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REDDING



Caroline Beteta

As I sit down to write this note on a Friday morning in May 2020, it's easy to imagine another typically glorious day in California. Today's forecast in Los Angeles calls for low humidity, temperatures in the mid-70s, and not a cloud in the sky—perfect weather for a beach outing or brunch under the sun. The mercury will rise a bit higher in Napa and Sonoma wine country—the grapes really like that—but things will cool down

after sunset, creating an ideal environment for sipping a glass of Pinot Noir or Cabernet Sauvignon with that special someone.

Under normal circumstances, nature lovers would be flocking to Yosemite National Park on a day like today. Disneyland Resort and Universal Studios Hollywood would be bustling with excitement. Hotels, restaurants, shops, and museums would all be full, and road trippers would be exploring every nook and cranny of the state, eagerly anticipating whatever awaits around the next bend.

These aren't normal circumstances, of course. The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted travel across the globe, placing unprecedented limits on our ability to explore the world around us.

Nobody knows for sure when the virus will subside to the point where people will be ready to travel again, but I do know this: When the time is right, California will welcome all visitors with open arms.

With that in mind, I invite you to peruse the road trip itineraries we've created for you here. Whether you're a first-time visitor or a longtime resident, there's an endless supply of experiences to discover in the Golden State. So go ahead. Let yourself dream a little. It's allowed.

We very much look forward to seeing you soon.

CAROLINE BETETA
PRESIDENT AND CEO, VISIT CALIFORNIA



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Alturas	-	577	374	281	471	689	457	724	676	144	302	810	358	419	571	676	369
Bakersfield	577	-	227	631	110	112	245	147	216	438	277	233	294	243	122	147	341
Bishop	374	227	-	618	337	267	350	257	301	400	272	354	368	371	366	322	368
Crescent City	281	631	618	-	549	729	470	764	834	213	375	850	365	401	585	690	302
Fresno	471	110	337	549	-	219	154	254	324	331	171	340	187	151	139	255	234
Los Angeles	689	112	267	729	219	-	321	37	107	545	385	121	382	341	201	95	428
Monterey	457	245	350	470	154	321	-	382	451	316	187	465	116	72	145	250	170
Ontario	724	147	257	764	254	37	382	-	71	580	420	114	416	375	238	132	463
Palm Springs	676	216	301	834	324	107	451	71	-	660	489	137	511	445	308	202	533
Redding	144	438	400	213	331	345	316	580	660	-	160	666	216	247	430	535	227
Sacramento	302	277	272	375	171	385	187	420	489	160	-	509	87	118	300	400	98
San Diego	810	233	354	850	340	121	465	114	137	666	509	-	502	461	325	216	549
San Francisco	358	294	368	365	187	382	116	416	511	216	87	502	-	48	232	337	55
San José	419	243	371	401	151	341	72	375	445	247	118	461	48	-	186	291	102
San Luis Obispo	571	122	366	585	139	201	145	238	308	430	300	325	232	186	-	106	283
Santa Barbara	676	147	322	690	255	95	250	132	202	535	400	216	337	291	106	-	388
Santa Rosa	369	341	368	302	234	428	170	463	533	227	98	549	55	102	283	388	-



CALIFORNIA WELCOME CENTERS™

Get helpful travel information and tips at the state's official Welcome Centers. Pick up free guides, talk to local experts, and get tips on dining and activities. Note that services and hours may be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

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SANTA ROSA • 9 Fourth St.; 800/404-7673
SAN FRANCISCO • PIER 39, Unit B16, 2nd Level; 415/981-1280

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- State Capital
- California Welcome Center™
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- NM National Monument
- NP National Park
- NRA National Recreation Area
- NS National Seashore
- SP State Park

DISTANCE: 110 MILES • STARTS: SAN DIEGO

San Diego to Anza-Borrego

Head east from the sunny beaches to reach surreal desert landscapes

Anza-Borrego Desert State Park bares its desert soul at The Slot. The twisting canyon's silt-stone walls reveal the landscape dissected, the earth's crust sliced open by time and water. A stroll through this buff-colored canyon will inspire you to explore much more of San Diego County and Anza-Borrego.

To get there, meander through **San Diego's** eastern outback. Twenty minutes from downtown, stop at Mission Trails Regional Park, where an architecturally striking visitor center offers exhibits on Kumeyaay Indian life, and the Cowles Mountain Trail delivers a 360-degree city view. Farther east on Interstate 8, go see **El Cajon's** off-the-radar gems. Relive the 19th-century Old West at the Olaf Wieghorst Museum, its walls lined with horse and cowboy paintings. Savor an hour at Summers Past Farms—sip tea among the spring-blooming sweet peas, relax on the patio, or shop for herbal soaps and garden art.

