



151 Things to Do in Carmel California and the Monterey Peninsula

There are a ton of things to do in Carmel CA, and the surrounding Monterey Peninsula. But how do you find all of your options? And how do you find them all in one place?

We have put together a comprehensive list of 151 fun things to do in Carmel CA and the surrounding areas.

We confess. This isn't the entire list of things to do in Carmel and the Monterey Peninsula. We thought about putting together THAT list and realized that we would never go to print! There are just SO many things to do. But our list does give you the most choices available in one place. Enjoy!

Once you have finished looking through our list, be sure to leave us a comment and let us know which things you have done. And if you have something new to add to our list, we'd love to get those comments too!

Here's our list of 151 things to do.

BEACHES, PARKS, and RESERVES

1. **Carmel Beach:** This mile long beach arcs along the Pacific. The north end runs underneath Pebble Beach Golf Links and the south end ending at a beautiful Frank Lloyd Wright home. There are eight stairways leading down to the beach and there are new restrooms toward the south end. Dogs are permitted off leash on the beach and ‘mutt mitts’ are available along Scenic for your dog’s use. You can get to Carmel Beach by heading straight down Ocean Avenue (west) until it ends. There is limited parking there. You can also drive down Eighth where it ends at Scenic Drive. Turn left onto Scenic and you may find a parking spot along the road.
2. **[Garrapata State Park](#):** This beautiful state park is located on Highway 1, 6.7 miles south of Rio Road in Carmel. It offers 2 miles of beach. It’s a great place to see sea lions, harbor seals, and sea otters.
3. **Lovers Point Park and Beach:** This park is located in Pacific Grove, along Ocean View Blvd. It's a great place to sunbathe or climb on the rocks. Swim if you like cold water! The park is right next to the Beach House Restaurant which has great views and food. Picnics are fun during the day. There is a parking lot at 17th Street, but you can also park along the street. There is a walking path beside the water, making it easy to reach the beach.
4. **Monastery Beach:** Located at Carmel River State Beach, Monastery Beach creates a beautiful arc along the sand. It backs up to the Carmel River Lagoon. Enjoy the beach from high and dry, but stay clear of the surf. There’s a strong under tow and the beach drops sharply into the ocean. At low tide, you can enjoy walking down the stairs and climbing along the rocks. To get there, take Scenic going south. If you are driving, you can drive past Monastery Beach and park in the lot at the Carmel River Lagoon.
5. **[Asilomar State Beach](#):** Asilomar State Beach is a beautiful, one mile stretch of beach and rocky coves. Enjoy the walking trails and magnificent views of the Pacific Ocean. You can bring you friendly dog on a leash. Across the street is the Asilomar Dunes Natural Preserve. There’s a ¼ mile boardwalk that meanders through the 25 acres of dunes. You’ll be surrounded by more than 450,000 plants. You can stop at the Phoebe Apperson Hearst Social Hall and relax by the rock fireplace, or get a treat from the café.



6. **[Carmel River State Beach](#)**: This 1 mile long beach and lagoon is a popular spot for scuba divers. It features a sanctuary that is a great place to see native birds.
7. **Carmel River Lagoon and Wetlands Natural Reserve**: Enjoy the abundance of waterfowl. Ducks, mallards and coots float in the lagoon. Egrets and herons stand tall in the reeds. Hawks circle overhead. Bring your binoculars.
8. **[Monterey State Beach](#)**: This beautiful beach runs from the Wharf in Monterey to Seaside. The Seaside end of the beach is very popular for paragliders. You will often see them launching from the cliffs above the beach. The beach is flat and inviting, with kayakers, scuba divers, swimmers, and sun bathers enjoying the wide expanse of sand.
9. **[Andrew Molera State Park](#)**: This park is quite undeveloped, so it's a wonderful place for hiking and beach combing. Dogs are not allowed, but there are 24 camp sites available with a reservation.
10. **[Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park](#)**: This beautiful park is 37 miles south of Carmel on Highway 1 and 12 miles south of Pfeiffer Big Sur. From the higher elevation trails, you'll have great views of the Pacific. There is also an 80 foot drop waterfall. In December and January you may see migrating whales from Overlook Trail.
11. **[Fort Ord Dunes State Park](#)**: This secluded, 4 mile stretch of beach is magnificent. Originally part of Fort Ord, visitors can now park and walk down the 1500 foot trail to the beach and enjoy incredible views of the Monterey Bay. It's ok to have your leashed dog on the paved areas, but not on the beach.
12. **Mission Trails Park**: There are 5 miles of trails that meander through this 33 acre preserve. You can enjoy a leisurely hike from Carmel to the Carmel Mission. Multiple trails within the park create a wonderful, and non-strenuous hike. You can bring your dog on a leash. Access the trail from Rio Road across from the Carmel Mission. Or begin in Carmel by the Sea by walking up Mountain View to the trailhead.
13. **Forest Hill Park**: This family park is located at the corner of Camino del Monte & Junipero in Carmel. If the little ones need to burn off some energy and mingle with local families, this is the place. With a playground complete with structures and swings Forest Hills Park also offers a basketball court, a sand volleyball court, two tennis courts, horseshoe pits, barbecues, bathrooms and plenty of places to sit and relax.

