

The Original Road Trip: California's Central Coast Arts & Culture



7 DAY ROAD TRIP TRAVELING FROM SAN FRANCISCO TO LOS ANGELES

DAY 1

Arrive at San Francisco International Airport (SFO) and drive to Santa Cruz County (75 mi/120 km; 1 hour 25 minutes).

DAY 2

Santa Cruz County

- History doesn't have to be stuffy! Explore a unique California Historic Landmark: the **Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk** seaside amusement park. www.beachboardwalk.com. This park is home to two National Historic Landmarks, the 1924 **Giant Dipper** wooden roller coaster, and the 1911 **Looff Carousel**. Admission to the park is free (rides are extra), a walking tour brochure costs \$3. Interpretive signs are located throughout the family amusement park, and a historium is located upstairs in **Neptune's Kingdom**. Enjoy on-site restaurants, shops, a great beach, and of course, fun rides! www.santacruzca.org

Overnight in Santa Cruz County.

DAY 3

Morning: drive to Gilroy in Santa Clara County (43 mi/69 km; 48 minutes).

Recommended drive: Hwy 1 and 101 South.

Gilroy

- **Chitactac Adams Heritage County Park** offers a unique view into the Native American culture of Santa Clara County before and after the arrival of the Spanish. A self-guided interpretive walk around the site, including eight stations with interpretive panels, is supplemented by an interpretive shelter with panels and displays. The trail panels include photographs and original art depicting Ohlone village life, Ohlone buildings, petroglyphs, Ohlone food processing, and the natural history of Spanish California and Ohlone culture in the 19th and 20th centuries. Open daily year-round from 8 a.m. to sunset, this four-acre site is located just minutes from the cities of Gilroy and Morgan Hill on Watsonville Road. Admission is free. www.gilroyvisitor.org

Drive to Monterey County (40 mi/64 km; 45 minutes).

Monterey County

- Walk Monterey's **Path of History** as a free self-guided tour of Old Monterey, marked by easy-to-distinguish yellow tiles set in the sidewalk. This walk explores the fully restored historic adobes, gardens and sites of interest, such as **Colton Hall**, where the California Constitution was created and

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California's First Theater was built. Guided tours are also available to such sites as the **Cooper Molera House and Garden, Custom House, Larkin House, Casa Soberanes**. Prior to going on the Path of History, view a short film at the **Monterey Maritime Museum** that provides a good introduction to the history of the area. www.seemonterey.com

Overnight in Monterey County.

DAY 4

Morning: drive to Hearst Castle in San Simeon (94 mi/151 km; 2 hours 10 minutes).

Recommended drive: Hwy 1 South.

Hearst Castle

- Set atop the rolling hills in San Simeon is **Hearst Castle®**, one of the most popular tourist destinations in California. Originally built as the private estate of art collector and publisher W.R. Hearst, today it is recognized worldwide for its glamour, elegance and authentic art pieces. As a California State Park, it is open to the public daily for guided tours. Feel the allure of this fascinating country house, where Mr. Hearst entertained movie stars and business tycoons with lavish dinners, private film screenings and glittering parties. Tour reservations are strongly recommended and may be made by phone at 800-444-4445 or online. www.hearstcastle.org

Continue on Hwy 1 South/101 South to Pismo Beach (54 mi/87 km; 1 hour).

Pismo Beach

- **The Great American Melodrama & Vaudeville** offers visitors an atmosphere of old-time theater complete with cabaret tables, sawdust on the floor, and honky-tonk piano music. Professional performers present top-notch productions of great classic comedies, melodramas and thrillers. www.classicalifornia.com

Overnight in Pismo Beach.

DAY 5

Drive south on Hwy 101 to Santa Maria (20 mi/32 km; 21 minutes).