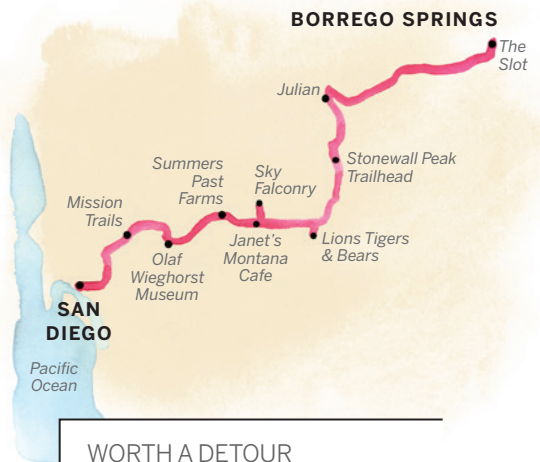
Push east to **Alpine** for an unforgettable raptor experience. At Sky Falconry, a magnificent Harris's hawk will land softly on your gloved hand. Afterward, satisfy your hunger with a half-pound burger underneath the antler chandeliers at Janet's Montana Cafe, then interact with the animals at Lions Tigers & Bears, a big cat and exotic animal rescue facility.

Wind north on scenic Highway 79 to Cuyamaca Rancho State Park, where 130 miles

of trails wait to be explored. Bag the summit of 5,730-foot Stonewall Peak for a sweeping view that takes in Mount San Gorgonio, Mount San Jacinto, and the Salton Sea.

End your day in the apple-rich mining town of **Julian**. Sample the famous buttery-crust pies at Mom's Pie House, Julian Pie Company, or Apple Alley. Tuck in at the old-world Julian Gold Rush Hotel, then join Eagle Mining Co. for a morning tour of the Eagle and High Peak Mine to learn about Julian's 1870s Gold Rush.

Afterward, make a dramatic descent from the mountains on Banner Grade's tight curlicues, losing 4,000 feet in elevation. Once you've reached **Anza-Borrego Desert State Park** near Borrego Springs, head straight to The Slot. Squeeze through its narrow walls, walk under its gravity-defying arch, and shoot endless photos in this surreal desert canyon.



WORTH A DETOUR

Snack stop: In Santa Ysabel, try the specialty breads—like date nut raisin and jalapeño cheese—at Dudley's Bakery.

Spiny flora: Drive Old Kane Spring Road off Hwy. 78 to see Anza-Borrego's Cactus Garden with nine different species.

AREA OF DETAIL



Desert wow: Go off-roading in luxury with California Overland Desert Excursions Jeep tours in Anza-Borrego.



LEGOLAND California Resort

DISTANCE: 180 MILES • STARTS: SAN DIEGO

Classic Southern California Tour

Enjoy craft beer, whale watching, hiking, and ocean views

If craft beer is king in San Diego County, Stone Brewing World Bistro and Gardens is the royal palace. The Escondido bistro is more than an IPA mecca—it's an oasis of lush gardens and farm-to-table food. Follow this horseshoe-shaped trip to find sunny beaches, relaxed wineries, and two theme parks before reaching Stone's sudsy paradise.

If you've just landed in **San Diego** and need a snack, go to Liberty Public Market, which offers a smorgasbord of flavors under one roof. Taste empanadas, artisan cheese, and brown-sugar popcorn from more than 30 vendors. Head to nearby SeaWorld San Diego to ride aquatic-themed coasters and learn about marine life, then keep with that theme at **La Jolla Cove**, where you can watch sea lions bask in the sun. For an up-close look, select a vessel at La Jolla Kayak, or pay a few bucks at The Cave Store and descend a wooden staircase to a sea cave. Enjoy ocean views as you

head north on Highway 101 to **Carlsbad**, where kids will love LEGOLAND California's The LEGO Movie World, complete with a Unikitty-themed ride. Make a reservation at Jeune et Jolie, where the French-Cali dishes are as pretty as the Art Deco-inspired decor.

The next morning, head up Interstate 5 to **Dana Point** (aka the Dolphin and Whale Watching Capital of the World) and spend the day with Dana Wharf Sportfishing & Whale Watching. For a one-of-a-kind experience, book the Curlew, a 1920s classic schooner complete with two staterooms and a dining saloon.

Once your land legs return, kiss the ocean goodbye and venture east on State Route 74. Fill your pockets with old-fashioned treats at Ortega Oaks Candy Store in **Lake Elsinore** before taking the trailhead across the street to Ortega Falls, which flows spring through fall.

Continuing east, you'll spot shimmering Lake Elsinore before turning south on Interstate



WORTH A DETOUR

Moment of zen: Stroll through the Meditation Gardens at Encinitas' Self-Realization Fellowship to enjoy tropical plants and ocean vistas.

Route 78: Explore more Hops Highway hot spots like Ebullition Brew Works, Belching Beaver, and Iron Fist Brewing.

AREA OF DETAIL



Taste of history: Get a sense of San Diego's Mexican and 19th-century roots in Old Town State Historic Park.

15 into **Temecula Valley**. Sleep among the vines at the Ponte Vineyard Inn, which sits within walking distance to three wineries. Wake up and head south on I-15 to **Stone Brewing** where you'll taste brews and explore the lovely one-acre grounds.



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NO SUNSET SHALL GO UNWATCHED.

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HORIZONS ARE MEANT TO BE CHASED.

BUCKLED IN IS WHERE WE ARE MOST FREE.



California
dream big



DISTANCE: 96 MILES • STARTS: LOS ANGELES

Kid-Friendly Adventure

Visit theme parks, beaches, and more on this perfect family trip

People travel from all over the world to visit Southern California's beaches and theme parks, and this family-friendly drive from Los Angeles to Anaheim has epic adventures in both categories and more.