14. **Devendorf Park:** This relaxing sanctuary within Carmel by the Sea, offers benches, an expanse of green lawn, and restrooms. It's located at the corner of Ocean Avenue and Junipero.
15. **First Murphy Park:** Next to the First Murphy House in Carmel at the corner of Lincoln and 6th you'll find First Murphy Park. Lined with a long wooden bench, this park is a relaxing place to catch your breath and look across the pines to the Pacific Ocean. A few steps away from the park you find 'The Valentine', a life-sized bronze statue of an elderly couple sitting on a park bench. The statue was created by George Wayne Lundeen. Visitors and locals enjoy sitting across from the captivating couple or taking a picture seated by their side. There are also restrooms that have been built into the hillside, underneath the park.
16. **Piccadilly Park:** This is a sunny Carmel courtyard park with an old world charm. It is nestled along the west side Dolores between Ocean and 7th Avenue. There are welcoming benches and a gurgling fountain, making it a wonderful place to stop at your are wandering in Carmel. It was designed by landscape architect Walter Guthrie. The gardens are a beautiful example of the use of drought tolerant plants. Many of the garden's plants are only found in this secluded spot, or in limited areas of California. There are also restrooms available at the park.
17. **[Jacks Peak](#):** Jack's Peak rises 1068 above Carmel and Monterey and is the highest point in the Monterey Peninsula. So if you are from Denver, this may seem pretty insignificant! Jacks Peak Park has much to offer the outdoor enthusiast. Almost 8.5 miles of horseback riding and hiking trails wind through cathedral-like forests and to breathtaking ridge top vistas. The Skyline Self-Guided Nature Trail traverses the summit of Jacks Peak and features fossils from the Miocene epoch. Brochures describing features along the trail are available at the entrance station. Visitors can also enjoy other passive activities including nature study, photography or picnics.
18. **[Point Lobos State Reserve](#):** The entry to the reserve is 3 miles south of Carmel on Highway 1. Here you will find seals, sea otters, sea lions, and migrating whales during the season. There is a small cabin at Whalers Cove that is now a museum. It was built by Chinese fishermen.
19. **McAbee Beach:** McAbee beach is in the middle of Cannery Row. It was a whaling station in the 1800's. In the 1900's it was a beach resort and boat rental and then home to the Monterey and Sea Beach canneries. Today is it a State Marine Conservation area. McAbee is a favorite scuba diving spot. The waters are

almost always calm and the rocky bottom is a favorite spot for a huge variety of marine life. Sea otters are common here and you can often hear a tap-tap-tap as they use a rock or other tool to open abalone shells. The beach is located between Hoffman and Prescott Streets in Cannery Row.

20. **Pfeiffer Beach**: Known for purple hued sand, Pfeiffer Beach is at mile marker Mon 45.64, down Sycamore Canyon Road off of Highway 1. If you are headed south from Carmel, the turn off is .66 miles past the Ranger Station. It's a challenge to find, but well worth the effort. There are 4 picnic tables at the beach and your dog can accompany you on a leash (the dog needs to be on the leash, not you...)



21. **Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary** : This is a federally protected marine area off the coast. It offers some of the best wildlife viewing in the world. It stretches from San Francisco to Cambria, featuring beaches, tide pools, and kelp beds. It's great for scuba diving!

TOURS

22. **Point Sur Lighthouse Tour**: Take a tour of an amazing California lighthouse. A docent will lead your tour up the windy, dirt road to the top, where you'll have incredible views out to the Pacific and you can tour the lighthouse. The walk to the top is worth the trip. You're peering out over the Pacific at every turn.



23. **Tor House and Hawk Tower**: Robinson Jeffers, the famous American poet, began building Tor House in 1918 using granite boulders pulled from the cove below the house by horses. Originally illuminated by candles and oil lamps, Tor House was electrified in 1949. In 1920, Jeffers began building Hawk Tower for his wife. He completed the Tower in 1924. Guests to his home included Sinclair Lewis, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Langston Hughes, Charles Lindbergh, George Gershwin, and Charlie Chaplin. You can take a docent-lead tour, beginning each hour, on Friday or Saturday beginning at 10am and ending at 3pm.

24. **Bay Boat Tour:** There are several kinds of boat tours you can take in the Monterey Bay. Choose from whale watching, sailing, a glass bottom boat, or a romantic dinner cruise. Head over to Fisherman's Wharf in Monterey to find your tour.
25. **[Condor Tour](#):** For a once in a lifetime experience, let the Ventana Wildlife Foundation take you on a 2 hour tour down the California coast to view condors. For an even more incredible tour, take the California Condor Sanctuary Tour. Executive Director Kelly Sorenson will take you into the back country of Big Sur to the remote Condor Sanctuary 2800 feet above the ocean. We have done this excursion and feel that it is one of the most unusual and magnificent activities we have done in the Monterey area.
26. **[Monterey Movie Tour](#):** Let owner Doug Lumsden take you on a magical two hour driving tour showcasing the beautiful scenery of the Pacific coast, Cannery Row, and the history of more than 200 movies filmed in the Monterey Peninsula. This is a very popular tourist activity so be sure to reserve in advance.
27. **[Segway Tour](#):** Tour Recreation Trail in Monterey, or take the Historical Monterey Tour, or the 17 Mile Drive Tour. You can do all of these on a segway!
28. **[Monterey Waterfront and Cannery Row Tours](#):** – Tim Thomas has been giving a local perspective to his tours of Cannery Row for years. It's a wonderful way to see Monterey Bay and learn about the aquatic life.
29. **[Little Mermaid Glass Bottom Boat Tour](#)** of Monterey Bay: See the aquatic life in the Monterey Bay through the magic of this glass bottom boat.
30. **Asilomar Ranger Guided Tours** - Call the local California State Park office at (831) 646-6443 to schedule one of these fascinating tours: Beachwalk, Architecture/History, or Dunes.



EVENTS

31. **Blessing of the Animals**, Church of the Wayfarer – held every year at Church of the Wayfarer, you can bring your dog to the service at 10am and stay for a blessing of your dog in the church garden afterward. This event brings visitors from far and wide. Contact [Church of the Wayfarer](#) in Carmel for details.
32. **[Inns of Distinction Tour](#):** Each year at the Christmas holidays, the Carmel Heritage Society holds the Inns of Distinction Tour. It's great fun, with tours of

many Inns in Carmel, including a commemorative wine glass, wine and food from some of the area restaurants. The 2015 tour is on December 6th. Check the Carmel Heritage Society website for details.

33. **[Concours on the Avenues](#)**: Get ready for the 2016 Concours on the Avenue on August 16th. If you are a car officianado, you won't want to miss this fun and free event. Vintage cars line the streets of Carmel by the Sea. Find your favorites and talk with owners before viewing the winners on Lincoln Avenue in front of Cypress Inn and Church of the Wayfarer.



