

## The Cities, Towns and Regions of Monterey County

Monterey County boasts 99 miles of coastline and 3,771 square miles of magnificence that beg for exploration. From submarine depths to elevations of over 5,500 feet, Monterey County offers a diverse array of things to see and do. Visitors can explore 12 towns and multiple unincorporated areas, all with distinct characteristics, including:

### Big Sur

This unincorporated area offers approximately 70 miles of rugged coastline along Highway 1 in Southern Monterey County. In the 1930s, the construction of Highway 1 made this stunning region accessible to all. Lodging options range from luxury resorts perched above the rugged coastline to rustic cabins. All of Big Sur's accommodations are harmonious with the area, perfect for visitors seeking a retreat from the busy world.

**Fun Fact:** Big Sur has provided inspiration to photographers, painters, writers and musicians. Henry Miller and Jack Kerouac chronicled the area in books, and Ansel Adams and Edward Weston captured Big Sur's rugged beauty on film. Even Robinson Jeffers described Big Sur in epic verse, which later became the inspiration for the Beach Boys' album *Holland*.

### Carmel-by-the-Sea

This charming one-square-mile village has a population of nearly 3,750 residents. It is known for its many attractions, perhaps none more so than the incomparable white-sand, dog-friendly Carmel Beach. Carmel-by-the-Sea has over a dozen wine tasting rooms all within one square mile of each other, as well as 42 inns and hotels from casual and comfortable to elegant and refined — offering a sum total of 990 rooms. Every lodging property in Carmel-by-the-Sea includes breakfast with a room booking.

**Fun Fact:** Carmel has been a mecca for artists, writers and musicians since the turn of the last century. Today, more than 100 art studios, galleries and antique stores represent the works of master artists, both local and from around the world. Carmel's most famous resident is Clint Eastwood, who was the mayor of the village from 1986 to 1988.

### Carmel Valley

This sun-kissed region stretches 12 miles from Highway 1 to quaint Carmel Valley Village and beyond. Carmel Valley is one of Monterey County's prized wine appellations, producing award-winning wines that can be sampled at more than 20 wine tasting rooms and wineries in the area. Accommodation options range from luxury resorts along championship golf courses to boutique hotels set amongst the verdant vineyards.

**Fun Fact:** Carmel Valley enjoys 300 days of sunshine each year, making it the perfect wine country getaway.

### Marina

This vibrant town was once home to soldiers stationed at Fort Ord. The former army base is now the site of Fort Ord National Monument, with 86 miles of trails just waiting to be explored. The town is an outdoor enthusiast's paradise with various wind sports, surfing and skydiving. Marina offers luxury accommodations set amongst coastal dunes and family-friendly hotels ideally situated for a Monterey Bay getaway. Diners will enjoy an abundance of authentic and delicious ethnic restaurants in addition to traditional American fare.

**Fun Fact:** Marina offers the world's highest tandem skydiving experience from 18,000 feet with a record 90 seconds of adrenaline packed free fall.

### Monterey

This coastal town is home to many California firsts, including the first state capital, the first brick house, the first public library and the first printing press, which printed *The California*, California's first newspaper. It is known for its coastal beauty as well as its top attractions, including the Monterey Bay Aquarium, Cannery Row and Old Fisherman's Wharf. The Monterey Conference Center, located in downtown Monterey just steps from Alvarado Street, hosts conventions and events throughout the year. Accommodations range from waterfront resorts to quaint inns and family-friendly hotels.

**Fun Fact:** In January 1958, the City of Monterey officially renamed Ocean View Avenue "Cannery Row" in honor of John Steinbeck, the author of the well-known novel by the same name. Today's Cannery Row, anchored by the Monterey Bay Aquarium, stretches along the waterfront and features restaurants, hotels, specialty shops, local artists' galleries and wine tasting rooms.