Start your journey at Universal Studios Hollywood's *The Secret Life of Pets: Off the Leash*, a new experience that travels into a simulated New York City and introduces visitors to 64 animated figures from the movie. Enjoy some of the park's thrill rides based on movie magic, such as *Harry Potter and the Forbidden Journey* and *Jurassic World—The Ride*, and don't miss *The World-Famous Studio Tour* to go behind the scenes at the working lot.

Leaving Universal, you'll find different types of amusement around **Los Angeles**. The fun is more old-fashioned at Griffith Park's Travel Town Museum, where everyone loves the miniature train rides. Then again, who doesn't love dinosaurs? In Exposition Park at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County's Dinosaur Hall, see a trio of T-Rex skeletons and even touch a 65-million-year-old triceratops fossil.

Continue south into Orange County and catch a wave in **Huntington Beach** (aka Surf City USA) during lessons with Corky Carroll's Surf School. Afterward, grab a bite at Huntington Beach Pier, where choices range from poke tacos at Duke's Huntington Beach to classic burgers at Ruby's Diner.



Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County

Then go for more seaside fun and an iconic treat at **Newport Beach's Balboa Island**, birthplace of Balboa Bars, a slab of ice cream on a stick that's dipped in chocolate and smothered with toppings. Chill out some more with skating at **Irvine's** Great Park Ice, which offers equipment rentals and lessons. If you'd rather leave the double axels to the pros, dig into tacos or flatbread pizzas at *Between the Rinks*, a restaurant with tables overlooking the ice.

Budget plenty of time in **Anaheim** at Disneyland Resort's two theme parks to experience all the classic rides and to check out the newer attractions, like *Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge*, the 14-acre land that embraces the best of the iconic movie series. Before you arrive, download the Disneyland app to find out wait times, access the time-saving MaxPass, order food, and even track down strolling characters during your visit.



WORTH A DETOUR

Scenic vista: Laguna Beach's Top of the World Overlook boasts views that extend to Santa Catalina Island.

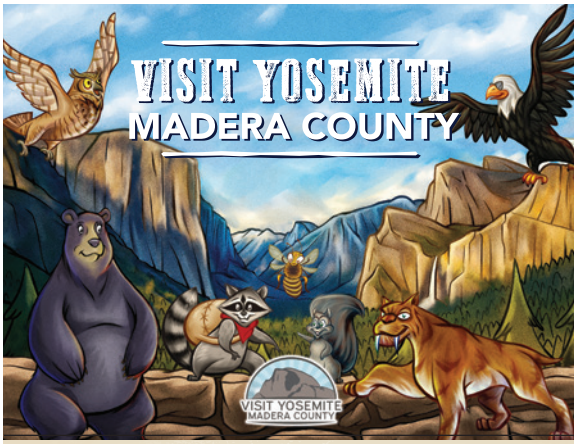
Tour a famous ship: Check out the Queen Mary in Long Beach—you can even spend the night in a stateroom or cabin.

AREA OF DETAIL



Retail splurge: Venture to Costa Mesa to shop at South Coast Plaza, home to more than 250 luxury stores.

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Visit TenayaLodge.com or call 888.514.2167



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AT YOSEMITE



DISTANCE: 131 MILES • STARTS: LOS ANGELES

L.A. to Big Bear Lake

Explore urban gems en route to a mountain escape

Snowflakes and ski hills lure **Big Bear**'s winter visitors, but the rest of the year, this Southern California alpine getaway is prime for hiking, biking, and lakefront fun. Big Bear's 6,750-foot elevation offers big benefits—cool temps, a shoreline rimmed with pines, and dozens of trails. Hike up Castle Rock Trail for close encounters with massive granite boulders and peeks at the lake, or mountain bike along Skyline Trail's vista-filled single-track. Work up a sweat, then cool off with a swim around China Island.

Big Bear is located just a few hours east of Los Angeles International Airport, and this itinerary features some fascinating attractions en route. Stop along the way in **Pasadena**, where you can park your car and walk from one museum to another. See works by Rodin, Rembrandt, and Renoir at the Norton Simon Museum, discover Finnish folk art at the Pasadena Museum of History, and tour prizewinning American Arts and Crafts architecture at the Gamble House. Across town at the Huntington Library, stroll 120 acres of meticulous gardens, then go indoors to view rare books and art.

Head a few miles east to pick up your own rare and common cacti or succulents at the California Cactus Center in East Pasadena, then continue on to **Arcadia**, where you can wander the Los Angeles County Arboretum's paths feature free-roaming peacocks, a waterfall, and the cottage made famous by the TV series *Fantasy Island*.

Back on the freeway, cut south to the college town of **Claremont**. Sample duck tacos and grilled pears at Bardot, then

drop into the Claremont Museum of Art to view Millard Sheets' colorful California landscapes. In nearby **Ontario**, get schooled on all things California at the California Welcome Center, then linger for browsing at Ontario Mills' 200-plus shops.

Continue a few miles into San Bernardino County to **Redlands**, a city built on citrus. Sweet navel oranges fostered vast Victorian wealth, grandly displayed in ornate "Marmalade Mansions." Tour the 1897 Kimberly Crest House, a French chateau with formal Italian gardens, then sample Hangar 24 Brewery's orange wheat beer.