34. **[Carmel Farmers Market](#)**: Every Thursday from 10am – 2pm you can find fresh produce and beautiful flowers at the Carmel market on 6th between Junipero and Mission. This is a local's favorite!



35. **[Old Monterey Marketplace](#)**: 4-8 summer, 4-7 winter; Alvarado & W. Franklin St.

36. **[Pacific Grove Certified Farmers Market](#)** – every Monday from 3-7 (3-6 winter)

37. **[Monterey Peninsula College Farmers Market](#)**: every Friday from 10-2, 930 Fremont Street at the college

38. **[Pebble Beach Food & Wine](#)**: Pebble Beach Food & Wine is the premier epicurean lifestyle event on the West Coast, matching 250 acclaimed wineries and 100 celebrity chefs to create a hedonistic four-day destination on one of the most picturesque strips of coastline in the world. Throughout the weekend you'll enjoy intimate access to the pinnacle of culinary and wine talent at wine tastings, cooking demos, and some of the most exclusive, unique dining opportunities available in the world. Join us for the 2016 event March 31 – April 3, 2016.

39. **[AT&T Pro-Am Golf](#)** – Follow your favorite professional golfers at the 2016 AT&T pro am from February 8th -14th at Pebble Beach. Great golf, fun amateurs, incredible views of the Pacific Ocean.

40. **[Annual Sand Castle Contest](#)**: You just missed the 55th Annual Sand Castle Contest at Carmel Beach on October 4th. Sand Castle building starts at 8am, with judging at 2pm. Call 831-620-2020 for details for next year. Join in the fun by building or watching. See who gets the coveted 'Golden Shovel' award or the 'Sour Grapes' award. Watch contestants try to bribe the judges with wine, food, or beach massages! Fun for everyone!

41. **[Bach Festival](#)**: July 16-30, 2016, with a Fall concert on October 22, 2015. Enjoy music venues all over Carmel celebrating the genius of J.S. Bach.
42. **[Sunset Center](#)**: Offering a full array of entertainment, the Sunset Center is a premier venue in the Monterey Peninsula. It's located at the corner of San Carlos and 8th in Carmel, an easy walk from most hotels and inns in Carmel by the Sea.
43. **[Carmel Dachshund Club Annual Weiner Roast](#)**, Carmel Beach: Fun and more fun at Carmel Beach with this annual Dachshund event. Dachshunds bring their owners each year to have a party with food and festivities on the beach.



WINE

44. **[Wine Tasting in Carmel](#)**: With nearly 20 tasting rooms in Carmel by the Sea, you can enjoy a lot of wine tasting. We have listed a few below that have some unique features, but you will find any of the tasting rooms in Carmel offer a great experience. Well behaved dogs are welcome in each of the tasting rooms.
45. **[DeTierra Wine Tasting Room](#)**: We added De Tierra because their tasting room is one of the most relaxing in Carmel. In addition to their wine bar, they have several seating areas, some with very comfortable, cushioned chairs, and one seating area with a bay window view onto the Carmel streets. They are a family owned winery.
46. **[Silvestri Wine Tasting Room](#)**: Feature estate grown, vineyard bottled wines from the Carmel Valley. Elegant tasting room with a party room above for wine club members. Owner Alan Silvestri is also a Golden Globe award winning musician, producing music for films including Avatar, Forrest Gump, Back to the Future, and others. View clips in the tasting room.
47. **[Caraccioli Cellars](#)**: On Dolores between Ocean and 7th, the Caraccioli Cellars tasting room is both elegant and chic. We have included them because they are the only vintner in Carmel to offer award winning, sparkling wines.



48. **[Galante Wine Tasting Room](#)**: If you like big, bold reds, you'll love Galante wines. Their tasting room is a western classic in a charming location behind the Blue Dog Gallery.
49. **[Wrath Cellars](#)**: Wrath produces some excellent wines. We have included their tasting room because they are located in Carmel Plaza, next to The Cheese Shop. Get your cheese and stop by Wrath to taste and pick up a bottle, then enjoy an afternoon sipping and munching at a table in the plaza.
50. **[Carmel Valley Wine Tasting](#)**: If you're up for a short drive out to Carmel Valley, you can taste some wonderful wines, including Talbott, Bernardus, and Boekenoogen, to name a few among the 20+ wine rooms. Our link gives you information on each winery and a map to make your trip easy.
51. **[Wine Walk by-the-Sea](#)**, Carmel Chamber of Commerce: If you'd like to sample wines from several tasting rooms, you may want to pick up Wine Walk by-the-Sea™ passports from the Carmel Chamber of Commerce office. Each passport lets you taste wines from 9 of 14 listed wineries in Carmel for \$65.
52. **[Nielsen Brothers Market](#)**: Located at the corner of 7th and San Carlos in Carmel, Nielsen Brothers isn't really a tasting room. But they have an amazing selection of wines and a fantastic wine purveyor, Patrick Shrady. Stop by to see their wine cellar and have Patrick help you select your perfect bottle of wine. And on many days their cellar is open for tasting.
53. **[Wine Trolley](#)**: We could have listed this under our Tours, but we thought you wine drinkers might be more apt to find it in the Wine section! You can take a fun tour from Monterey to Carmel Valley, with plenty of wine tasting stops and beautiful scenery along the way. Leave the driving to the Wine Trolley so everyone can enjoy the wine experience.



WALKING

54. **[Carmel Walking Tour](#)**: Tuesday through Saturday, you can meet up with Gael Gallagher in the courtyard at the Pine Inn for this magical, 2 hour walking tour of Carmel. You'll get a sense of the history, color, and flavor of Carmel that most visitors will miss. Be sure to make a reservation.
55. **[Scenic Road Walk by Day and at Sunset](#)**: You don't need a guide for this. Simply stroll down to Scenic Road, which meanders on a cliff above Carmel Beach and enjoy the sights, sounds, and smells. The morning will fill your lungs

with crisp sea air and the sounds of dogs scampering along the beach or chasing balls into the frothy ocean. Bring your coffee and stop at one of the many benches along Scenic and simply take it all in. Come back in the evening to walk the sun set across the Pacific and over Pebble Beach. It's a vision that locals never tire of and one that is gladly shared with visitors.

