

CALIFORNIA COAST



The California coast that stretches between Los Angeles and San Francisco is one of the wildest and most beautiful areas in California. The part between Monterey and Morro Bay is absolutely gorgeous.

CALIFORNIA COAST

WHAT TO DO

OCEANO DUNES NATURAL PRESERVE ★★

About 5 km south of Pismo Beach, along the coast, you will discover this huge area of dunes in the town of Oceano. It is recognized by scientists, environmentalists and visitors as the most beautiful and the largest area of coastal dunes remaining in California. Open from 7 am to an hour after sunset.

WWW.OHV.PARKS.CA.GOV/?PAGE_ID=1207

PISMO BEACH PIER ★

Take a stroll through the streets of the city and finish your walk along the beach, on the pier. If the weather is right, you will be treated to a beautiful sunset to end the day on a high note!

PISMO BEACH PREMIUM OUTLETS ★

If you want to shop for great American or international brands at very attractive prices, the Pismo Beach Outlets is a must for you.

333, FIVE CITIES DRIVE
PISMO BEACH

WWW.PREMIUMOUTLETS.COM/OUTLET/PISMO-BEACH



OCEANO DUNES NATURAL PRESERVE

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PISMO BEACH, CALIFORNIA

© iStock Photo

DESTINATIONS



HEARST CASTLE ★★

This incredible castle was built between 1919 and 1947 to house the vast collection of art and antiques of publishing magnate William Randolph Hearst. It is located on a hilltop and offers an exceptional view of San Simeon and the surrounding area. The castle had 56 bedrooms and 61 bathrooms, a central kitchen, 19 living rooms, a library, 51 hectares of gardens, outdoor and indoor swimming pools, a movie theatre, tennis courts, the largest private zoo in the world, and even an airfield. It was almost a hill town unto itself! After Hearst's death in 1951, the castle became uninhabited and was given to the State of California, which turned it into a museum. Today it is a State Historical Monument and National Historic Landmark and is open to the public. Several guided tours are offered, and a 40-minute film on the castle's history is shown at the Hearst Castle Theater. Reservations are highly recommended. Dining options available on site.

750, HEARST CASTLE ROAD
SAN SIMEON
1-800-444-4445
HEARSTCASTLE.ORG

ELEPHANT SEAL VISTA POINT ★

Located about 7 kilometres north of San Simeon and the road to Hearst Castle, Elephant Seal Vista Point is one of the best spots in California to watch elephant seals. Hunted

almost to extinction for their oil-rich blubber, they are now protected by the Marine Mammal Protection Act. Their rookery grows from year to year and currently stretches for about 10 km along the shore around Point Piedras Blancas, north of San Simeon. They come ashore for a few months each year to molt, give birth and mate. They spend the rest of the year out at

sea, swimming thousands of kilometres from the coast and diving to depths of up to 5800 feet in search of food. The best time to observe the seals is from December to March. The observation areas are open every day of the year and access is free. There is a large parking lot on site that can accommodate RVs.



ELEPHANT SEALS

© iStock-117040024, Michelle Nagle



HEARST CASTLE

© AdobeStock_3001786, Brent Reeves

HIGHWAY 1 ★★★

If you only drive one scenic route in California, it should be Highway 1, especially the stretch between Carmel (to the north) and San Simeon (to the south), which is widely considered to be one of the most scenic driving routes in the United States, if not the world. For the most spectacular views, we strongly suggest going in the **afternoon**, as the coastline is often cloaked in fog in the morning (especially from June to August). You're in for an exciting ride along Highway 1, with its dizzying mountains, rugged terrain, coastal landscapes, coves and stunning beaches. Here are the Top 3 must-see stops along this section of Highway 1:

POINT LOBOS STATE RESERVE ★

Located just 4 miles south of Carmel, Point Lobos State Reserve is an area of headlands, coves and rolling meadows. The offshore area forms one of the richest underwater habitats in the world and is very popular with divers. Wildlife includes seals, sea lions and sea otters and migrating gray whales (from December to May). Thousands

of seabirds also make the Reserve their home. Hiking trails follow the shoreline and lead to hidden coves, such as **Bird Island Trail ★** and **Sea Lion Point Trail ★** which provides views of sea lions. At **Whalers Cove**, which used to be a whaling station, a small cabin built by Chinese fishermen at the turn of the century still remains and is now a cultural history museum. **Please note that any vehicle over 21 ft long is not allowed to drive or park within the reserve.** WWW.PARKS.CA.GOV/POINTLOBOS