Departing Redlands, snake through a twisty ascent on postcard-vista roads to **Big Bear Lake**. Sleep in comfort at The Club at Big Bear Village, then zip over to Boulder Bay for a morning kayak paddle.



WORTH A DETOUR

Go for a cruise: Hop on the Lake Arrowhead Queen, then soak in a tub at Lake Arrowhead Resort and Spa.

Photo opp: Rain or shine, 400 brightly colored umbrellas form a canopy over Redlands' Orange Street Alley.

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Channel Islands National Park

DISTANCE: 369 MILES • STARTS: MONTEREY

Monterey to Channel Islands National Park

Natural wonders abound on this Central Coast journey

Road trips don't usually end on islands. But just a short boat ride away from Ventura or Oxnard, the pristine beaches and rolling hills of **Channel Islands National Park** await. Starting in **Monterey**, this trip ranges inland before returning to the ocean, with amusement park rides for the kids, wine tastings for adults, and plenty of beauty for everyone along the way.

See playful otters and a 28-foot-tall kelp forest tank at the Monterey Bay Aquarium. Then play at Gilroy Gardens, the horticultural theme park where rides offer younger kids just the right thrill. Snake into a forest on the Timber Twister Coaster or glide through a greenhouse on the Sky Trail Monorail.

There are more rides, including a double-deck carousel, at **Hollister's** Casa de Fruta, a farm stand that grew into a can't-miss destination for its dried fruit and fresh-baked pies. In **San Luis Obispo**, stay at the eclectic Madonna Inn in themed rooms, such as the grotto-like

Caveman suite (complete with a bathroom waterfall).

Explore the nearby Pismo State Beach Monarch Butterfly Grove, where thousands of black-and-orange beauties congregate from October to February. Break up the drive in **Los Alamos**, a sleepy ranching town just off U.S. 101 that has emerged as a culinary destination; Bell's is the place for California-inspired French bistro cuisine.

Farther south, climb along chaparral-covered slopes to sweeping panoramas from 2,458-foot Gaviota Peak at Gaviota State Park. When it's time to fuel up, head to **Santa Barbara's** La Super-Rica Taqueria, the landmark (and cash-only) stand where tacos prepared with freshly made corn tortillas and such classics as chile rellenos keep lines perpetually long. Worth the wait? Definitely.

In Ventura, get into the spirit of your upcoming adventure with steamed clams and harbor views at Brophy Bros. Seafood & Clam Bar. **Channel Islands**

WORTH A DETOUR

See a masterpiece: Experience the splendors of Hearst Castle, where tours lead through the opulent rooms and suites.

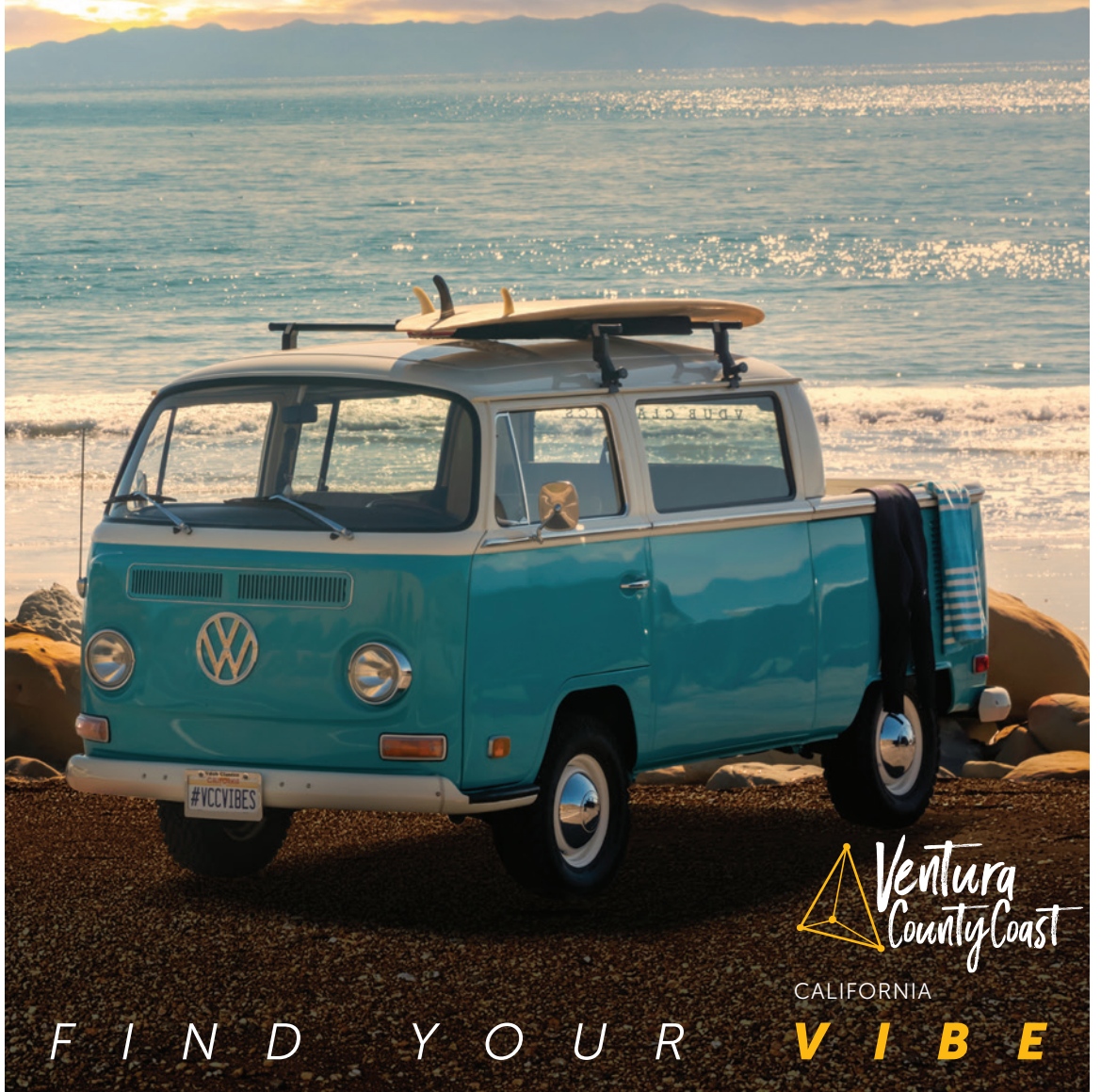
Scenic vista: Take in the craggy volcanic spires of Pinnacles National Park along the High Peaks Trail.

