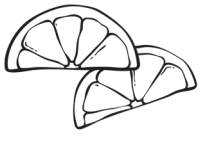
- **CHOOSE** Select a tightly closed, cold oyster that smells like clean ocean air—not low tide—and give it a quick rinse to wash off grit or bits of shell.



- **SHUCK** With care (and a little moxie), hold the oyster flat-side up in a towel, insert a shucking knife at the hinge, wiggle and twist until it pops, then slice under the top shell to reveal your prize.



- **LOOSEN** Slide your knife or a small fork under the oyster to detach it from the bottom shell, keeping the liquor intact—it should look ready to glide, not cling.



- **FLAVOR** Add a dash of lemon, a spoonful of mignonette, or a drip of hot sauce—just enough to highlight the oyster, not drown it. Or, for the purists, enjoy it straight.



- **SLURP** Take it down in one smooth motion, chew once or twice if you're dealing with a larger specimen, then let the salty ocean taste linger.

EVENTS

Check out upcoming events across the region and explore must-see attractions to extend your stay.


Kinetic Grand Championship





MAY 23–25

KINETIC GRAND CHAMPIONSHIP

Humboldt County

This outrageous contest merges art and engineering in a three-day race. Competitors build wacky, human-powered contraptions that can traverse land, sea, and dunes, then pilot them over a 50-mile course between Arcata and Ferndale.

MAKE IT A WEEKEND
Stroll among giant redwoods at Humboldt Redwoods State Park. Don't miss the 366-foot-tall Rockefeller Tree (aka Tall Tree) or the fallen Dyerville Giant in Founder's Grove.

Reserve a private outdoor hot tub or red-cedar sauna at Finnish Country Sauna and Tubs in Arcata, then grab a cappuccino at cozy Café Mokka.

JULY 4

THE WORLD'S LARGEST SALMON BBQ

Fort Bragg

At this Noyo Harbor event, attendees chow down on grilled salmon and sip beer from North Coast Brewing, and watch evening fireworks. The proceeds go toward restoring salmon habitat in local rivers and streams.

MAKE IT A WEEKEND
Go horseback riding at the Pacific's edge. Ricochet Ridge Ranch offers trail rides along Ten Mile Beach.

Explore downtown Fort Bragg: The International Sea Glass Museum displays 3,000-plus sea glass pieces. Edgewater Gallery shows locally made artworks. Lost Coast Found sells vintage curiosities.

JULY 11

BIGFOOT DAZE

Willow Creek

Residents honor their hometown cryptid with a costumed parade, ice cream social, watermelon-eating contest, and riotous Bigfoot Calling Contest.

MAKE IT A WEEKEND
Visit the Willow Creek China Flat Museum to see plaster casts of Bigfoot's footprints and purchase a Sasquatch keychain.

Challenge the Trinity River's whitewater on a guided trip with Bigfoot Rafting. Cross your fingers for a bald eagle or bear sighting in the quiet stretches.

EVEN MORE EVENTS

FEB.
CRAB CAKE COOK-OFF & WINE TASTING COMPETITION
Mendocino

MAY
THE BIG LEBREWSKI: LEGENDARY BOONVILLE BEER FESTIVAL
Boonville

JUNE
ANDERSON VALLEY PINOT NOIR FESTIVAL
Anderson Valley

JULY
NORTHERN NIGHTS MUSIC FESTIVAL
Piercy

AUG.
KLAMATH SALMON FESTIVAL
Klamath

AUG.
TRINIDAD BAY ART & MUSIC FESTIVAL
Trinidad

OCT.
CRESCENT CITY BLUES & BBQ FESTIVAL
Crescent City

NOV.
MENDOCINO COUNTY HOMEBREW FESTIVAL
Ukiah

MATT FILAR. PREVIOUS PAGE: COURTESY RHODY'S GARDEN CAFE



Wild Diamond Vineyards



ANGELA DE PALMA-DOW

LAKE COUNTY INSIDER

The executive director of the Lake County Land Trust is also a lake biologist who's fascinated by Clear Lake and its surrounding volcanic landscape. "It's unique among freshwater lakes because it's so old—nearly half a million years—and it's shallow and vast with 120 miles of shoreline. Lake County's small, rural communities are connected by the lake. People who live here embrace the small-town lifestyle."

LAKEPORT

"Lakeport has a cute downtown and wonderful exhibits at the Historic Courthouse Museum. You can rent a boat or kayak at Disney's Boat Rentals, or walk along the lakeshore at Library Park. I like to stop at Angelina's Bakery. Their wild berry scone is my favorite, but all the pastries and breakfast sandwiches are delicious. Park Place is great for lunch by the water."

WING IT

"The Rodman Preserve is open on Saturdays, and the birdwatching is glorious. Two miles of hiking trails overlook the wetlands north of Clear Lake. After a hike, drive to the Blue Wing Saloon and order the Blue Wings (of course) or the Wild Burger made with bison, wild boar, elk, and Wagyu beef."

BEACH DAY

"Clear Lake State Park has a wind-protected beach with picnic tables and shade canopies. People go swimming and stand-up paddling. I take my 3-year-old son there—he loves to run around on the beach, walk the trails, and see the deer and woodpeckers. You can pick up sandwiches or breakfast foods at Studebakers Coffee House and Deli in Kelseyville."

LOCAL GOODS

"Peace & Plenty Farm grows saffron, lavender, and vegetables. Visit their farmstand to taste saffron-lemonade popsicles or buy saffron-infused honey or saffron tea. The Shannon Mercantile sells gourmet goods, and they host a Saturday farmers' market with local craftspeople and food vendors. You can even cut your own flowers from their huge zinnia field while you sip Shannon wines."

WINE AND OLIVES

"Chacewater Winery & Olive Mill is one of our favorite local wineries. It has a large outdoor pergola with horseshoes and bocce ball and a big field for kids and dogs to run around in. I love their Highlander Red Blend and orange Muscat. It's fun to taste the olive oils, too. Their Manzanillo oil is the best for dipping, cooking, and dressings."

SUNSET VIEW

"Wild Diamond Vineyards sits up on a hilltop with a gorgeous 360-degree view. The tasting room was built from reclaimed shipping containers and has a huge platform deck with Adirondack chairs and blankets. On Fridays and Saturdays, it stays open late so people can watch the sunset. The wines are spectacular, especially the Cabernet Franc."



Shannon Mercantile

VAN DAMME COVE

OUT THERE

Kayak through the otherworldly coastal caves of Little River

Hidden beneath Northern California's towering coastal cliffs, a network of enchanting sea caves awaits. Join a guided tour through craggy passages and sunlit caverns.

GETTING STARTED

For 30 years, Kayak Mendocino has steered travelers through these sparkling, fauna-filled caves, occasionally negotiating right-of-way with a harbor seal. The tour group prides itself on creating unique journeys for guests of all experience levels, from first-timers to more seasoned kayakers.

Your trip starts with a quick chat to set plans in motion with your guide. Once the details are set, you'll meet for launch at Van Damme Cove, a naturally protected inlet that provides the perfect environment for new paddlers. There may be waves down the coast, but here the natural headlands, coves, and offshore rock formations tame most swells.

Sit-on-top kayaks—single and tandem—are ready at the shore. Families with younger children will often choose the tandem option for safety, and helmets are available upon request.

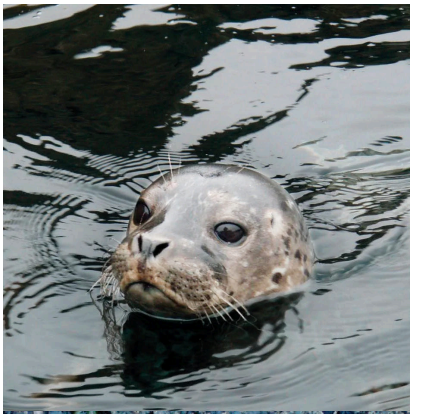
WHAT TO EXPECT

Once in the water, you'll float past sandstone cliffs and paddle through caves filled with sea stars. Expect narrow passageways as well as dark caverns with bright openings and huge archways. Keep your eyes peeled for mussels, purple sea urchin, and green anemones.

Will you get wet? Of course! Dress for the sea spray, but the cove will keep most guests protected from cold winds.

After 90 minutes of kayaking, the current will help you back to your starting point. Mendocino Kayak guides recommend heading to the nearby botanical gardens or visiting Princess Seafood in Noyo Harbor for fresh seafood and a celebratory crab roll.