HIGHWAY 1

© shutterstock_42321741, AJ9



WHALERS COVE, POINT LOBOS STATE RESERVE

© shutterstock_1604692087, Serj Milomuzh



BIXBY BRIDGE ON HIGHWAY 1

© Adobe Stock

BIG SUR ★★★

Big Sur Village is even quieter than Carmel and has a population of only 2,000. Intrepid surfers like to brave the impressive waves crashing on its rocks. Being at the foot of a mountain, access to the village is occasionally blocked by the closure of Highway 1 due to a landslide. Once you get there, you must stop at the legendary **Nepenthe Cafe** ★★ (48510, Highway 1, Big Sur). In operation since 1949, it is perched on a cliffside overlooking the coast, allowing you to take in **breathtaking scenery** ★★★ while enjoying a delicious meal. Open daily from 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. (closed on Christmas Day and Thanksgiving, the 4th Thursday in November).

PFEIFFER BEACH ★★★

This magnificent **beach** ★★★ is off the beaten path in the heart of Big Sur and a favourite with the locals. It can be hard for tourists to find as there is no road sign indicating its presence. From Highway 1, near **Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park**, turn onto **Sycamore Canyon Road**, which is unmarked but has a small yellow sign indicating "Narrow Road" and "No RVs - Trailers". Don't miss this beautiful beach with its breathtaking ocean scenery, dramatic outcroppings of rocks, intense waves (be careful, there can be a dangerous undertow), and purple-tinged sand coloured by the presence of manganese garnet. The beach is generally open ½ hour before sunrise and until ½ hour after sunset (unless it is closed because of bad weather). There is an entrance fee of \$10/car.

WWW.PARKS.CA.GOV/?PAGE_ID=578



VIEW ON BIG SUR



BIG SUR COASTAL LANDSCAPE



VIEW ON PFEIFFER BEACH



SUNSET ON THE PACIFIC OCEAN

WHERE TO EAT

1 SPLASH CAFÉ (\$)

Splash Café near Pismo Beach Pier is famous for its award-winning clam chowder. In fact, it serves more than 30,000 gallons of clam chowder every year! It is also one of the longest standing Pismo Beach restaurants and one of the busiest restaurants on the coast since 1989. Splash Café serves breakfast, lunch and dinner and the menu features staples such as soups, chilis, tacos, sandwiches, burgers and salads. If you want to enjoy the sunshine, order your meal to go and have a picnic on the Pier!

197, POMEROY AVENUE
PISMO BEACH
805-773-4653
WWW.SPLASHCAFE.COM

2 CRACKED CRAB (\$\$-\$\$\$)

If you're in the mood for great seafood in an ultra-relaxed atmosphere, the Cracked Crab is the place to go. The restaurant's concept is simple: a bucket filled with a selection of shellfish steamed with spicy Cajun sausage, red potatoes and corncobs is dumped on your table. This is accompanied with melted butter, homemade spicy cocktail sauce, homemade triple

mustard sauce, warm sourdough rolls, and the tools you need to get down to business. If you're not into seafood, there are always steak, chicken and vegetarian dishes. Note that the restaurant does not take reservations, so arrive early!

751, PRICE STREET
PISMO BEACH
805-773-2722
WWW.CRACKEDCRAB.COM

3 VENTANA GRILL (\$\$-\$\$\$)

This exceptional restaurant offers spectacular Pacific Ocean views and superb coastal fusion cuisine. The upscale menu is based on a blend of South

American and Mexican flavors, with a touch of California and the Mediterranean. Appetizers include soups, chicken wings with Chipotle, and tacos on fresh homemade tortillas. For the evening main course (served with beans and poblano rice), try the Chimichurri steak or pork chop with fresh pineapple salsa. And for dessert, you could choose the chocolate fondue with churros and fruit, or plantains sautéed with rum for example. A pure delight!

2575, PRICE STREET
PISMO BEACH
805-773-0000
WWW.VENTANAGRILL.COM