Santa Maira

- Hollywood props fly high at the **Santa Maria Museum of Flight**. Among the museum's featured movie props are an H1 Racer from **The Aviator**, a full-scale Wright glider from **Winds of Kitty Hawk** and a large radio-controlled model airplane that flew in the **Flight of The Phoenix**. Even the museum's main building is an original wooden hangar that was featured in the movie **The Rocketeer**. A custom acrobatic plane from **The Rocketeer** is also featured. However, there's much more than Hollywood at the heart of this little museum, which features a variety of planes, models,

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photos, memorabilia and exhibits, including a restored F4 fighter jet that served in Vietnam and a 1929 Fleet biplane. www.santamaria.com

Continue on 101 South to Santa Ynez Valley and Solvang, (36 mi/58 km; 37 minutes).

Santa Ynez Valley and Solvang

- **Wildling Art Museum's** new facility in Los Olivos is one of eight **Santa Ynez Valley Museums**. The new building in Los Olivos opened in February 2009 and celebrates the nation's wild places as seen through the eyes of its finest painters, printmakers, photographers, and sculptors. It is the only museum in the United States with this sole focus. Other Santa Ynez Valley cultural attractions include the **Santa Ynez Valley Historical Museum & Carriage House** in Santa Ynez; **History Rooms** in Los Alamos and Buellton; **Elverhoj Museum of History & Art**; **Hans Christian Andersen Museum**; **Vintage Motorcycle Museum** and **Old Mission Santa Ines Museum** in Solvang. www.syvva.com
- Every summer from June through September, the **PCPA's (Pacific Conservatory of Performing Arts)** productions of live, professional plays, musicals and comedies are performed under the stars at the **Solvang Festival Theater**, a 700-seat venue in the half-round. Located downtown within easy walking distance of hotels and restaurants, numerous overnight packages and dinner specials are available—for both individuals and groups. www.solvangusa.com

Overnight in Solvang.

DAY 6

Drive to Santa Barbara (33 mi/53 km; 45 minutes).

Recommended drive: 154/San Marcos Pass Rd.

Santa Barbara

- Don't miss the **Old Mission Santa Barbara**, the 10th of the California Missions founded by the Spanish Franciscans and the only one to be continuously occupied and used since its founding in 1786. Self-guided tours begin in the gift shop and explore eight restored rooms, the cloister gardens, chapel, historic cemetery, and beautiful Moorish fountain and courtyard. Its beautiful setting, unique twin bell towers, and lovely façade have earned it the title "Queen of Missions." Customizable docent-led group tours are also available and provide a memorable experience for visitors. www.santabarbaraca.com

Continue south along the coast to Ventura (28 mi/45 km; 30 minutes).

Recommended drive: 101 South.

Ventura

- **The Olivas Adobe** is an outstanding example of a two-story Monterey-style adobe. Don Raymundo Olivas built the Olivas Adobe after he received a Mexican land grant in 1841. Visitors can tour the

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Adobe's lovely garden, which contains 100-year-old fuchsias and a grape arbor dating from the early California Mission period. Visitors can also see exhibits of the Olivas family photographs in the parlor and period furnishings in the other rooms. The Adobe's outside grounds are open daily, with docent-guided tours on Saturday and Sunday, 10am to 4pm. www.ventura-usa.com

Continue south along the coast to Oxnard (11 mi/18 km; 15 minutes).

Oxnard

- Fresh. Fabulous. Retro. You'll find all three in downtown Oxnard at **Fresh & Fabulous Café and Bakery** located in the restored Woolworth Building. Retro-style vinyl booths and '60s-style lighting mix with modern-day healthy treats for a one-of-a-kind dining experience. After your meal, tour the nation's only **Woolworth Museum** located adjacent to the café. On display are lunch counter menus and memorabilia, original signs from the '30s, and a 1940s take-your-own photo booth. Journey further back in time to **Heritage Square**, just three blocks away, to tour an impressive collection of late 19th and early 20th century houses. www.visitoxnard.com

Overnight in Oxnard.

DAY 7

Drive to Los Angeles (62 mi/100 km; 1 hour 12 minutes).

Recommended drive: 101 South & 405 South.

Depart from Los Angeles International Airport (LAX).