MAKE A SPLASH
Scan the code for more Mendocino adventures







KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

LOCATION
Van Damme Cove

BEST TIME TO GO
April–September

HOW LONG ARE YOU ON THE WATER
90 minutes of paddling

AGE RANGE
4 and up

PRO TIPS

Craig Comen, owner and operator of Kayak Mendocino Nature Tours, shares his expertise for making the most of their guided tours.

- Wear quick-drying clothes for the excursion and pack a long-sleeve top.
- For your feet, Comen suggests sandals, water shoes, or going barefoot.
- Ask for a low-tide launch time if you want the best chance to spot sea life.

COURTESY KAYAK MENDOCINO (3). PREVIOUS PAGE, FROM TOP: KAREN PAYONE; SORAYA MATOS

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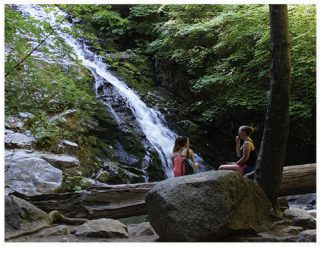

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Phone: (530) 365-7500

Bumpass Hell,
Lassen Volcanic National Park

SHASTA CASCADE

Adventure runs wild in this land of volcanic peaks, rivers, and untamed wilderness

AMANDA FRIEDMAN



Summit Lofts Boutique Hotel

NEW AND NOTEWORTHY

ACCOMMODATIONS

Hotel Káterina is **Chico**'s chic new boutique hotel, featuring a rooftop bar, pool, sauna, event space, and 112 guest rooms. In-house restaurant The Rancher's Daughter serves modern American fare that emphasizes local ingredients for brunch and dinner.

Lassen Volcanic National Park has reopened Drakesbad Guest Ranch after a four-year closure. The 125-year-old lodging in Lassen's remote Warner Valley has 19 cabins and lodge rooms. There's no WiFi and only limited electricity, so guests can enjoy screen-free pastimes like playing board games and hiking to the Bumpass Hell geothermal area.

Dunsmuir's railroad-themed resort has new owners, a new name, and fresh renovations. At Jubilee Railroad Wilderness Lodge (previously Railroad Park Resort), guests sleep in one of 23 historic cabooses. Property upgrades include restoration of the antique railcars that house The Dining Car restaurant, a kitchen makeover, and a new outdoor deck and bar. In downtown **Mt. Shasta**, the renovated Summit Lofts Boutique Hotel offers 12 modern rooms and suites, some with epic mountain views. The hotel is a short walk to restaurants, coffee shops, and pubs.

OUTDOORS

In January 2025, President Joe Biden established Sáttítla Highlands National Monument in the Medicine Lake Highlands region of Siskiyou and Modoc counties. The monument preserves the Medicine Lake Volcano and the ancestral territories of Indigenous tribes. Beautiful Medicine Lake, an hour's drive northeast of **McCloud**, is a popular spot for camping, boating, and fishing. Hiking trails lead to Medicine Lake Glass Flow and Pumice Crater.

Campers can sleep on the water at Lake Oroville's floating campsites. In quiet coves on the lake's south end, 10 two-story pontoon platforms are equipped with propane grills, sinks, food lockers, restrooms, covered living areas, and upper sun decks. The only catch? You need a boat to reach your site. Launch your own or rent one at Bidwell Canyon Marina.

Quincy is the state's new hotbed for mountain biking. The Sierra Buttes Trail Stewardship has been building the nearly 50-mile Mount Hough system for the last decade, and a new shuttle run will soon open to bikers. Yuba Expeditions in Quincy offers tours, shuttles, rental bikes, and updated trail info.


Yuba Expeditions



FROM LEFT: COURTESY THE ASCENSION AESTHETIC; COURTESY YUBA EXPEDITIONS; NEXT PAGE: BEANE MEDIA


Trails End Music Festival



Check out upcoming events across the region and explore must-see attractions to extend your stay.

EVENTS

MAY 23–24

MCCLOUD MUSHROOM, MUSIC, & WINE FESTIVAL

McCloud

Dig into the magic of mushrooms at McCloud's annual fungi fiesta. Join a guided foraging tour to learn how to find morels, porcini, and more. Sample mushroom and wine pairings, watch cooking demonstrations, and browse more than 100 craft and food stalls.

MAKE IT A WEEKEND

Cool off at pine-rimmed Lake Siskiyou, a deep-blue gem fed by five mountain streams. Rent kayaks and paddleboards at Lake Siskiyou Camp Resort Marina.

Hike upstream 1.9 miles from the Lower Falls Picnic Area to see McCloud River's trio of waterfalls.

Explore the volcano that towers over Mt. Shasta City. Drive the Everitt Memorial Highway uphill to Bunny Flat, then hike through alpine meadows to the historic Shasta Alpine Hut. Cap off the day with a farm-to-table meal in the garden at Lilys.

JUNE 19–20

TRAILS END MUSIC FESTIVAL

Etna

Hikers trekking the 2,650-mile Pacific Crest Trail schedule their stopovers to coincide with Etna's summer music festival. Main Street fills with food stalls and cocktail vendors, and a collection of bands play folk, rock, blues, and country music.

MAKE IT A WEEKEND

See more of Scott Valley with a trip to Fort Jones. Swing by its fascinating history museum, shop for vintage ephemera at Relics at the Rec, and score a bourbon bacon burger from Five Marys Burgerhouse (made with their own ranch-raised beef).

Drive to Etna Summit to survey the commanding vista from 5,960 feet, then continue a few miles farther to the Taylor Lake Trailhead. A 15-minute walk leads to enchanting Taylor Lake in the Russian Wilderness.

Transport your kayak or SUP to Kangaroo Lake for a leisurely paddle, then sleep under the stars at the lakeside campground.

NOV.–JAN.

GARDEN OF LIGHTS

Redding

Walk across Redding's Sundial Bridge to enter a winter wonderland at McConnell Botanical Gardens. Listen to holiday music as you wander through 10 acres of plantings illuminated by 2 million colorful lights. On chilly evenings, warm up with hot cocoa at firepits, or reserve a VIP igloo.

MAKE IT A WEEKEND

See a show at Redding's historic Cascade Theatre after a dinner of steak frites or coconut curry at Vintage Public House.

Bundle up for a 1.7-mile hike through live oaks and ponderosa pines to the triple-tiered Whiskeytown Falls at Whiskeytown National Recreation Area.

EVEN MORE EVENTS

APRIL
CHICO BREWFEST
Chico

JULY
MCCLOUD LUMBERJACK FIESTA
McCloud

AUG.
BUTTE COUNTY FAIR
Gridley

AUG.
DUNSMUIR RIVER & RAIL BREWFEST
Dunsmuir

SEPT.
MT. SHASTA BLACKBERRY MUSIC FESTIVAL
Mt. Shasta

SEPT.
REDDING BEER AND WINE FESTIVAL
Redding

SEPT.
MONTAGUE HOT-AIR BALLOON FAIR
Montague

SEPT.
ALTURAS BALLOON FEST
Alturas

SEPT.
HAPPY CAMP BIGFOOT JAMBOREE
Happy Camp



BIZZ JOHNSON NATIONAL RECREATION TRAIL

OUT THERE

A rambling ride through the historic Susan River Canyon

If you're headed to Susanville, don't forget your bike—or in winter, your cross-country skis. This northeastern California town about two hours east of Redding draws bikers, hikers, equestrians, and even snow lovers to its high-desert landscape along the 25.4-mile Bizz Johnson National Recreation Trail.

The wide, gravel-and-dirt pathway provides access to the rugged Susan River Canyon, lined with basalt cliffs, sagebrush, and Western junipers. The route once held the tracks of the Southern Pacific Railroad's Fernley and Lassen branch line, with trains carrying timber and freight through the canyon from 1914 to 1956. Three decades after the railway fell out of use, the route was converted to a recreation trail.

As you pedal or stroll along railroad bridges and trestles, it's easy to imagine the chugging engines of a century ago. Two pitch-dark tunnels, one 450 feet long and another 800 feet long, are especially exciting to ride through. Your eyes adjust fairly quickly, but if you're dark-averse, bring a flashlight or bike light.