56. **Courtyard Tour:** There are 42 courtyards and passageways in Carmel by the Sea. For a fun, self-guided walking tour, stop by the Carmel Visitors Center on the west side of San Carlos between 5th and 6th and pick up a map. While you're enjoying the courtyards you'll also be passing by the charming and inviting shops and eateries in the village.

57. **Carmel Food Tour: Indulge your inner Foodie and get a taste of Carmel by the Sea history on this 3 hour guided tour. You'll stop at 7 locations** and sample wonderful, local food and wines as you stroll through the alleyways and courtyards of Carmel. Tours are on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. Reservations required.

58. **Carmel House Names Self-guided Tour:** Carmel by-the-Sea doesn't have house numbers. Residents go to the local post office to collect their daily mail. Many homes have quaint and unusual names on an assortment of plaques. While you're enjoying the architecture as you walk around the residential neighborhoods, you can also check out the unique names such as Dream Catcher, Robin's Nest, and Tucked In. For a fun, residential walk, start at Ocean and Monte Verde and head either way on Monte Verde.



59. **Monte Verde Bridge:** This is the only bridge in the village. It links the town with one of the neighborhoods and it's a charming walk that's close to town. If you have time to relax and want to get a flavor for Carmel outside of the business district, start at Ocean and Monte Verde and go north on Monte Verde. Be sure to check out the unusual, commemorative bench along the way.

60. **Walk to Flanders Mansion:** This is a lovely, non-challenging hike that you can take along Mission Trail. From Junipero and Mountain View, head east up MountainView to the trailhead. Walk down the dirt pathway and turn right, following the signs. Flanders Mansion is no longer open, but it's a lovely, wooded walk.

61. **Court of the Fountains:** One of our favorite courtyards in Carmel. You'll find Court of the Fountains at the corner of Mission and 7th. Stroll through and pass

wine tasting, an art studio, an outdoor dining area and the charming pool and fountains.

62. **Hugh Comstock Cottages:** In the 1920's Hugh Comstock built his first Comstock cottage called Hansel for his wife to house her rag dolls, called Otsy-Totsey's. One of the most visible Comstock cottages is Tuck Box, which was built in 1927. If you'd like to see more of the Comstock cottages, stop by the [Carmel Visitors Center](#) on San Carlos between 5th and 6th and they can give you a list of the names and locations.



63. **City Hall, Carmel:** A historic walking tour wouldn't be complete without stopping by Carmel City Hall. It was originally built in 1921 as All Saints Church and later converted to the City Hall you see today. You'll find it on Monte Verde between Ocean and 7th.

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

64. **[Monterey Bay Coastal Recreation Trail Bike Riding](#):** Recreation Trail runs between Castroville all the way down to Pacific Grove, covering 29 miles. It's a great place for biking or walking, with magnificent views of the Pacific Ocean and colorful dunes. You can take the trail all the way to Fisherman's Wharf and beyond to the Monterey Aquarium. Check out the City of Monterey website for a video of the trail.

65. **[Bay Bikes](#)** – Bike Rentals, Barnyard, Carmel: If you want to explore the area by bike, but you didn't bring yours along, head on over to Bay Bikes, located in the Barnyard in Carmel, where you can rent your favorite bike. Or, if you prefer, Bay Bikes has two locations in Monterey.

66. **[Monterey Bay Surf Lessons](#):** Get individual or group surfing lessons at the magnificent Carmel beach. Contact them through their site to schedule or for more information on renting equipment.

67. **[Pebble Beach Equestrian Center](#):** With more than 30 miles of equestrian trails, you can enjoy any of the daily, guided trail tours.

68. **Tidepools along Scenic:** Wander along Scenic Road in Carmel, heading south toward Carmel River Beach. Along the way you'll pass several areas where you can carefully climb down to the rocky shore and respectfully explore the tide pools that beckon.

69. [Monarch Butterfly Sanctuary](#), Pacific Grove: Between mid-October through mid-February, magnificent clusters of Monarch Butterflies make their home at the Monarch Butterfly Sanctuary at 1073 Lighthouse Avenue in Pacific Grove. The best time to see the butterflies is from noon to 3pm when the sun is brightest and you'll find a docent to help you. The park is open daily for visitors and it's free.



70. **Moss Landing Public Dock:** Do you want to



see sea lions? Lots of sea lions? Then drive up the coast to Moss Landing State Beach and head over to the Public Dock. It's usually covered with sea lions, one on top of the other. You'll also hear them barking at each other as interlopers attempt to join the fray on the dock. Stay upwind if you can because sea lions have their own special aroma.

71. [Adventures by the Sea](#): Adventures by the Sea is the premiere recreational company on the Monterey Peninsula. For over 25 years, Adventures by the Sea has been providing visitors and locals the opportunity to discover Monterey by land and by sea! We have five locations throughout the Monterey Peninsula and our shops offer the best locations to start your kayaking or biking adventures from because we are in the heart of the action! Whether you are seeking to spot otters or looking for the recreational trail, our shops are truly in the best locations. Don't waste time getting there, when you can start there!

72. **Point Pinos** (The Great Tide Pool): Find abalone, star fish, sea anemones, muscles, and crabs as you explore multiple tide pools. Viewing is the best at low tide. Take highway 68 west. Turn left on Sunset Drive and follow it to the Ocean. You'll find the rocky tide pools all along the shoreline to the Point Pinos Lighthouse. Please keep our habitat safe by looking, but not taking anything.

73. [Elkhorn Slough](#): The Reserve is open Wednesday – Sunday from 9am – 5pm. The Slough is a wonderful place for kayaking, birding, or enjoying the variety of wildlife. Volunteer tours of the reserve are led on Saturdays and Sundays at 10am

and 1pm. There is also a birding walk on the first Saturday of each month at 8:30am.