History lesson: Mission San Miguel is notable for its graceful, one-of-a-kind colonnade with 12 arches of varying sizes.



National Park is only an hour away by boat, and soon you'll be exploring the park nicknamed "the American Galapagos" for its unique plant and animal life. Hike to pristine views, paddle a kayak to sea caves, or snorkel to spot the bright-orange garibaldi (the state fish) and bat rays.

Road Trip Vibes



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OXNARD

VENTURA

PORT HUENEME



DISTANCE: 266 MILES • STARTS: FRESNO

Fresno to Fairfield

Find a variety of treats on this colorful Central Valley drive

Drives don't get more colorful than this trip from the sweet-smelling orchards along the Fresno Blossom Trail to the rainbow-hued candies at Fairfield's Jelly Belly California factory.

Fly into Fresno Yosemite International Airport for easy access to Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks, Yosemite National Park, and the Central Valley highlights on this tour. First, head to the **Fresno Blossom Trail** for a burst of fragrance through the orchards of stone fruit, citrus, and apples. The bloom peaks in February and March, but throughout the year you can pick up produce at Simonian Farms and the trail's other farm stands.

Head northwest on Highway 99 to explore wetlands and look for tule elk, migrating waterfowl, and San Joaquin kit foxes on auto tours and nature trails at San Luis National Wildlife Refuge. For a look at the history of the Central Valley, the Great Valley Museum in **Modesto** has exhibits on five different local habitats, as well as collections of Yokut and Miwok Indian artifacts. Planetarium shows on Saturdays transport visitors into the distant reaches of outer space.

Continue north on 99 and stop at Midgley's Public House in **Stockton** for a hearty bowl of French onion soup or prime rib sliders. For dessert, continue to Michael David Winery in **Lodi**, which draws visitors for not only its burly Zinfandels, but also a café and bakery that serves pies baked with a family recipe

(rhubarb is a big favorite).

Walk off lunch along the 3.3-mile Cosumnes River Walk, which edges sloughs and travels through stands of native valley oak. Nearby in **Clarksburg**, it's all about grapes at the Old Sugar Mill, a one-stop destination with more than a dozen wineries for tastings, including the single vineyard Zinfandel at Todd Taylor Wines.

Explore more of California's crops at the UC Davis Arboretum and Public Garden, where three different mile-long loops lead through collections of native plants and species. Save the sweets for last and venture southeast on Interstate 80 to reach **Fairfield**'s Jelly Belly Candy Company. At the factory, three different tours show how these colorful treats are made (and include free samples). Combine beans to find your favorite new flavor combination and buy a pack for the road at the Jelly Belly Candy Store.



San Joaquin Valley



WORTH A DETOUR

Walk break: Explore the Delta, California's "Inland Coast," along trails at Big Break Regional Shoreline park.

Scenic vista: Climb to a plateau at Rockville Hills Regional Park for commanding views of the 3,848-foot Mount Diablo.

Raise a glass: Discover a changing collection of limited-edition and reserve beers at Isleton's Mei Wah Beer Room.