Tailor your ride on "The Bizz" to suit your ambition. For a quick out-and-back, start at the Susanville Railroad Depot—a must-stop for railroad history buffs—then bike or walk as far as you please. Most casual riders turn around at Devil's Corral, 7 miles west of Susanville. The trail's grade is so gentle, even novice bikers can handle the 14-mile round trip.

For an even shorter and easier trip, take a seat on the Lassen Rural Bus, load your bike on the bus bike racks, and disembark at Devil's Corral. You'll enjoy a 7-mile descent to Susanville.

WHO WAS BIZZ?

California state senator and U.S. Congressman Harold Terry "Bizz" Johnson worked on this rails-to-trails project and many other public works from 1958 to 1981.

PRO TIPS

- To get the full Bizz Johnson adventure, ride the bus to Mason Station, then pedal the entire 25.4-mile trail back to Susanville.
- You don't need a full-fledged suspension mountain bike. Any bike with 35mm tires will suffice, but leave your skinny road bike tires at home.
- A morning start is best, especially during the warmer months.
- In October, streamside willows and black cottonwoods don their fall colors. Black oaks on the hills above the river also put on a show.

AMANDA FRIEDMAN

DISCOVER MORE
Find more adventures in Susanville

VISIT *LASSENLANDANDTRAILSTRUST.ORG* FOR A BUS SCHEDULE, TRAIL MAP, AND MORE.

ADVERTISEMENT

REDDING ADVENTURE LIKE A LOCAL

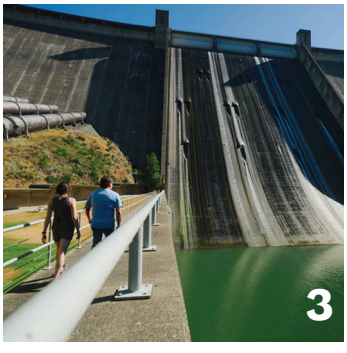
Redding, California boasts inspiring architecture and outdoor beauty. Visit million-year-old caves, or spend the day sailing on pristine lakes. While there is more than enough in Redding to keep you busy for a week or more, we've put together some of our favorite sites for a long weekend of exploring.



1. Start your trip at Redding's centerpiece - the **Sundial Bridge**! This architectural marvel reaches 217 feet into the sky and spans 710 feet across the Sacramento River, serving as a hub for Redding's rich trails system. Designed by Spanish architect Santiago Calatrava, the bridge was the first of its kind in the United States and is a functioning sundial.



2. After you've strolled down the Sundial, head towards **Shasta Lake** and check out **Lake Shasta Caverns National Natural Landmark**. Start the tour with a catamaran cruise across Shasta Lake, the largest manmade lake in California. Then hop on a bus and make your way to the beautiful and historic limestone caves where a guide will lead the way through caves that have been 250 million years in the making!



3. Spend the rest of the day exploring **Shasta Lake**! Go to **Shasta Dam** and check out their free tours or rent a boat and spend the rest of your day on the water.



4. After a good nights rest in Redding, hop in the car and head to Castle Crags State Park. Named for its 6,000-feet tall glacier-polished crags, this park has over 28 miles of trails, so whether you're looking for breath-taking views or just a pleasant walk in nature, Castle Crags has something for you.

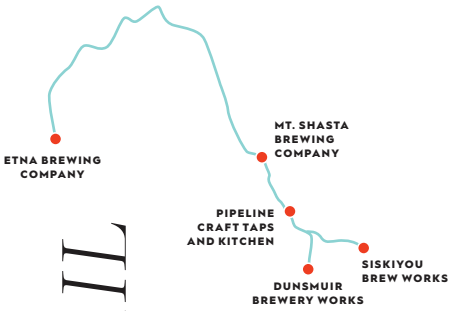


5. Finish your trip with a visit to Lassen Volcanic National Park! This hidden gem is a Yosemite and Yellowstone look-alike...but with a fraction of the crowds. It's a hiker's dream - Lassen's trails lead to meadows, bubbling mud pots, and even to the top of a volcano! Or head to a pristine mountain lake and kayak the day away for a perfect end to your Redding stay.

UpStateCA
SHASTA-CASCADE WONDERLAND ASSOCIATION

For additional trip ideas visit www.UpStateCA.com/Redding

ON THE TRAIL



SISKIYOU BEER TRAIL

MILES: *90*
WHAT TO EXPECT:
Brews with mountain views

A visit to Siskiyou County means hiking, biking, fishing, waterfall-watching, and all kinds of outdoor fun—and it's even better when your adventure ends with a cold, locally crafted brew. Find your favorite in these five Northern California towns, spread out over 90 miles.

Dunsmuir: After a day of fly-fishing on the Upper Sacramento River, you'll be hungry and thirsty. Sit down to Dunsmuir Brewery Works' elevated pub fare—Wagyu beef burgers, pesto-cream mussels, and hearty salads—and sample brewmaster Aaron Greener's beers. He honors Dunsmuir's railroad history with a hop-forward Train Hopper IPA, full-bodied Rusty Spike imperial red, and crisp Pusher pale ale.

McCloud: Sixteen miles northeast and only a few minutes from the McCloud Falls trailhead, Siskiyou Brew Works is housed in a big red barn with a dog-friendly, hops-covered patio. Toast your waterfall hike with a European-style brew—German kölsch, Bavarian lager, Belgian ale, or English porter—often poured by co-owner Patric Brush. His wife, Susan, turns out tasty pizzas and calzones and serves lemonade for the kiddos.

Mt. Shasta: A short 15-minute drive brings you to Mt. Shasta, where nearly every block offers a stunning view of the town's namesake dormant volcano. Ride your mountain bike on the Gateway trail system near town, then kick back on the patio at Pipeline Craft Taps & Kitchen. Choose a brew from 14 taps and share some duck-fat fries with your riding buddies, then stroll one block to Deadwood Supply to get your wheels tuned up. While you wait, you can purchase a six-pack to go from their cooler.

Weed: Ten miles north, Mt. Shasta Brewing Co. serves craft beers to outdoor recreationists in a playful, laid-back taproom. The brewery featuring funky decor draws a crowd for its intriguing beer menu, which includes a not-too-spicy jalapeño amber and a Lemurian lager, named for the mythical creatures who inhabit Mt. Shasta. To fuel up for your next adventure, order a calorie-dense Reuben sandwich or bratwurst.

Etna: Your last stop is Etna, population 700, a rural outpost that's unknown to many but world-famous among Pacific Crest Trail hikers seeking a resupply stop. An hour's drive from Weed, Etna Brewing Company has been making beer since 1872 (with a brief break for Prohibition). Order a blackberry blonde or amber ale and pair it with a Yeti burger, then make a plan to return to this friendly town as soon as possible.

Siskiyou County's breweries serve bold, local beers with mountain views.


Mt. Shasta Brewing Co.



Pipeline Craft Taps and Kitchen



Siskiyou Brew Works

AMANDA FRIEDMAN (3)