74. **Sea Lion Watching at Old Fisherman's Wharf:** No reservations needed for this sightseeing trip! Just head on over to Old Fisherman's Wharf, walk $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way down the dock, turn right and listen for the 'barking'. You'll find the sea lions piled up on one of the docks, or swimming around near the fish cleaning stations.
75. **[Whale Watching](#)** – Princess Monterey Whale Watching: Enjoy year round whale watching trips narrated by experienced marine biologists and naturalists. Tours are 2 ½ to 3 hours. Depending on when you choose to join us, you'll have the chance to observe marine mammals such as the Gray Whale, Humpback Whale, Blue Whale, Fin Whale, Minke Whale, Beaked Whales, Orca (Killer Whale), Bottlenose Dolphin, Northern Right Whale Dolphin, Pacific White-sided Dolphin, Risso's Dolphin, Harbor Porpoise, Dall's Porpoise, California Sea Lion, Pacific Harbor Seal, and Southern Sea Otter.
76. **Scuba Diving:** Explore the kelp forest and canyon in the Monterey Bay Sanctuary. Visibility is usually 10-30 feet underwater and you can expect water temperatures of 50-60 degrees. Monterey has been rated as the best diving beach in the U.S. by Scuba Diving Magazine. Some of the best dive spots include Bluefish and Whalers Coves at [Point Lobos](#), [Lovers Point](#) in [Pacific Grove](#), [Monterey State Beach](#), [San Carlos Beach](#) and [McAbee Beach](#) in [Monterey](#). These dive spots are suitable for all levels of divers. Monastery Beach and [Carmel River State Beach](#) in [Carmel](#) are popular with advanced-level divers. There are a couple of dive shops in Monterey for equipment rental, lessons, and guides.
77. **[Fishing](#)** – If fishing is your thing, then you want to head to Monterey and connect with Captain Chris Arcoleo. Chris started his fishing tours in the 1940's and today has a fleet of boats and guides that will make your fishing dreams come true.
78. **Kayaking at Monterey State Beach:** Stop by [Monterey Bay Kayaks](#), located at the beach on Monterey State Beach. Kayaking in the bay offers glimpses of sea otters and kelp beds.
79. **[Sailing](#)** – Enjoy sailing in Monterey Bay with Monterey Bay Sailing. Sailing lessons are available and boat trips for all levels of sailor. Or choose a captained cruise and relax!

SHOPPING

80. **Carmel Plaza:** With 3 levels of shops, food, and wine, you're sure to enjoy your shopping experience in Carmel Plaza. It's located between Junipero and Mission. From clothing to shoes, to linens and perfume, a cheese shop and wine tasting, there is something for everyone, including the Fountain of Woof for your dog.
81. **[Carmel Art Association](#):** Located on Dolores between 5th and 6th, the center is open daily from 10am to 5pm. The center features a variety of works by local artists and it's well worth the visit.
82. **[Tiffany's](#):** Still the leading name in jewels, Tiffany's is located on Ocean Avenue just west of the entrance to the Carmel Plaza. Stop by for a special treat, or simply to enjoy the bling.
83. **Get a [Spa Treatment](#):** Carmel is known for some terrific day spas. If you have time between shopping and wine tasting, why not relax at one of the local spas. Kush Day Spa is located next to Cypress Inn, down a charming alley. Call ahead to book your massage.
84. **Kris Kringle Shop:** It's Christmas 365 days a year at the Kris Kringle Shop on Ocean Avenue. If you enjoy the spirit of this holiday, you owe it to yourself to browse through this charming shop. Owner Carol Montana can tell you exactly how many days are left until Christmas!
85. **Nearly 100 Art Galleries:** Art galleries are scattered throughout town in Carmel. You'll find them on Ocean Avenue, Dolores, Lincoln, 6th and 5th and tucked away in some of the courtyards. Enjoy Ansel Adams, Blue Dog Gallery, sculptures by Stephen Whyte, and many more.
86. **[Weston Gallery](#):** One of the most famous photographers associated with the Carmel area is Ansel Adams. Stop by the Weston Gallery on 6th between Dolores and San Carlos to view his work.
87. **Doud Arcade:** Meander through the Doud Arcade, entering either from the south side of Ocean near San Carlos or from the west side of San Carlos. Explore the sock shop, the hat shop, original jewelry by Carmel artists, scarves for any occasion, and so much more.
88. **[The Secret Garden](#):** Part of Pilgrim's Way Community Bookstore, which is also well worth a visit, the Secret Garden beckons you down a long alley covered with vines, plants, and garden knick-knacks. You'll find it on the east side of Dolores between 5th and 6th.
89. **Antique Shops:** Enjoy a wide variety of eclectic antiques in the shops in Carmel. Some of the shops include [Conway of Asia](#) on Dolores, [Wittpenn's](#) on San Carlos, and [Robertson's Antiques](#) on Dolores.

90. **[Blue Dog](#)**: Rodrigue Studio, on the west side of Dolores between Ocean and 7th features a beautiful display of George Rodrigue's work. You'll see Blue Dog peering out at you from the gallery window, inviting you in to explore the gallery. In addition to being an amazing artistic talent, George Rodrigue also established a foundation to help preserve the arts for children. A stop by his Studio is well worth your time.