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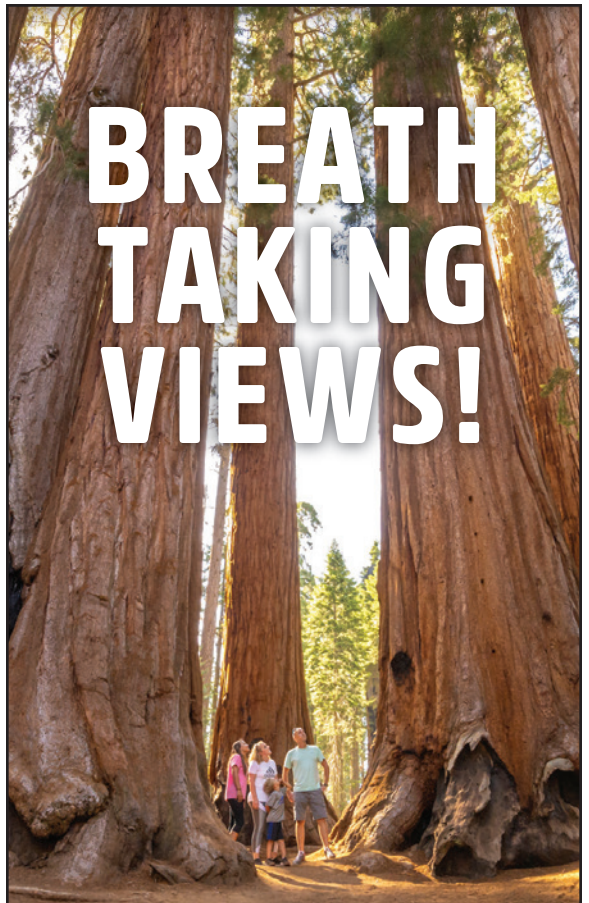
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San Francisco

DISTANCE: 144 MILES • STARTS: OAKLAND

Bay Area Culinary Tour

Taste your way from Oakland to the heart of wine country

This tour begins in the Bay Area, moves north through the farmlands of Marin County, and hits hot spots in Sonoma County and Napa Valley, with good bites and slurps at every turn.

Start in **Oakland** at the Ordinaire Wine Shop & Wine Bar to sample a dizzying selection of Sonoma's organic wines and cheeses. Then cross the Bay Bridge to **San Francisco**, where The Presidio has 1,500 acres of waterfront parklands with museums, hiking trails, and the Inn at the Presidio, with its daily wine-and-cheese reception for guests. Eat at the Presidio Social Club and sip from its robust regional wine list.

Drive the famed Highway 101 across the Golden Gate Bridge into the farmlands of **Marin** and **Sonoma**. When you see cows, it means you're in California cheese country. Pass **Novato** and skip onto side roads for samples and a picnic at the Marin French Cheese Co., founded in 1865. Continue north to **Petaluma** and order a pint at

HenHouse Brewing Company before continuing east to grab an irresistible ham biscuit at Lou's Luncheonette in **Sonoma**.

In **Yountville**, stock up on Nutter Butters and OhOh's at Thomas Keller's Bouchon Bakery, secure artisanal provisions of all sorts at Oakville Grocery, and then order your burger of choice at the iconic Gott's Roadside in **St. Helena**.

Head north to Francis Ford Coppola Winery in **Geyserville**, where you can choose from a variety of regular or reserve tastings, take a dip in the outdoor pool on a hot summer day, or even go on a vineyard scavenger hunt around the picturesque hilltop grounds. If you still have room for a meal, try the excellent on-site Italian restaurant, then check out an exhibit on the director's films and play a round of backgammon or bocce surrounded by landscaped lawns.

Relax overnight at the nearby Geyserville Inn, where bright, airy rooms overlook the vineyards and forested hills of Sonoma. With tasting rooms in



WORTH A DETOUR

Creative break: Visit the museums, gardens, and venues in Berkeley's cultural heart—the Downtown Arts District.

Shuck oysters: Buy a bucket of the famous local product to shuck at the Tomales Bay Oyster Company.

Open-air shopping: Check out Sebastopol's The Barlow, a

AREA OF DETAIL



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Heritagevalley.net



OXNARD

Mix things up in Oxnard, where Pacific Coast Highway meets Highway 101. Oxnard is home to miles of pristine white sand beaches, electric nightlife, some of the best taquerias in the state, world-class museums, the California Strawberry Festival, Dallas Cowboys Training Camp and an expansively picturesque harbor that serves as the closest access point to the Channel Islands National Park.

VisitOxnard.com | 805/385-7545





Point Reyes

DISTANCE: 360 MILES • **STARTS:** SAN FRANCISCO

San Francisco to the North Coast

Expect scenic stops along the ruggedly beautiful coastline

With its lush forest and dramatic sea cliffs, the destination-worthy **Patrick's Point State Park** is one of the most ruggedly romantic square miles in the state—and it beckons couples to tie the knot here on its aptly named Wedding Rock.

Let the park's crashing waves call you northward from **San Francisco**. Start your journey at Lands End, where you can hike along a coastal trail to spot offshore shipwrecks and ruins of the Sutro Baths. Stop in the swanky Cliff House for panoramic views served alongside Bloody Marys, before driving across the Golden Gate Bridge.

Snake along the protected coastline of Point Reyes National Seashore before stopping in **Marshall** for local oysters, served bubbling hot off the barbecue at Nick's Cove. Next, cut east through Sonoma County to **Healdsburg**. Window shop and sip your way through the historic downtown, stopping by intimate tasting rooms like Selby Winery,

Banshee Wines, and Siduri.

Continue along Highway 101 and State Route 128 to The Bewildered Pig in **Philo**. This perfectly out-of-the-way foodie mecca serves a prix fixe tasting menu highlighted by locally foraged vegetables and herbs. Jump back in the car to find your resting spot 30 minutes north at the elegant Little River Inn, overlooking the Van Damme State Park beach.