Destination Plumas County
basecamp for fun,
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TOURISM
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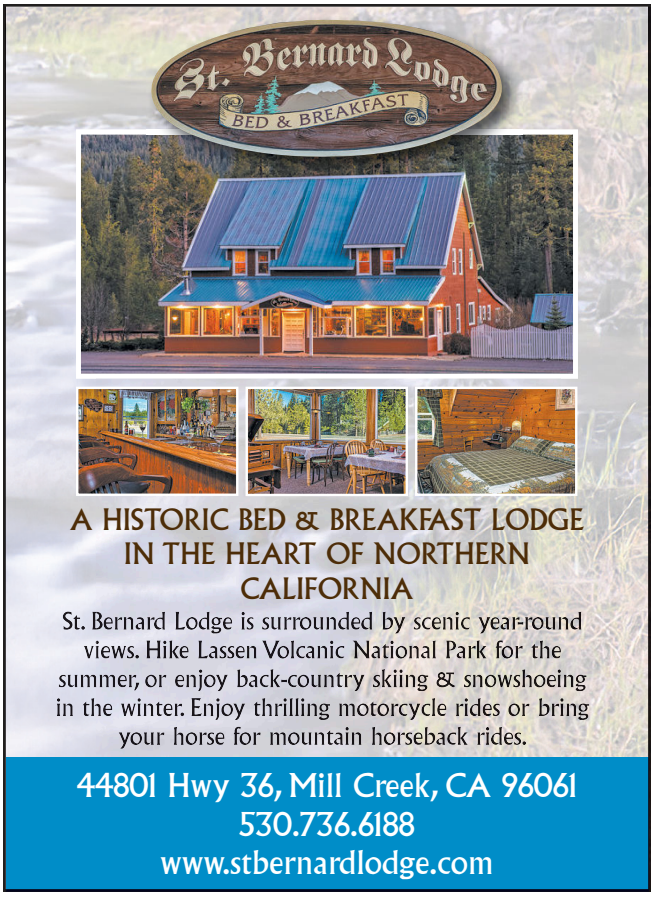
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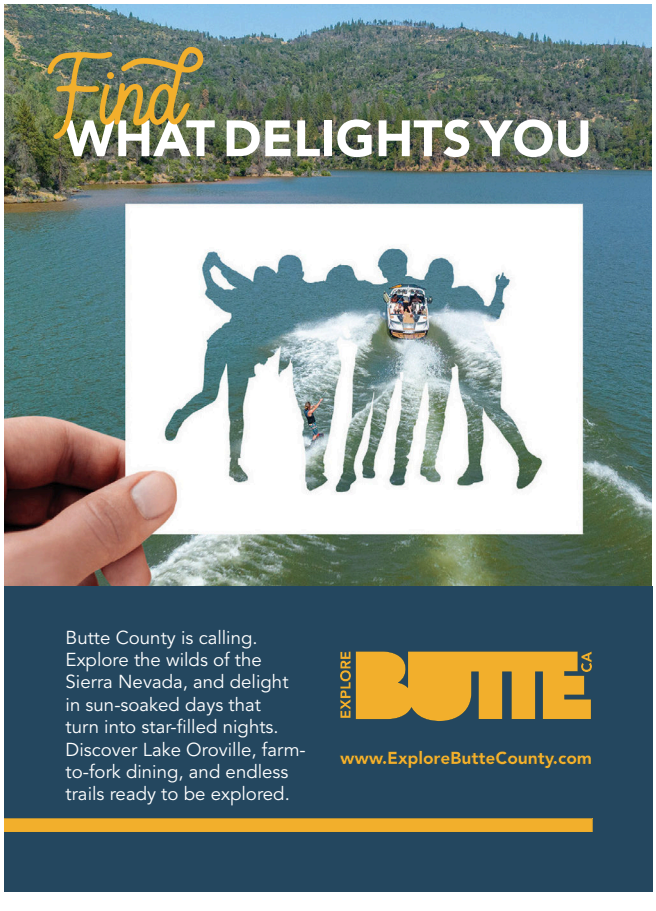
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WHAT DELIGHTS YOU
Butte County is calling. Explore the wilds of the Sierra Nevada, and delight in sun-soaked days that turn into star-filled nights. Discover Lake Oroville, farm-to-fork dining, and endless trails ready to be explored.
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BUTTE CA
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EXPLORE

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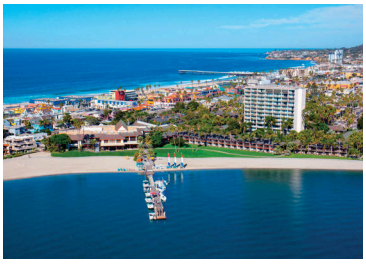

CATAMARAN RESORT HOTEL AND SPA

Located on the shores of Mission Bay, the Polynesian-inspired resort features tropical greenery, award-winning dining at Oceana Coastal Kitchen, and San Diego's only beachfront spa.

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LISTINGS

Discover ideas on where to go and where to stay across every corner of California

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SAN DIEGO COUNTY

PLACES

CARLSBAD

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LA JOLLA

Birch Aquarium at Scripps Institution of Oceanography at UC San Diego. Birch Aquarium features the groundbreaking work of Scripps Oceanography, plus incredible animals and interactive exhibits—all with stunning ocean views. Discover the wonders of our ocean planet in the brand-new Living Seas Gallery. *aquarium.ucsd.edu* See ad, p. 78

SAN DIEGO

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.* See ad, p. 2

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 619/231-1515; *sandiegozoo.org* See ad, p. 78

STAYS

LA JOLLA

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$$$

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* See ad, p. 174

$$ – $$$

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* See ad, p. 174

$$ – $$$

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

DESERTS

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STAYS

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Yucca Valley
56711 Twentynine Palms Highway; 760/365-5464

INLAND EMPIRE

PLACES

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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* See ad, p. 90





CALIFORNIA WELCOME CENTER

Ontario
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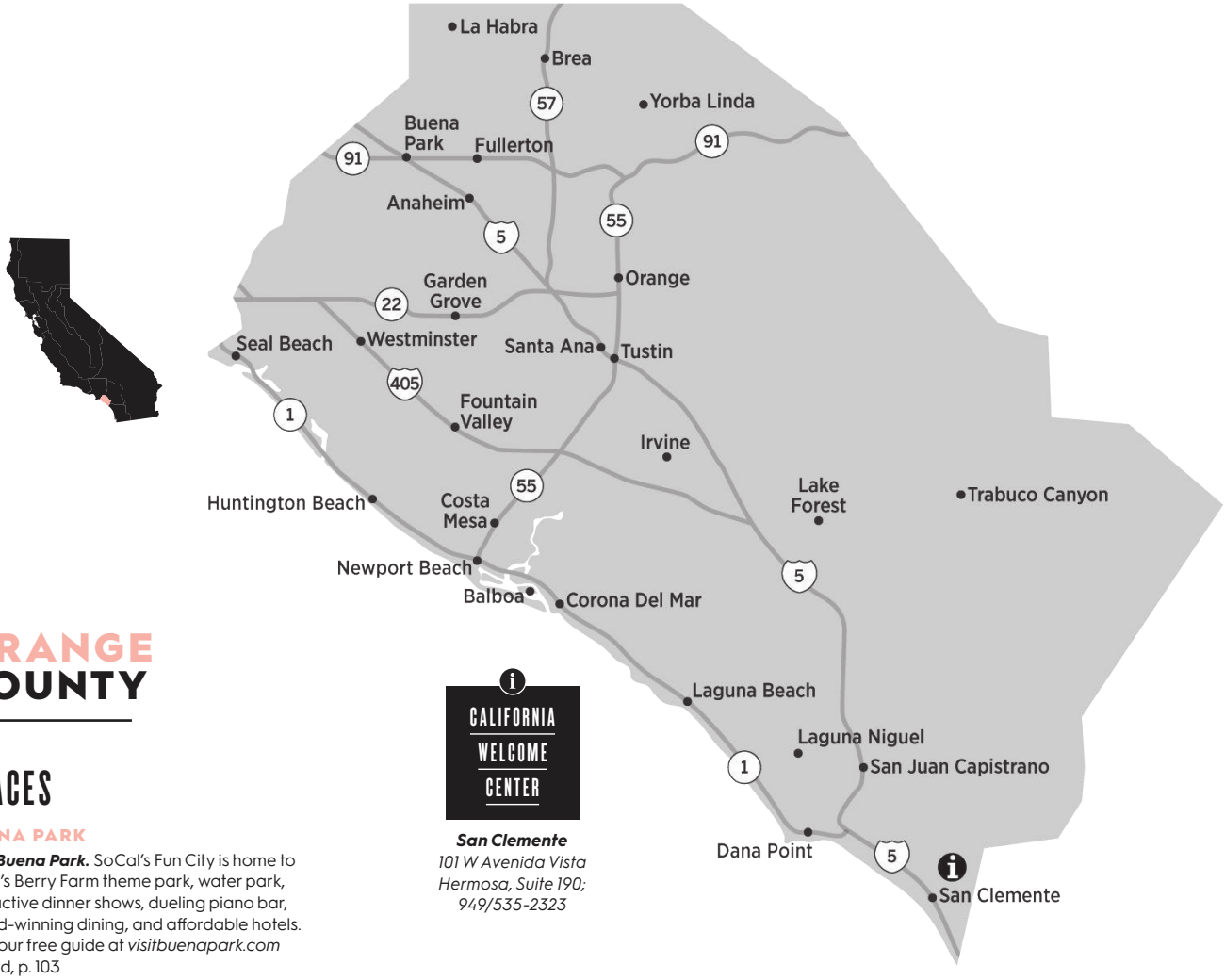
KEY

