

Three Epic Road Trips Through Monterey County, California
Indulge in the central coast's unique cuisine, wine and more this summer

Monterey, Calif., May 19, 2021 – With California set to fully reopen by mid-June and the majority of Americans ready to hit the road and explore, Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau (Monterey County CVB) has compiled a list of must-discover routes and corresponding not-to-miss local dishes and signature beverages throughout the breathtaking California central coast destination. After a long year of staying close to home, now is the time for travelers to venture out and taste their way through Monterey County.

“As the summer road trip season officially kicks off, we’re encouraging travelers to take advantage of the scenic routes throughout Monterey County,” says Rob O’Keefe, president and CEO of Monterey County CVB. “Nothing says ‘road trip’ more than seeking out local dishes and signature beverages in a destination, and Monterey County’s culinary bounty of produce, fresh seafood and well-rounded wines will not disappoint.”

Here are just three road trip ideas to explore in Monterey County:

Artichokes and Ethnic Cuisine

Travelers heading south from San Francisco along iconic Highway 1 should make their first stop in Moss Landing, a quaint fishing village in northern Monterey County. After marveling at the diverse wildlife found in the Elkhorn Slough, continue south to Castroville for a stop at [Pezzini Farms](#) – known for its artichokes for the past 80 years – and sample French-fried artichokes and other delicacies at the Choke Coach food truck onsite. Tip: View the fields and fields of the big spiky artichoke plants heading out of town.

Continue southeast on Highway 1 to State Route 183 to marvel at acres upon acres of farmland on the way to renowned author John Steinbeck’s hometown of Salinas. Stroll historic Old Town Salinas and grab lunch at one of the dozens of authentic Mexican eateries located within just a few blocks ([Villa Azteca](#) is a locals’ favorite), and be sure to peruse the recently reopened National Steinbeck Center.

Take the back roads about 15 minutes west to Marina to indulge in [Urban Wine Row](#): a fun tasting atmosphere that gives guests access to three boutique wineries in one spot. Then, enjoy some beach time at Marina State Beach, known for its steady winds for paragliding perfection. End the day at one of the area’s eclectic eateries showcasing a variety of cuisines – from Filipino delicacies at Lola’s Kusina to fresh Asian fare at longtime Marina staple, [Ho-Wah Chinese Restaurant](#).

STAY: [Sanctuary Beach Resort](#) offers a secluded oasis situated on Marina State Beach. Guests can enjoy resort activities including sunset bonfires, coastal hikes, weekend beach yoga and access to a heated swimming pool. The resort also offers onsite dining at Salt Wood Kitchen and Oysterette, which includes an oyster bar and live-fire open kitchen serving delectable wood-grilled delicacies.

Fresh Catch and Craft Beer

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Seafood lovers will be delighted to start their urban road trip in Monterey along the bay, where the best Monterey-style clam chowder can be found at [Old Fisherman's Grotto](#). Grab a local, hop-forward ale at [Alvarado Street Brewery & Grill](#) in the heart of downtown Monterey before biking (or walking) the stunning Monterey Bay Coastal Recreation Trail northwest to Pacific Grove.

Lovers Point Beach in Pacific Grove is a great location to take a dip in the ocean before relaxing at the adjacent Lovers Point Park. The park is a beloved spot for picnics with its ocean views and on-site snack shop, or head inland for sustainably sourced seafood at [Passionfish](#). Travelers also are encouraged to try [Pacific Grove Brewing Company](#) beer at one of many restaurants in the area. Fun fact: Pacific Grove was the last town in California to allow the sale of alcohol up until 1969!

Travelers can continue on 17-Mile Drive through Pebble Beach and stop to snap an Instagram-worthy photo with the Lone Cypress. End in charming Carmel-by-the-Sea, known for its whimsical shops and cobblestone streets, where travelers can indulge in local seafood at [Flying Fish Grill](#) (try the seafood clay pot) and enjoy a second round of Alvarado Street Brewery beer at its sister location. Culminate the trip with a short walk along Carmel Beach to watch the sun set.

STAY: [The Vagabond's House](#) is an English Tudor-styled inn nestled in the heart of Carmel-by-the-Sea. Designed with a focus on Carmel's artistic roots, the boutique inn offers fire pits in its courtyard, a spa studio and well-appointed rooms for all types of travelers.

Views & Vines

Start this adventure in Carmel Valley, which enjoys more than 300 days of sunshine each year. Known for its rolling hills, grapevines and tranquil experiences, indulge at Refuge – the nation's first co-ed, outdoor spa. The cell phone-free site promotes silence and offers guests access to plunge pools with thermal waterfalls, Swedish and deep-tissue massages, and of course breathtaking views of the Santa Lucia Preserve.

Continue to [Folktale Winery & Vineyards](#), known for its Chardonnay and Pinot Noir but also boasting a crisp, warm-weather favorite: Folktale Sparking Rosé. Dine outdoors in the Wine Garden (reservations required), with menu specialties including fresh ceviche, wood-fired pizzas, artisanal cheeses and more. Travelers who prefer multiple wine tasting options in a walkable footprint can try Carmel Valley Village, which offers dozens of wineries within a three-block radius.

Head south to Big Sur to feel the open road along Highway 1. Stop in Carmel Highlands for lunch at the [California Market at Pacific's Edge](#). Located in the Hyatt Carmel Highlands, the restaurant offers dishes made with locally grown ingredients and unmatched views of historic Point Lobos State Reserve. Next, set out for a hike at the stunning Andrew Molera State Park, where you can marvel at the panoramic views of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. Continue on to Henry Miller Library, which pays homage to the author who found great inspiration in Big Sur. End at [Nepenthe](#), known for its unparalleled views of the coast and famous Ambrosia Burger.



STAY: [Big Sur Lodge](#) is located within Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park, allowing guests direct access to explore the diverse landscape – from riverbanks to redwoods, oaks, sycamores, maples and more. The lodge is both family- and pet-friendly, and the perfect spot to disconnect and reconnect with nature.

Visitors are encouraged to plan lodging and dining reservations ahead of time to make getaways seamless and stress-free. For more information about Monterey County, tips on safe and responsible travel, and to plan an epic summer road trip, visit www.SeeMonterey.com.

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ABOUT MONTEREY COUNTY CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

The Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau (Monterey County CVB) is a 501c6 non-profit organization that drives tourism for Monterey County. Tourism is the largest industry on the Monterey Peninsula and the second largest in the County. The MCCVB is a partnership of the hospitality community and local governments that aims to drive business growth through compelling marketing and targeted sales initiatives that maximize the benefits of tourism to its guests, members and the community. Travel spending in Monterey County was \$3.24 billion in 2019, representing a 3.3 percent increase from 2018. This \$3.24 billion in visitor spending supported 27,120 jobs, contributed \$296 million in total taxes and generated \$153 million local tax dollars that directly benefited the community. For more information, visit www.SeeMonterey.com and follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

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