FOOD

91. **[Carmel Coffee House and Roasting Company](#)**: Wander down the alley on Ocean between San Carlos and Dolores to this charming coffee shop. You can watch them roast their own beans, then enjoy your coffee on their charming patio or take it down to Carmel beach.
92. **[The Cottage Restaurant](#)**: Next to Church of the Wayfarer on Lincoln between Ocean and 7th, owner Kathleen serves up yummy breakfast and lunch items in her inviting cottage. Sit by the fire or enjoy the street view. While you're there, pick up the Carmel Pine Cone, available every Friday morning for free.
93. **[Fifi's](#)**: A local favorite in Pacific Grove, Fifi's intimate restaurant offers terrific food and usually has wine pairing specials. A favorite is their French onion soup. Fifi's was voted the best French restaurant in Monterey County for 2015.
94. **[Cottage of Sweets](#)**: Your visit to Carmel wouldn't be complete without a stop at Cottage of Sweets on Ocean Avenue between Monte Verde and Lincoln. Home made fudge and every sweet you can imagine will tempt you.
95. **[Flying Fish Grill](#)**: They don't advertise because they don't need to. This Asian Fusion restaurant in a subterranean setting serves up incredibly delectable seafood dishes. Favorites include YinYang Salmon and Sea Bass.
96. **[Tuck Box](#)**: Built by Hugh Comstock, Tuck Box offers tea and food from 7:30am to 2:30pm every day. They don't take reservations and they are a little loose about the closing time, so be sure to stop by on Dolores if you'd like to eat there. It's an experience worthy of a photo op.
97. **[La Bicyclette](#)**: On the corner of 7th and Dolores, La Bicyclette is a local and visitor favorite. Think fresh food, wood fired pizzas, and a terrific menu.
98. **[Casa Nova](#)**: Romance is in the air when you dine at Casa Nova, located on 5th between San Carlos and Mission. You'll get the idea right away when you walk by and see the charming outdoor tables and restaurant that looks like it could be in a quaint village in France.

99. **[Sea Harvest](#)**: This fish market and restaurant is located in the CrossRoads Shopping Center. It made our list because its market sells fish that was just delivered from the Monterey Bay. If you prefer, you can eat in their adjoining restaurant and, yup, they serve up that same awesome seafood. Sea Harvest also has locations in Monterey and Moss Landing.
100. **[Hog's Breath Inn](#)**: One of the best known restaurants in Carmel, Hog's Breath was owned by Clint Eastwood. Be sure to take your picture under the giant Hog's Head sign before wandering down the lane to dine by their outdoor fireplace. Dogs are welcome.
101. **[The Cheese Shop](#)**: One of our favorite spots in Carmel, you can sample from more than 200 kinds of cheese. It's a super fun experience and there is no pressure to buy. (but you will!) It's located in the Carmel Plaza.
102. **The Monterey Fish House**: We love great, local seafood, especially when served up by a family-owned restaurant that has been serving Monterey locals for years. Don't go for ambiance, but do go for fantastic food. They don't have a website, but you can call them at (831) 373-4647. They are at 2114 Del Monte Avenue in Monterey.
103. **[Abalonetti's](#)**: After you have explored Fisherman's Wharf, go enjoy lunch at Abalonetti's. If you are local, they have local's specials every day, but even if you are visiting the prices are reasonable and the food is excellent. Plus if you sit outside or by the windows you can look out onto the harbor. Since 1999 they have been voted the best calamari and we agree. We go there often for the local special and include an appetizer of their tender calamari.
104. **[Dametra's](#)**: Voted the best restaurant in Carmel, we added Dametra's to our list because it's also really fun. The food is Mediterranean and excellent. While you're enjoying your meal, the chef, one of the owners, and some of the staff will magically appear and sing and play for everyone in the restaurant.
105. **[Rocky Point](#)**: Take a drive down Highway 1 to Rocky Point restaurant. The views out over the Pacific are breath taking.
106. **[Deetjen's](#)**: Deetjen's is a unique and historic hotel and restaurant in the pines on your way into Big Sur. We love going there for brunch. The food is wonderful, the restaurant is charming, and the drive down Highway 1 offers panoramic views of the Pacific Ocean. Well worth the extra time it takes to get there, this restaurant is very popular with locals from Carmel.

107. **Wharf Marketplace, Monterey:**

If you're headed over to Fisherman's Wharf, take a few minutes to stop by the Wharf Market, located along Del Monte as you turn into the parking area for the Wharf. There's a great selection of fresh seafood, fresh vegetables from Tanimura and Antle, wines, and an ice cream bar.



108. **Phil's Fish Market,** Moss

Landing: If you decide to drive north to Moss Landing to see the sea lions at the Moss Landing Public Dock, you may want to make it a lunch date. Phil's Fish Market offers clam chowder and lots of seafood served in an unassuming, casual environment. It's a favorite for locals.

HAPPY HOURS

109. **Vesuvio's Starlight 65 Rooftop Patio:** Owned by local legend Rich Pepe, Vesuvio's serves up excellent Italian food. But head upstairs to their rooftop deck for a fun happy hour and some great hor d'oeuvres. We love their wood fired pizza!

110. **The Bud Allen Hour -10 cent Happy Hour at LaPlaya:** OK, this one is a little tricky, but fun and well worth the adventure. Every Sunday from 5pm until 5:10pm, LaPlaya serves up wine and well drinks for just 10 cents. Yup, that's right, just 10 cents. Be there before 5pm and belly up to the bar and have your exact change ready. If you are there on time, you'll be guaranteed at least one drink.

111. **Mission Ranch:** Follow Dolores south until it ends at Mission Ranch, owned by Clint Eastwood. Cocktails are served starting at 4pm. Sunset views over the fields to the Pacific Ocean are well worth your time. Grab a table outside and have an appetizer while you wait. Later, sing along at the piano bar, which has music nightly, sometimes with Clint on the keys.

112. **Cypress Inn Yappy Hour:** from 4:30-6pm in Terry's Lounge, bring your friendly dog and enjoy Yappy Hour with locals and visitors. Doris Day co-owns Cypress Inn and has made it the most dog-friendly hotel in Carmel.

113. **[Il Fornaio](#)**: Fun happy hour with samplings of food from the menu. This is one of the favorite happy hours for locals. Located on the north side of Ocean Avenue in Carmel in the Pine Inn.

DOG STUFF

114. **Fountain of Woof**: How many towns have a Fountain of Woof? Bring your dog to the main floor level of Carmel Plaza and let them quench their thirst. You'll be able to spot the stone figure of a dog head.
115. **[Diggidy Dog](#)**: I don't even have a dog and I love this shop! Dog treats, dog outfits, dog collars. Some of the treats look like cupcakes and make me hungry! If you have a dog that you love, don't miss Diggidy Dog. On the east side of Mission between Ocean and 7th.