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



ORANGE COUNTY

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PLACES

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COSTA MESA

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HUNTINGTON BEACH

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STAYS

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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 aa rooftop lounge and Italian deli. Bonfires/firepits with beach butler services. 714/845-8000; *waterfrontresort.com* See ad, p. 101

$$$

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

LOS ANGELES COUNTY



PLACES

CLAREMONT

Discover Claremont. Enjoy a delightfully unexpected getaway 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 at owner-curated boutiques, and stay the night. See ad, p. 109

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SoFi Stadium. 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. 109

LONG BEACH

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. 104

PASADENA

Visit Pasadena. Where historic Route 66 meets science, culture, and charm. Home to NASA's JPL, Caltech, the Rose Parade, museums, and shops along Colorado Blvd. Discover innovation and beauty in one destination. 800/307-7977; *visitpasadena.com* See ad, p. 109

SANTA MONICA

Santa Monica Travel & Tourism. Visit Santa Monica. Welcome to a place where beach vibes and urban vibrations are open to all—with 8.3 walkable square miles of dining, shopping, and lodging. Welcome, world. 800/544-5319; *santamonica.com* See ad, inside cover

WEST HOLLYWOOD

Visit West Hollywood. Welcome to a city that inspires. With boutique hotels, rooftop views, and an electric nightlife, every moment here feels iconic—and unmistakably West Hollywood. See ad, p. 5



CALIFORNIA WELCOME CENTER

Los Angeles
100 Citadel Dr., Suite 480; 323/888-1724

Torrance
Del Amo Fashion Center, 3525 W. Carson St.; 424/392-7495

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

CENTRAL COAST



CALIFORNIA WELCOME CENTER

Gilroy
8155-6 Arroyo Circle, Building A; 408/842-6436

Salinas
1-A Station Place; 831/757-8687

PLACES

ARROYO GRANDE

Visit Arroyo Grande. Explore the historic village with Michelin-recognized dining and a thriving music scene, a short drive from world-class wineries. Home to the only swinging footbridge in California (say hi to the wild roosters!). *visitarroyogrande.org* See ad, pgs. 121-123

CAMARILLO

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. 121-123

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* See ad, p. 174

LOMPOC

Explore Lompoc. California adventure reaches new heights in Lompoc! The West Coast's rocket launch hub, it's surrounded by vineyards, murals, a restored mission, and more. Hike, sip, surf, golf—you can even skydive here! Are you ready for liftoff? See ad, p. 117

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. 115

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 ads, pgs. 21, 121-123

OXNARD

Visit Oxnard. Oxnard is A Beat Apart—where waves crash like cymbals on Oxnard-born DW Drums, taco trails sizzle, and downtown hums with festivals, live music, and coastal energy with a rhythm all its own. 805/385-7545; *visitoxnard.com* See ad, pgs. 121-123

PISMO BEACH

Pismo Beach. Pismo Beach captures the essence of Classic California, where sandy beaches, ocean sunsets, and coastal charm create a timeless getaway. Plan your stay with lodging specials and discover why happiness lives here year-round. See ads, pgs. 112, 121-123

SAN LUIS OBISPO

Visit San Luis Obispo. Come live the SLO Life in the city of San Luis Obispo. Along Highway 1, you'll find this charming town with farm-fresh food, world-class wineries, and a slower pace. The best parts of California, all in one home base away from home. *visitslo.com* See ad, pgs. 121-123

SANTA BARBARA

Visit Santa Barbara. 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 digital Visitor Magazine at *santabarbaraca.com* 800/676-1266; See ad, back cover

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

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 lodgings, restaurants, wineries, tasting rooms, and events, go to *visitsyv.com* See ad, pgs. 121–123

SOLVANG

Solvang USA. Solvang, the Danish Capital of America, blends Danish heritage with California wine country charm. Wander past windmills, taste authentic pastries, sip local wines, and enjoy signature events like Danish Days and Julefest. See ad, pgs. 121–123

VENTURA

Visit Ventura. Sip, stroll, shop, and explore Ventura's charming car-free Downtown with unique boutiques and eateries. And it's all just blocks from the beach! *visitventuraCA.com* See ad, pgs. 121–123

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 Visitors Center, and exursions. Open daily. *venturaharborvillage.com* See ad, pgs. 121-123

STAYS

CARMEL

Tickle Pink Inn at Carmel Highlands. 155 Highland Drive. 34 rooms. Our enchanting coastal hideaway overlooks the Big Sur coastline, and a host of complimentary amenities pamper you from morning to night. 800/614-7437; *ticklepinkinn.com* See ad, p. 117

$$$

MONTEREY

Portola Hotel & Spa. 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. 121–123

$$ – $$$

CENTRAL VALLEY



PLACES

BAKERSFIELD

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. 130–131

FAIRFIELD

Visit Fairfield. Nestled between San Francisco and Sacramento, Fairfield is home to the world-famous Jelly Belly Candy Company, the scenic Suisun Valley wine region, and is just minutes from the renowned wine countries of Napa and Sonoma. *visitfairfield.com* See ad, pgs. 130–131

FRESNO

Visit Fresno County. Fresno County—no frills, just fun. Explore Forestiere Underground Gardens and Fresno Chaffee Zoo. We're the center of U.S. ag with top dining experiences. Fly in to easily access Yosemite, Sequoia, and Kings Canyon. *visitfresnocounty.org* See ad, pgs. 130–131

LODI

Visit Lodi. Sip, stroll, and savor in Lodi—where over 135 varietals, 85 wineries, and friendly winemakers welcome you to California's most approachable wine region. Explore more at *visitlodi.com* See ads, pgs. 124, 130–131

MODESTO

Visit Modesto. Experience California's Middle Ground where farm-fresh meets vibrant culture. Tour stunning murals, cruise blooming orchards in spring, and see why we're a top hidden music scene. Your ideal Yosemite base camp. 1315 J St. *visitmodesto.com* See ad, pgs. 130–131

OAKDALE

Visit Oakdale. Welcome to your gateway for adventure! Raft the scenic Stanislaus River, explore Gold Country, and see why we're the Cowboy Capital of the World. A perfect stop for Yosemite-bound travelers. 590 N Yosemite Ave. *visitoakdale.com* See ad, pgs. 130–131

STOCKTON

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. 130–131



CALIFORNIA WELCOME CENTER

Fairfield
Jelly Belly Candy Company, 1 Jelly Belly Lane; 877/793-7386

Modesto
1315 J St.; 209/526-5588

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

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. 130–131

Visit Visalia. Visit Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks from your base camp in Visalia, where outdoor adventures and a vibrant downtown dining, shopping, and brewery district combine to make unforgettable experiences. *visitvisalia.com* See ad, pgs. 130–131

WINTERS

Visit Yolo. Savor the flavors of Yolo County, where every season brings something new to the table. Come experience why it's California's freshest escape. *visityolo.com* See ad, pgs. 130–131

HIGH SIERRA

PLACES

BASS LAKE

Bass Lake Chamber of Commerce. Nestled among the tall pines and only 14 miles from 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. 77