### Moss Landing

This small fishing village is located at the mouth of the Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Reserve in north Monterey County. Elkhorn Slough winds seven miles inland, feeding 2,500 acres of tidal salt marsh, the largest tract of tidal salt marsh in California outside of the San Francisco Bay. Moss Landing is a popular spot for antiquing, surfing and nature watching, including year-round whale watching on the Monterey Bay. Romantic seaside accommodations are paired with locally owned restaurants and seafood fresh from the bay.

**Fun Fact:** Elkhorn Slough in Moss Landing is home to a high concentration of southern sea otters – over 125 individuals – and tens of thousands of migrating birds representing over 200 species.

### Pacific Grove

This historic town was founded in the 1870s as a Methodist summer retreat and still bears the look and feel of yesteryear. The original retreat area remains with homes dating back to the late 1800s and early 1900s. The charming town is nicknamed "Butterfly Town, U.S.A." due to the fact that every year thousands of Monarch Butterflies overwinter in this coastal town. Picturesque Lovers Point Park and Beach has been a popular spot for boating, swimming and picnics since the late 1800s. The park is now famous for the many scenes filmed for HBO's award-winning series *Big Little Lies*.

**Fun Fact:** Point Pinos Lighthouse in Pacific Grove has been in operation since 1855, making it the oldest continuously operating lighthouse on the West Coast.

### Pebble Beach

This iconic region is renowned for its breathtaking beauty, legendary golf courses and world-class accommodations. It is home to Pebble Beach Golf Links, the number one public course in the county, as well as the historic Lodge at Pebble Beach and the fabled 17-Mile Drive, featuring epic coastal views and the famed Lone Cypress Tree. Pebble Beach plays host to premier events throughout the year including the annual AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am Golf Tournament each February and the legendary Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance every August, during what has become known as Monterey Car Week.

**Fun Fact:** 17-Mile Drive through Pebble Beach is one of only nine private toll roads in the country, and the only one west of Mississippi.

## Salinas

This vibrant agribusiness hub is the county seat of Monterey. It is most famous for being the ancestral home of Noble Prize laureate John Steinbeck and the nationally renowned National Steinbeck Center. Salinas hosts popular events throughout the year including the California International Airshow and the California Rodeo Salinas. Lodging options range from standard hotels to the unique Vision Quest Ranch, the onsite Bed and Breakfast at the Monterey Zoo — a sanctuary for retired television and movie animal celebrities.

**Fun Fact:** The National Steinbeck Center, a 37,000 square-foot facility, is believed to be the largest facility devoted to a single American author. Pulitzer prize winner John Steinbeck was born in Salinas in 1902.

## Salinas Valley

Located 19 miles inland from Monterey, this agricultural region produces 80% of the nation's lettuces as well as a large portion of the United States' supply of artichokes, broccoli, strawberries, squash and cauliflower, earning the name "Salad Bowl of the World." This fertile area is also home to over two dozen wineries and tasting rooms. Most of these wineries are connected by River Road and the River Road Wine Trail, which runs south from Salinas along the base of the Santa Lucia Mountains. Salinas Valley is home to Pinnacles National Park. While the park itself is young, having been designated a U.S. National Park in 2013 by President Barack Obama, the volcanic spires found in the park are over 23 million years old.

**Fun Fact:** Bee diversity at Pinnacles National Park ranks among the highest known anywhere on Earth with nearly 400 different species found within the borders of the park.

## Seaside

This up-and-coming city boasts easy beach access perfect for catching the sunset over the Monterey Bay. Seaside is also the entrance to Fort Ord National Monument, known for outdoor recreation including hiking, biking and horseback riding. The revitalized downtown area of Broadway Avenue features an array of ethnic dining options and is home to a year-round Saturday Farmer's Market.

**Fun Fact:** Black Horse and Bayonet, former military golf courses, are known for their incredible ocean views as well as their challenging holes. Both courses are steeped in rich tradition and have played host to PGA Tour greats such as Arnold Palmer and Jack Nicklaus, as well as several U.S. presidents and foreign dignitaries.