The next morning, spend a few hours strolling through Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens in **Fort Bragg**. The 2.5-mile trail loops through manicured gardens and wildflower fields. Continue north as Highway 1 curves away from the coast, leaving beach scrub for giant sequoias. Enjoy the tunnel of green through groves of 2,000-year-old trees.

After a forest-filled drive, **Ferndale's** colorful Victorian village will surprise and delight. In the 1850s, Danish immigrants created a bustling dairy industry, using their fortunes to



WORTH A DETOUR

Photo opp: Take the 450-foot-long pedestrian bridge down to the Muir Beach Overlook.

Go horseback riding: In Elk, choose between a forest or beach jaunt on one of Ross Ranch's trusty steeds.

Fallen giant: In Humboldt Redwoods State Park, marvel at the Dyerville Giant—thought to be the largest tree on earth before its falling in 1991.

build what locals call "butterfat palaces." Marvel at wraparound porches and gingerbread trims before heading to your final destination, 47 miles north. Reserve a campground to enjoy the full **Patrick's Point** experience—ending the day with a sunset over the rocky outcroppings and starting a morning surrounded by birdsong.

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Information for this card will not be provided after March 31, 2021.





Hetch Hetchy

DISTANCE: 168 MILES • STARTS: SACRAMENTO

Sacramento to Hetch Hetchy Valley

Gold Rush history and Yosemite's expansive wilderness await

In Hetch Hetchy Valley in Yosemite National Park, sheer granite cliffs and domes frame an eight-mile-long lake, its edges graced by gushing cataracts. Hetch Hetchy Reservoir's most important job is supplying 2.7 million Californians with drinking water, but nature lovers are drawn to its pristine meadows and quiet backcountry trails.

Take advantage of the flourishing coffee scene in **Sacramento** and fuel up with a Temple Coffee pour-over or a Chocolate Fish nitro flash brew to start your journey. Sweep through Highway 16's rolling grasslands to join Highway 49 winding south to **Sutter Creek**. Browse Fine Eye Gallery for one-of-a-kind jewelry, and watch artists transform molten glass into vases at Chaos Glassworks. Get a blacksmithing lesson at Knight Foundry, a relic from mining days. Rest up at the elegant Hanford House Inn, then move on to **Jackson** in the morning. Tour the Kennedy Gold Mine

to learn how 1800s miners extracted gold from hard rock. Lunch on a goat cheese salad or lamb burger at farm-to-fork Rosebud's Cafe, then push south on 49, slowing down for the Mokelumne River canyon's tight curves.

East of **Angels Camp**, stretch your legs with a walk to Natural Bridges, a limestone cave you can swim through, or explore the magnificent underground world at Moaning Caverns. Proceed to **Jamestown**, where Railtown 1897 State Historic Park offers excursion rides on steam locomotives. A long, zig-zagging ascent up Highway 120 brings you to **Groveland**. Poke into the Iron Door Saloon, California's oldest continuously operating bar, its ceiling covered in crumpled dollar bills. Then drive out to Rainbow Pool for a dip in the Tuolumne River's chilly waters.

Cruise north to Yosemite's **Hetch Hetchy** entrance and stroll across O'Shaughnessy Dam's concrete crest. On the

SACRAMENTO



WORTH A DETOUR

Photo opp: Capture an inspiring mountain landscape at Minaret Vista in Mammoth Lakes.

More adventure: Kayak or canoe around the strange tufa towers in the high-alkaline waters of Mono Lake in the Eastern Sierra.

Sip side trip: Tiny Plymouth overflows with vineyards: Try Scott Harvey Wines, Helwig Vineyards, and Sobon Estate.

AREA OF DETAIL



dam's far side, a two-mile trail traces the shoreline to boisterous Wapama Falls, roaring with spring snowmelt.

After a hike in Hetch Hetchy, a microbrew will hit the spot, so backtrack to Evergreen Lodge. With a cabin here or at sister property Rush Creek Lodge, you can roast s'mores and stay up late to admire the stars.

DISTANCE: 325 MILES • STARTS: SACRAMENTO

Exploring Shasta Cascade's Wonders

Uncover the treasures of this remote, magical region

A mighty snow-capped volcano—14,179 feet high and 17 miles wide—reigns over Northern California. The largest stratovolcano in the Cascade Range, Mount Shasta's massive cone can be seen from 150 miles away—and this trip takes you right to it.

Starting in **Sacramento**, venture north on Highway 99 to **Yuba City**, where the jagged outline of the Sutter Buttes marks the smallest mountain range in the world. Fuel up with a Cubano and blue-cheese fries at Justin's Kitchen, then drive around the Buttes' eroded lava domes—you can circle the entire range in an hour. (Or join a guided hike with Middle Mountain Foundation.)

Ramble north toward **Gridley**, driving through Gray Lodge Wildlife Area to see thousands of snow geese and waterfowl in fall and winter. From May to July, walk Lavender Ranch's fragrant purple flower fields. Keep spinning north to **Chico**'s Sierra Nevada Brewery, a pioneer in

California's craft beer revolution. Tour the sleek, eco-friendly brew house, then hike or bike along Big Chico Creek Canyon in Bidwell Park. Don't leave town without splurging at Shubert's Ice Cream & Candy, Chico's sweet spot for handmade chocolates and peanut brittle.