FISH CAMP

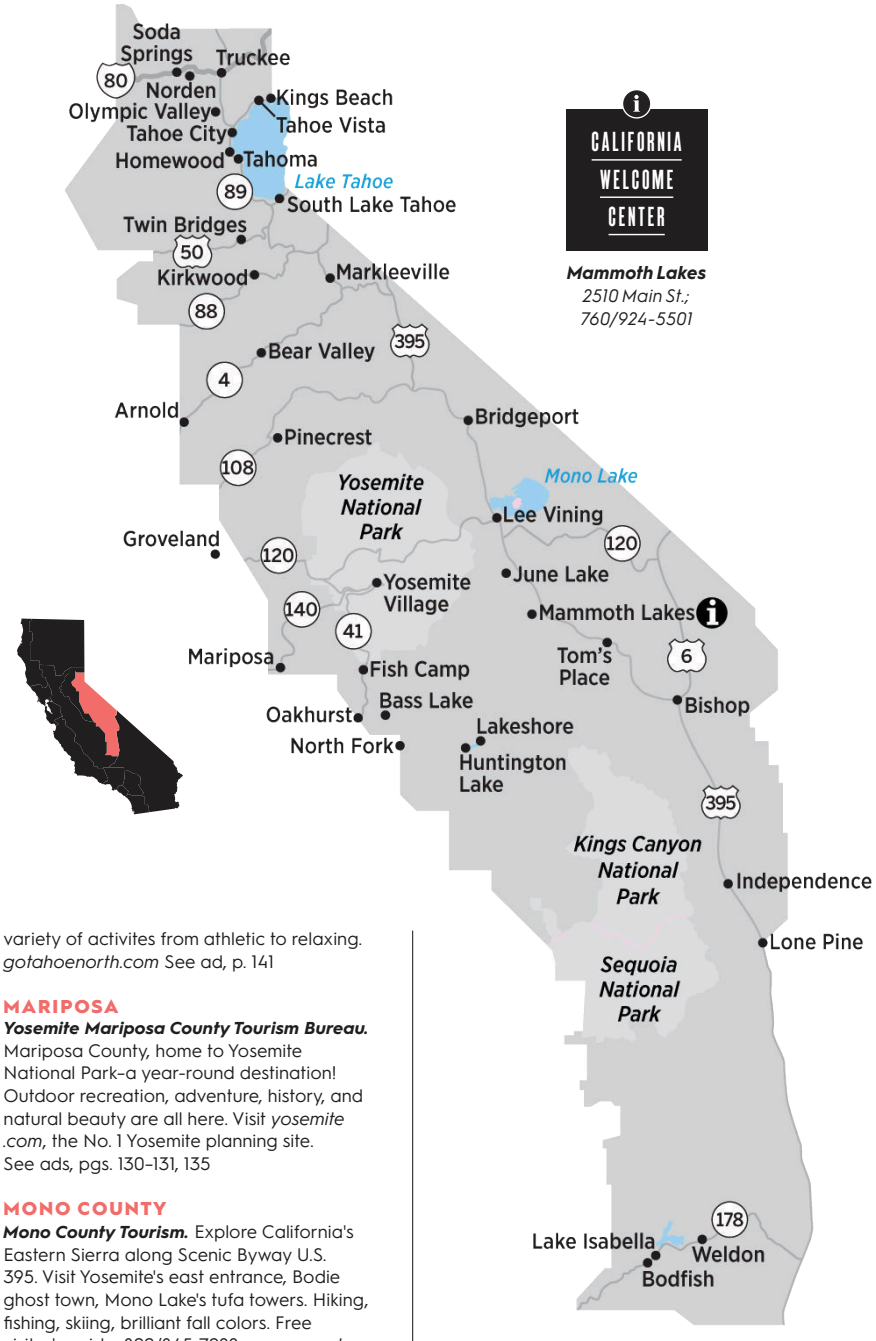
Yosemite Mountain Sugar Pine Railroad. Highway 41, north of Oakhurst. An exciting steam-train ride at Yosemite's south gate. Groups welcome. April–October. Info at *ymsprr.com* or call 559/683-7273. See ad, p. 77

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. 77

LAKE TAHOE

Lake Tahoe Travel. 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 activites from athletic to relaxing. *gotahoenorth.com* See ad, p. 141



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 No. 1 Yosemite planning site. See ads, pgs. 130–131, 135

MONO COUNTY

Mono County Tourism. 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 visitor's guide. 800/845-7922; *monocounty.org* See ad, p. 135

OAKHURST

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 ads, pgs. 77, 130–131

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

Majestic Mountain Loop. Visit three of California's National Parks in as little as three days: Sequoia, Kings Canyon, and Yosemite. Take a plane, take a car, or take a guided tour. 559/683-4636; *majesticmountainloop.com* See ad, p. 77

SONORA

Visit Tuolumne County. Find endless adventure on a Tuolumne County road trip. Explore uncrowded Yosemite, authentic Gold Country, and scenic High Sierra, 2.5 hours east of the San Francisco Bay Area. There's lodging for all budgets. 209/533-4420; *visittctoday.com* See ad, p. 132

SOUTH LAKE TAHOE

Bike Lake Tahoe by Clearly Tahoe. Explore forested trails, beaches, and meadows from our shop on one of our pedal assist electric cruisers or downhill mountain bikes. No transportation necessary. Bike rentals are available for walk-up daily. *bikelaketahoe.com* See ad, pgs. 138–139

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. 540/544-4664; *clearlytahoe.com* See ad, pgs. 138-139

Lake Tahoe Accommodations. Discover your perfect Lake Tahoe getaway, cozy cabins, modern condos, and luxury homes with mountain or lake views. All close to top skiing, beaches, and trails. Call 530/544-3234 or book online at *tahoeaccommodations.com* See ad, p. 138-139

Lake Tahoe Balloons. We offer daily hot-air balloon rides over Lake Tahoe between May and mid-October, weather permitting. Enjoy unrivaled views of Lake Tahoe and the Sierra Nevada mountains! 530/544-1221; *laketahoeballoons.com* See ad, pgs. 138–139

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, pgs. 138–139

Visit Lake Tahoe. 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. 138–139

STAYS

SOUTH LAKE TAHOE

Margaritaville Resort Lake Tahoe. Sitting at the base of Heavenly Mountain, the new Margaritaville Resort Lake Tahoe welcomes guests with lush island vibes and a tropical state of mind. Elevate your stay at Lake Tahoe's only all-suite resort. 530/544-5400; *margaritavilleresorts.com/margaritaville-resort-lake-tahoe* See ad, pgs. 138–139

$$$

Station House Inn. Dog-friendly boutique hotel with vintage summer camp vibes near Heavenly Village & Lake Tahoe. Relax by the pool, soak in the hot tub, gather around fire pits, and make memories. Group stays and events welcome! 530/542-1101; *stationhouseinn.com* See ad, pgs. 138–139

$$ – $$$

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, pgs. 138–139

$$$

The Landing Lake Tahoe Resort & Spa. Lakeside seclusion and 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, pgs. 138–139

$$$

FISH CAMP

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; *visittenaya.com* See ad, p. 137

$$ – $$$

COARSEGOLD

Chukchansi Gold Resort & Casino. Located 30 minutes from the Yosemite south entrance on Hwy 41. AAA Four Diamond resort with premier gaming, dining, and an indoor/outdoor pool and spa. 866/794-6946; *chukchansigold.com* See ad, p. 143

$$ – $$$

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

The Redwoods In Yosemite. 8038 Chilnualna Falls Rd. 75 Years of bringing Yosemite to your doorstep. Choose from our 115-year-round Yosemite cabins and luxury vacation homes. Wedding & Event Center inside the park. 844/245-5141; *redwoodsinyosemite.com* See ads, p. 137, 149

$$ – $$$

Yosemite 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. 137

$$ – $$$

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 wildernest. HV-14255 Hwy 88 Hope Valley, CA 96120 530/694-2203; *desolationhotel.com/hope-valley* See ad, pgs. 138–139

$$$

GROVELAND

Evergreen Lodge at Yosemite. 33160 Evergreen Rd. 88 Cabins, 22 Resort Glamping sites. Iconic mountain resort bordering Yosemite. Restaurant, tavern, guided trips, daily activities. No hidden resort fees. 209/379-2606; info@evergreenlodge.com; *evergreenlodge.com* See ad, p. 143

$$$

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. 143

$$$

Rush Creek Lodge & Spa at Yosemite. 34001 Hwy 120 at Yosemite's northwest entrance. 143 rooms. Award-winning spa, restaurant, tavern, pool, hot tubs, guided trips, daily activities. No hidden resort fees. 209/379-2373; info@rushcreeklodge.com; *rushcreeklodge.com* See ad, p. 143

$$$

KEY

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GOLD COUNTRY

PLACES

AMADOR

Visit Amador. Discover Amador's hidden gem's—paddle lakes, sip wine, ride rail bikes, explore caverns, shop boutiques, and pan for gold. Stay in historic hotels, enjoy galleries, markets, farm-to-fork dining, gaming, tours, and lively Main Street events. See ad, p. 144

FOLSOM

Visit Folsom. Cycle, paddleboard, and shop your way through Folsom, where scenic lakes, 50+ miles of trails, lively events, and a vibrant historic district await. *visitfolsom.com* See ads, pgs. 144, 149

GOLD COUNTRY

Sutter Creek Visitors Bureau. Rich in Gold Rush history, Sutter Creek's beautiful historic buildings have boutiques, restaurants, and wine tasting. Located between San Francisco, Lake Tahoe, and Yosemite, Sutter Creek is the perfect stop on your California adventure! See ad, p. 151