116. **[Cypress Inn](#)** –You'll find Dog beds, dog bowls, dog treats, and a Yappy Hour that your dog can bring you to (if you are good). Stay at Doris Day's famous dog-friendly hotel in Carmel, on Lincoln at the corner of 7th. The rooms are beautiful. And Terry's Lounge fun.

QUIRKY STUFF

117. **High Heel Permit Law** – City Hall, Carmel. There's a law (really) that says you can't wear heels higher than 2 inches in Carmel. If you saw our uneven sidewalks, you would know why. Stop by City Hall and get your free permit. It's fun and suitable for framing!
118. **Ring the Bell at Church of the Wayfarer** – Church of the Wayfarer is located at the geographic center of Carmel by the Sea on Lincoln at the corner of 7th. As the oldest church of Carmel, originally the bell was sounded as a fire alarm. Today, you can stop by and ring the bell to celebrate your anniversary or special occasion. The church is usually open during the day. Stop in the narthex, leave your thoughts on the diary, and pull the green velvet cord to ring the bell. Don't forget to take a selfie...or have someone else get your pic! It's free, but you

can also leave a 'thank you' donation in the wooden box on the right side of the entrance doors.

119. **[Find the Secret Mailbox:](#)**

Carmel by the Sea is known for not having home mail delivery. Home owners go to the central post office to pick up mail. There's also a 'secret mailbox' in Carmel, located along the beautiful Scenic Drive walk. [Read our blog post](#) to learn how to find it.



120. **View Doris Day's Home:** Doris

Day is co-owner of Cypress Inn. A long time resident of the Monterey Peninsula, Doris' home overlooks the 18th tee at Quail Lodge and Resort. Even if you don't play golf you can take a drive to Quail and see her pale yellow home on the cliff above.

121. **Carmel Post Office** – This is one of those iconic places that you have to

see. Home owners in Carmel by the Sea don't have house numbers or home mail delivery. So home owners trek to the Carmel Post Office, on 5th between Dolores and San Carlos to pick up their mail. Each owner has an antique style post box. Stop in the main office and see the famous cartoons by Bill Bates. You'll be sure to leave chuckling.



122. **Caricature on Old Fisherman's Wharf:** Strolling along Old Fisherman's Wharf is fun. Nearly at the end, you'll find an artist who will draw your caricature to take home. Get one for yourself or for your entire group!

123. **Photo Op at Bubba Gump's:** Located on the Monterey Bay, just down the street from the Monterey Bay Aquarium, Bubba Gumps has good food in a fun a casual atmosphere. Play movie trivia while you wait for your meal, or take your photo outside on the bench where you can pretend you are Forest Gump reciting your line about the box of chocolates. This is a great place to stop for a late lunch after working up an appetite at the Aquarium.

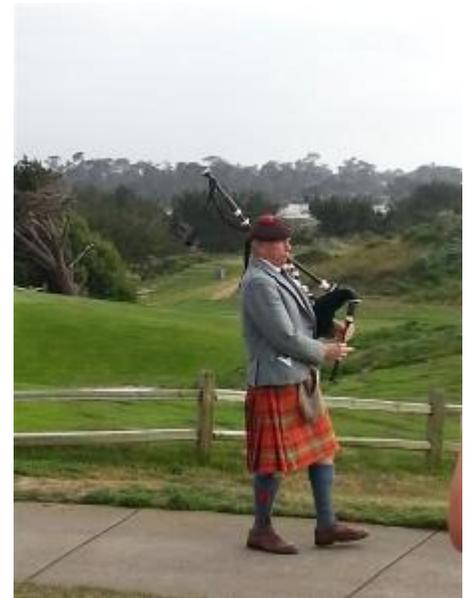
GOLF

124. **[Pebble Beach Golf Links](#)**: This course is rated #1 in the U.S for public golf courses. You'll see why as you play your way along the cliffs above the pounding surf of the Pacific Ocean. Pretend you are playing in the AT&T Pro-Am, which is held here each February. Bring plenty of golf balls.
125. **[Pacific Grove Municipal Golf Links](#)**: This is the most reasonably priced golf course on the Monterey Peninsula. The back nine offers spectacular views of the Pacific Ocean and provides a real challenge with wind sweeping across the fairways. You'll share much of the front nine with the deer that have made this course their home. If you want to play golf on the Monterey Peninsula without breaking the bank, but still having the thrill of the ocean, this is the place to play.
126. **[Spyglass Hill Golf](#)**: Rated one of the toughest courses in the world from the championship tees, you'll find plenty of challenge no matter which tees you choose. The first 5 holes make you pick your lies among sandy dunes, while the final holes take you through the pines.
127. **[The Quail](#)**: This beautiful course has just been renovated and is challenging and fun. One of the few courses that you can walk, you're likely to see deer on number 1, number 4, and number 10. For a resort style treat you can stay at the Quail Lodge and play golf, then enjoy dinner at Edgar's.
128. **[The Links at Spanish Bay](#)**: This is a Scottish links style course that will challenge you as you play your way around the natural terrain of the Monterey coastline.
129. **[Peter Hay Golf Course](#)**: This is the only 9 hole, executive, par-3 course on the Monterey Peninsula. It's located just across the street from the Pebble Beach Links Course.