LOTUS

Current Adventure Kayaking/Lake Natoma Paddle Rentals. Since 1994! Kayak, canoe, and paddleboard sales, rentals, lessons, and tours on Folsom's scenic Lake Natoma, and beginning/private whitewater kayaking lessons on the famous American River! 530/626-3363; *kayaking.com; lakenatomapaddlerentals.com* See ad, p. 144

Mother Lode River Trips. Whitewater rafting, zipline, and camping on the American River! 50+ years with the best safety record in the industry. An experience you'll never forget. Ask about a free ride on the zipline! *malode.com* See ad, p. 144

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. 132

PLACER COUNTY

Visit Placer. There is never an offseason in Placer County, with easy access to experience a year-round mix of activities: outdoor adventures, wineries, breweries, world-class shopping, dining, history, arts and culture, and more. 530/887-2111; See ad, p. 151

PLYMOUTH

Helwig Winery. Discover Helwig Winery in Plymouth, CA—award-winning wines, sweeping mountain views, an inviting tasting room, wine cave, and tasting deck. Enjoy The Helwig Kitchen or private tastings for an unforgettable wine-country escape. See ad, p. 144

RANCHO CORDOVA

Visit Rancho Cordova. Step off the beaten path and into AMAZING. International eats, award-winning brews, quirky major events, and affordable outdoor attractions await you in Rancho Cordova. To plan your trip, check out *visitranchocordova.com* See ad, p. 151

SACRAMENTO

The River Fox Train. Immerse yourself in California's farming heritage aboard the River Fox Train! From wine tasting and tea trains to Murder Mysteries, the River Fox offers a one-of-a-kind way to experience California's capital. 800/866-1690; *riverfoxtrain.com* See ad, p. 151

CALIFORNIA WELCOME CENTER

Auburn
1103 High St., Suite 150; 530/887-2111

El Dorado Hills
2023 Vine Street, Suite 105; 916/358-3700

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CALIFORNIA WELCOME CENTER

Santa Rosa
9 Fourth St.;
800/404-7673

San Francisco
PIER 39, #B16, 2nd Level;
415/377-2707

Half Moon Bay
New address coming soon
650/726-8380

SONORA

Visit Sonora. Step into Sonora! Stroll historic downtown streets filled with Gold Rush charm, boutique shops, and cozy cafés. It's a great base for visiting nearby state historic parks, mountain trails, and Yosemite. Lodging for every budget. *sonoraca.com* See ad, p. 132

STAYS

BASS LAKE

The Pines Resort. The only lakeside resort near Yosemite. The Pines Village has cabins with full kitchens, lakeside suites, two restaurants, boat rental, market and gas, bar, and indoor and outdoor event spaces. Weddings and groups. *basslake.com* See ad, p. 149

$$$

JACKSON

National Hotel Jackson. 2 Water St. Where romance meets history in this restored Victorian hotel featuring luxurious rooms, vintage details, refined dining, and a warm, inviting atmosphere in the heart of Gold Country. 209/217-8267; *nationalhotelcalifornia.com* See ad, p. 149

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LA GRANGE

Don Pedro Recreation Agency. Located in the Sierra Nevada Foothills, Don Pedro Lake offers watersports, three dog-friendly campgrounds, a 2-acre swimming lagoon, biking, and hiking. For more info: *donpedrolake.com* See ad, p. 132

$

SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

PLACES

BURLINGAME

The San Francisco Peninsula. South of San Francisco and north of expectations, discover the San Francisco Peninsula where hiking trails, beaches, farm-to-table cuisine, and dog-friendly adventures meet easy city access. Explore at *thesanfranciscopeninsula.com* See ad, p. 159

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. 174.

LIVERMORE

Livermore Valley Wine Community. 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. 152

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

PETALUMA

Marin French Cheese Co. 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; See ad, p. 157

Petaluma Visitors Program. In Sonoma County, walk Petaluma's historic downtown with art galleries, quirky events, riverfront dining, and live music. Taste Petaluma's award-winning wine, beer, and spirits, and paddle its river. See ad, p. 159

PLEASANTON

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. 152

SAN FRANCISCO

Exploratorium. The Exploratorium is an iconic San Francisco museum for all ages. 700+ interactive exhibits on science, art, and human phenomena. Conveniently located at Pier 15 on the Embarcadero, between the Ferry Building and Pier 39. *exploratorium.edu* See ad, p. 159

SAN JOSE

Visit San Jose. 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 alfresco a year-round event. 800/SAN-JOSE; *sanjose.org* See ad, p. 11

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. 157

SONOMA

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. 157

STAYS

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

$ – $$

PETALUMA

San Francisco North/Petaluma KOA. 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. 157

$ – $$

NORTH COAST

PLACES

FORT BRAGG

Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens. Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens sits on the bluffs of Northern California, a year-round coastal paradise of color and texture. Wander forest trails, discover rhododendrons, dahlias, and ferns by the sea. Open daily. Dogs welcome. See ad, p. 160

The Skunk Train. All aboard the Skunk Train for a journey through time and towering redwoods! Since 1885, this historic route has wound deep into the Noyo River Canyon offering views as timeless as the ride itself. 707/964-6371; *skunktrain.com* See ad, p. 160

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. 160

UKIAH

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. 160



KEY

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SHASTA CASCADE



PLACES

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. 166

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. 173

LAKEHEAD

Lake Shasta Caverns National Natural Landmark. 20359 Shasta Caverns Rd. The 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. 530/238-2341; *lakeshastacaverns.com* See ad, p. 166

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. 166

QUINCY

Plumas County Tourism. Wide-open spaces, a touch of quirkiness, and plenty of outdoor activities. From mountain biking, water sports, world-class fishing, hiking, and relaxation in between, it's four seasons of adventure. *plumascounty.org* See ad, p. 173

REDDING

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. 166

CALIFORNIA WELCOME CENTER

Anderson
1699 Highway 273; 530/365-1180

UpState CA Waterfalls Guide. With over 50 breathtaking cascades in the region, UpState CA is the perfect place to come and chase waterfalls! Call to get a free guide 530/365-1180 or request one online: *upstateca.com/request-free-visitor-guide* See ad, p. 166

STAYS

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. 166

$$

MILL CREEK

St. Bernard Lodge. 7 rooms. Ten miles west of Chester on Hwy 36. Great location for visiting both the SW and SE entrances to Lassen Park. Fifteen 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. 173

$ – $$

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 UpState CA. Quaint B&Bs or favorite lodging brands, Redding has it all. 530/365-7500; *chooseredding.com* See ad, p. 171

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. 166

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

CALIFORNIA'S STATE AND NATIONAL PARKS

IN THE GOLDEN STATE, the great outdoors encompasses a vast array of gorgeous terrains: mountain ranges, coastal preserves, desert wonderlands, redwood forests, and more. Not only does California boast the most national parks of any state in the U.S. (9), but it also has the most state parks (280), whose roster includes historic gold mines, caves, waterfalls, and ghost towns. Check out these resources to plan your trip to California's state and national parks, with all the details you will need to camp, hike, paddle, or bike.



Kings Canyon National Park



SWATHI CHIRRA/SHUTTERSTOCK

CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS
parks.ca.gov

CHANNEL ISLANDS NATIONAL PARK
nps.gov/chis

DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK
nps.gov/deva

JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK
nps.gov/jotr

LASSEN VOLCANIC NATIONAL PARK
nps.gov/lavo

PINNACLES NATIONAL PARK
nps.gov/pinn

REDWOOD NATIONAL AND STATE PARKS
nps.gov/redw

SEQUOIA & KINGS CANYON NATIONAL PARKS
nps.gov/seki

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK
nps.gov/yose

CITY INDEX

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Alameda SFBA
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Albany SFBA
Albion NC
Alder Springs CV
Alhambra LAC
Alleghany GC
Alpaugh CV
Alpine SD
Alta GC
Altadena LAC
Alturas SC
Amador City GC
Amboy D
American Canyon SFBA
Anaheim OC
Anaheim Hills OC
Anchor Bay NC
Anderson SC
Anderson Springs NC
Angels Camp GC
Angwin SFBA
Antioch CV
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Apple Hill GC
Apple Valley IE
Applegate GC
Aptos SFBA
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Arcadia LAC
Arcata NC
Arnold HS
Arroyo Grande CC
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Arvin CV
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Atwater CV
Auburn GC
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Avenal CV
Avila Beach CC
Azusa LAC

Baker D
Bakersfield CV
Balboa OC
Balboa Island OC
Baldwin Park D
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Banning IE
Barstow D
Bartle SC
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Bayside NC
Bear Valley HS
Beaumont IE
Beckwourth SC
Bell LAC
Bella Vista SC
Bellflower LAC
Belmont SFBA
Belvedere SFBA
Ben Lomond SFBA
Benbow NC
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Berkeley SFBA
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Beverly Hills LAC
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Big Sur CC
Biggs SC
Bishop HS
Blairsden SC
Blue Jay IE
Blue Lake NC
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Bodega SFBA
Bodega Bay SFBA
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El Cajon SD
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El Dorado Hills GC
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Pixley CV
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Princeton CV
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Prunedale CC
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Quail Valley IE
Quartz Hill LAC
Quincy SC

Ramona SD
Rancho Bernardo SD
Rancho Cordova GC
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Rancho Mirage D
Rancho Palos Verdes LAC
Rancho Santa Fe SD
Rancho Santa Margarita OC
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Ricardo D
Richgrove CV
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Ripley D
Ripon CV
Riverbank CV

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Rocklin GC
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Rough and Ready GC
Rowland Heights LAC
Rubidoux IE
Running Springs IE
Ruth SC
Rutherford SFBA
Ryde CV

Sacramento GC
St. Helena SFBA
Salinas CC
Salton City D
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Samoa NC
San Andreas GC
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San Ardo CC
San Benito CC
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San Joaquin CV
San Jose SFBA
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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
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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 OC
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
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Suisun City CV
Summerland CC
Sun City IE
Sun Valley LAC
Sunland LAC
Sunnyvale SFBA
Sunset Beach OC
Surfside OC
Susanville SC
Sutter CV
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Sylmar LAC

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Thornton CV
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Three Rivers CV
Tiburon SFBA
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Toluca Lake LAC
Tom's Place HS
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Topanga LAC
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Vacaville CV
Valencia LAC
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Walders Basin HS
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Walnut Grove CV
Warner Springs SD
Wasco CV
Waterford CV
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West Covina LAC
West Hollywood LAC
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Westchester LAC
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Wheeler Ridge CV
Whiskeytown SC
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Whittier LAC
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Woodcrest IE
Woodlake CV
Woodland CV
Woodland Hills LAC
Woodside SFBA
Woodville CV
Wrightwood IE

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

THIS OR THAT WITH JOSH MEYERS

As the new host of the California Now Podcast, he's ready to hit the road, chat with locals, and inspire your next trip. But first, we put him in the hot seat for a round of rapid-fire questions.

IN-N-OUT OR TACO TRUCK? I prefer taco truck—I'm vegan. There is a veggie burger at In-N-Out, but it is just a bun with vegetables on it.

NORCAL OR SOCAL FOR A WEEKEND GETAWAY? I live in SoCal so I feel like NorCal is a go-to getaway 'cause it's a different vibe.

SURFBOARD OR SNOWBOARD? Snowboard! Although, I'm more of a skier. But a day on a snowboard is fun—a day on a surfboard is fun too. I'm just really not good at it.

PALM TREES OR REDWOODS? Redwoods for me. I feel like the palm tree is the iconic tree of California, but I would hug a redwood and I feel like I wouldn't hug a palm tree.

SAN FRANCISCO FOG OR L.A. SUNSHINE? I'm a fog guy. In Los Angeles, we get May Gray and June Gloom and to me that's the best time of year because I love waking up to a very, very gray day.

ROAD TRIP IN A CONVERTIBLE OR A CAMPER VAN? Camper van. Convertibles are nice, but the sun has been made to hurt me, and a camper van would keep me nice and safe. And I'd have all my stuff! I like gear.

DO YOU PREFER A STACKED ITINERARY OR GOING WITH THE FLOW? I like having a few things planned, otherwise you might not do anything, but I think you need to leave breathing room to be able to do things that just strike you in the moment.

405 OR THE 101? 101. That's five minutes from my house. That's my jam.

TEACUPS OR MATTERHORN? Matterhorn. They've redone that yeti and I haven't seen it so I'm eager to. The teacups might get my belly.

PRICE IS RIGHT* OR *JEOPARDY? *Jeopardy.* My parents watch it religiously. And I love asking my mom what she thinks of the current champion. Because she has very strong opinions!

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DREAM DESTINATION FOR THE PODCAST? Any of the national parks out here. I did a hike on Mist Trail in Yosemite. At the top of it, there's a sign that says, "Little Yosemite Valley," and I know that it's the people up there that I want to be hanging out with. It lives in the back of my mind as the place to go.

AMANDA FRIEDMAN







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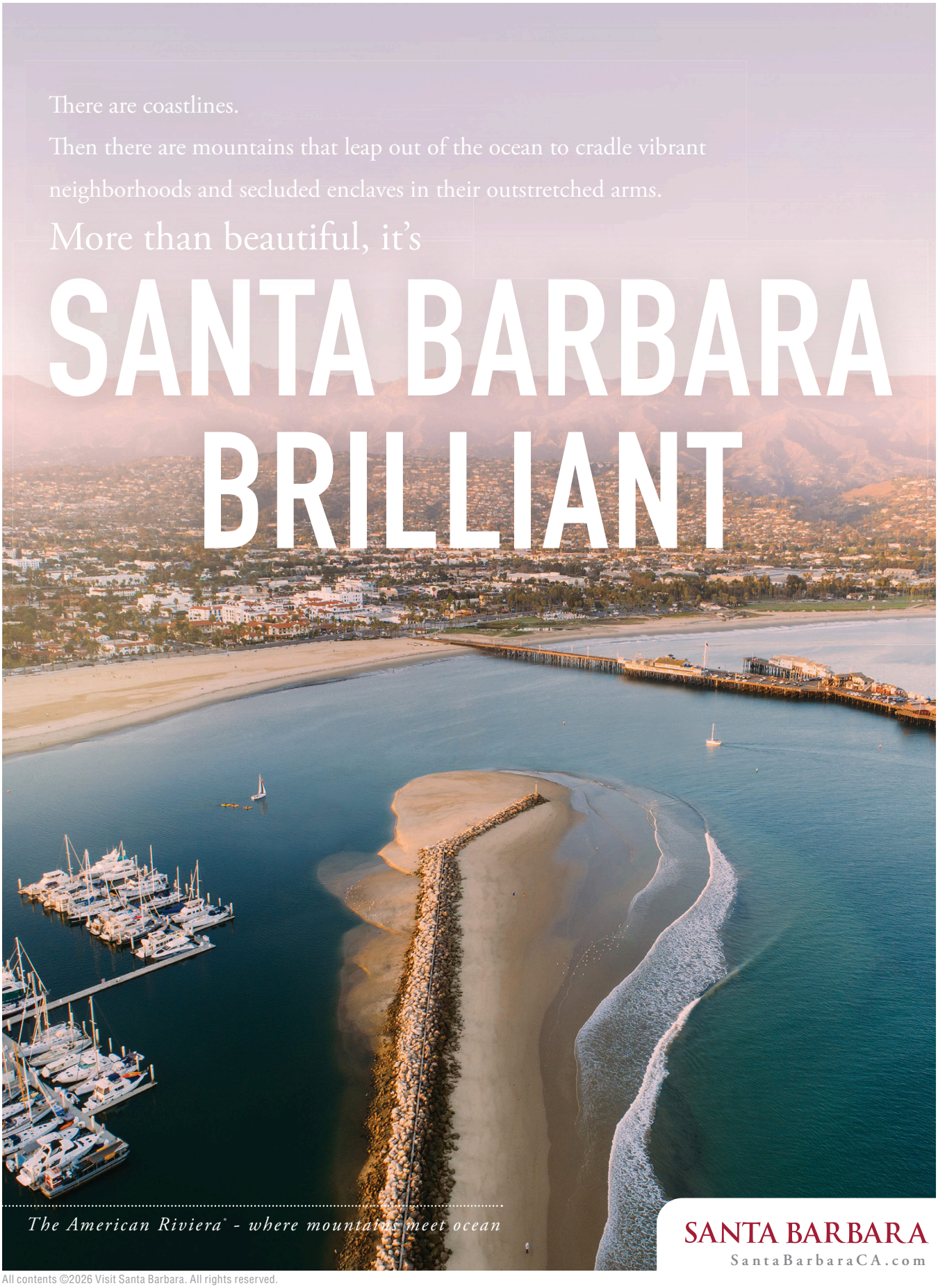

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