ATTRACTIONS

130. **Monterey Bay Aquarium**: Experience sealife at the Aquarium. From octopus to sea horses, jelly fish to sting rays, the Monterey Bay Aquarium is a full day of ocean fun. Be sure to visit the Otter tank for a special treat. There are hands on exhibits for the kids and a tunnel where you can experience a crashing wave. There's also a theater with some pretty amazing films that take you down into the canyon of Monterey Bay. If you have never been to the Aquarium, this should be on your list.
131. **Cannery Row**: Specialty shops, art galleries, restaurants, and attractions line the street now called Cannery Row. This area was made famous by John Steinbeck in his book, Cannery Row. Although the street is now lined with shops, you can still savor the history as you stroll down the street.
132. **Carmel Mission Basilica**: Although the Carmel Mission has been a popular visitor attraction for many year, the recent sainthood of Father Junipero Serra has attracted even more visitors. You can attend services at the Mission or visit the museum.
133. **Bagpipers at Spanish Bay**: One of our favorite things to do, head out to the Inn at Spanish Bay a half hour or so before sunset. Settle yourself in on the outdoor terrace overlooking the Pacific Ocean and have some wine and appetizers. As the sun sets, you'll be rewarded with a bagpiper ascending from the beach all the way to the terrace. The music is haunting and the sunset is magnificent.
134. **Custom House Plaza**: this is the oldest government building in California. You can wander through the adobe building and look out onto the harbor just as the custom house officials did in the 1840's.
135. **Steinbeck Center**: The National Steinbeck Center is a little off the beaten path in Salinas. If you are a Steinbeck fan, you'll enjoy the trip. In addition to a lot of Steinbeck memorabilia, you can see the camper that Steinbeck used when he wrote Travels With Charlie.
136. **First Murphy House**: First Murphy House is located on Lincoln and 6th Avenue and is owned by the City of Carmel-by-the-Sea and maintained by the Carmel Heritage Society. Native plants with paths border the First Murphy House and benches surrounding the gardens are a relaxing place to stop and



catch one's breath. The First Murphy House was built in 1902 by 17-year old Michael Murphy, who went on to become one of Carmel's greatest builders. Tours of the house are available. From the gardens visitors can enjoy a spectacular view of Carmel Bay. Public restrooms are located adjacent to the park.

137. **[Old Fisherman's Wharf](#)**: Great fun for everyone. There's a large parking lot with plenty of room for everyone. Once on the wharf you can explore the shops, including crafts, clothing, jewelry, restaurants, candy, and gifts. Wander to the end and you can take the stairs for a rooftop view of the harbor, or head over to the tour boats and look for sea lions. It's definitely a tourist attraction, but worth the time.
138. **[Old Wharf next to Fisherman's Wharf](#)**: Next to the tourist 'Old Fisherman's Wharf', this wharf is a working wharf for the larger fishing ships that bring their catch into the Bay. Walk out to the end to go into one of the fish markets and you'll see how bountiful the Monterey Bay is. This isn't a tourist mecca, but it's worth the walk to get a feel for life in the Monterey Bay.
139. **[Carl Cherry Center](#)**: You need a little perseverance to find the Carl Cherry Center in Carmel. It's at 4th and Guadalupe, outside the main business district. The Center is open Monday – Friday from 11am – 4pm. Art exhibits emphasize emerging and experimental artists from the Monterey Peninsula.
140. **[Golden Bough Playhouse](#)**: The Golden Bough Theater is on the west side of Monte Verde between 8th and 9th, in the middle of a residential neighborhood. If you are in town long enough, you'll enjoy attending a performance in this small theater. You can check out the schedule on the Pacific Rep website. It's also fun to simply walk by the theater and check out the kiosk showcasing upcoming events.
141. **[Circle Theater](#)**: This is one of the most fun theaters we have ever experienced. It's tiny. It's a theater in the round. There are only a few rows of seats. When you are in the audience you feel like you are part of the stage. It's located on the back side of the Golden Bough Playhouse, on Casanova Street.



142. **Frank Lloyd Wright**
House: This home is privately owned and not open to the public, except it's occasionally on the Carmel Homes Tour. But you can get a good glimpse of the home, either by walking south on Carmel Beach to the end (the house juts out over the rocks), or by walking along Scenic (you will walk right past the house).



143. **Sunset Center**: Located at the corner of San Carlos and 8th, the Sunset Center is a major event center that draws people from all over the Monterey Peninsula.
144. **Carmel Children's Library**: If you have your kids in tow, the Carmel Children's Library is a great place to while away some time. Located on the corner of 6th and Mission, you'll find friendly librarians and some fun activities.
145. **Laguna Seca Mazda Raceway**: If you are a car racing fan, you'll want to take a trip to the Mazda Raceway. It's about 10 miles inland from Carmel, off of highway 68.
146. **Workmen's Cottages on Cannery Row** – at Bruce Ariss Way on Cannery Row, across from the Aquarium. These cottages are worth a few minutes so you can see what it was like for the workers in the sardine factories who came from Japan, Philippines, and Spain.
147. **The Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History**: This museum in Pacific Grove offers you a glimpse into the birds, insects, plants, and other wildlife that inhabit the Monterey Bay area. Admission is free.

DRIVES

148. **Highway 1 to Big Sur**: It's about 20 miles from Carmel to Big Sur along highway 1. The drive is magnificent with incredible views of the Pacific Ocean and then the pine forests in Big Sur. Do your homework before heading down to Big Sur and plan for taking some of the lesser known roads. If this is your first time to Big Sur, plan to spend most of the day.

149. **Bixby Bridge:** Bixby Creek Bridge is 10 miles south of Carmel along Highway 1. Begun in 1931 and opened in 1932, it's an architectural marvel offering incredible views and photo opportunities along the Pacific coastline. If you are heading to Big Sur, you will cross Bixby Bridge.

150. **17 Mile Drive:** Most people drive into 17 mile drive by turning off of highway 68 on their way into Pacific Grove. For a little less hectic entry, try taking the 'back way'. From Carmel, head down Ocean Avenue toward the Ocean. Turn right on San Antonio and follow the road to the guard gate going into 17 mile drive.

151. **Scenic Road, Carmel:** If you aren't up for walking, you can still enjoy the incredible view out over Carmel Beach into the Pacific. Take Scenic Road south as far as you can go. It's one way all the way to Carmel River Lagoon. You'll pass the Frank Lloyd Wright home, Carmel Beach, Carmel River Beach, and the wildlife sanctuary. This is where the road becomes 2-way, so drive carefully.



We hope you enjoy exploring our 151 Things to Do in Carmel and the Monterey Peninsula. Be sure to visit our site at ILoveCarmelCalifornia.com and sign up for our blog with lots of fantastic local tips about Carmel by the Sea.

Questions? Feel free to [Contact Us](#) anytime at ILoveCarmelCalifornia.com.

We also invite you to [Follow Us on Twitter](#) and [Like Us on Facebook](#) and on [Pinterest](#).