Twenty minutes north in tiny **Vina**, Trappist-Cistercian monks welcome guests to New Clairvaux Vineyard. Sip Syrah and Tempranillo handcrafted by monks and supervised by Aimée Sunseri, a fifth-generation California winemaker.

Two more hours on the road takes you past Lassen Volcanic National Park to **Old Station**. Explore underground at Subway Cave, a pitch-black tunnel formed by a 20,000-year-old lava flow. Veer north on Highway 89, then pull over at **McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial State Park** to see 129-foot-high Burney Falls.

Keep winding north to the upscale logging town of **McCloud**, where plush beds await



WORTH A DETOUR

Marvel-worthy: Explore the out-of-this-world volcanic features at Lassen Volcanic National Park.

Photo opp: Hike to Gray Butte's summit from Panther Meadows Campground for great shots of Mount Shasta.

Hike stop: Explore jagged peaks and alpine meadows along 600 miles of trails in the Trinity Alps Wilderness.

AREA OF DETAIL



at the McCloud Mercantile Hotel. In the morning, ascend to 7,900 feet on Mount Shasta via the vista-filled Everitt Memorial Highway from downtown **Mt. Shasta City**. Hike the Horse Camp Trail amid mountain wildflowers or go snowshoeing at Bunny Flat.



Mount Shasta

DISTANCE: 119 MILES • STARTS: LAKE TAHOE

Lake Tahoe to Gold Country

Discover alpine fun and underground wonders

Two hundred feet below the surface in California Gold Country, the auditorium-sized chambers of Black Chasm Cavern hold a rare treasure trove of glittering crystals, spiky stalactites, and North America's largest display of twisting, curling, glass-like helictite formations. This natural wonder is literally a hidden gem, a worthwhile conclusion to a road trip of discovery from Lake Tahoe through the hills and valleys of central California.

Starting at an elevation of 6,200 feet on the shores of **South Lake Tahoe**, explore the inlets and beaches by boat or kayak, then soar upward in a gondola at Heavenly to zip-line and climb at its Epic Discovery Park (summer only). Make your base the convenient Hotel Becket, gobble up fish tacos and local ales lakeside at Riva Grill, then hit the road, taking Highway 50 winding westward through the Sierra Nevada.

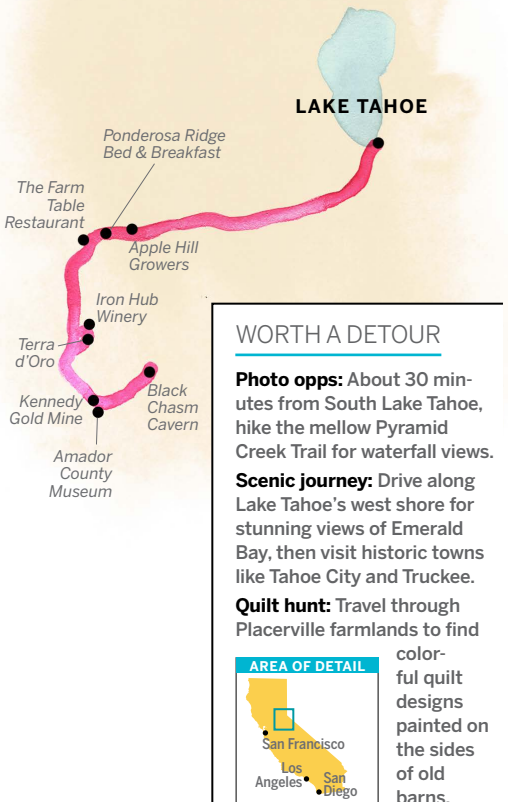
Sample the fresh bounty of California's farm-to-fork heartland at some of the 50 family-run farms and wineries of Apple Hill Growers near **Placerville** (check in advance for seasonal openings). Nearby, stay at the homey Ponderosa Ridge A Bed & Breakfast, overlooking a three-acre orchard. See the creative uses for all this produce at The Farm Table Restaurant (try the homemade sausages or turkey-pumpkin panini). Get dessert at the Hangman's Tree Ice Cream Saloon next door, underneath an outlaw hanging from the façade of the historic structure.

Across the rolling hills of Highway 49 about 30 minutes south, the emerging wine country of **Amador County** has 45 wineries as of yet escaping the tourist crowds of Napa. Sample wines in the scenic tasting room of the 50-year-old Terra d'Oro Winery in **Plymouth**, then stop by the Iron Hub Winery to fuel your trip onward with wine and soup pairings.

Dive into 19th-century Gold Rush history along Highway 49 at Kennedy Gold Mine and the Amador County Museum near **Jackson**. But even the gleam of gold can't compare to nature's million-year-old rock sculptures revealed in tours through Black Chasm Cavern in the hills above **Volcano** off of Highway 88. This National Natural Landmark includes trails, picnic areas, a sluice-gold-panning activity, and even a monolith-filled Zen Garden. But the real treasure worth the trip is what lies hidden below at your final destination.



Black Chasm Cavern





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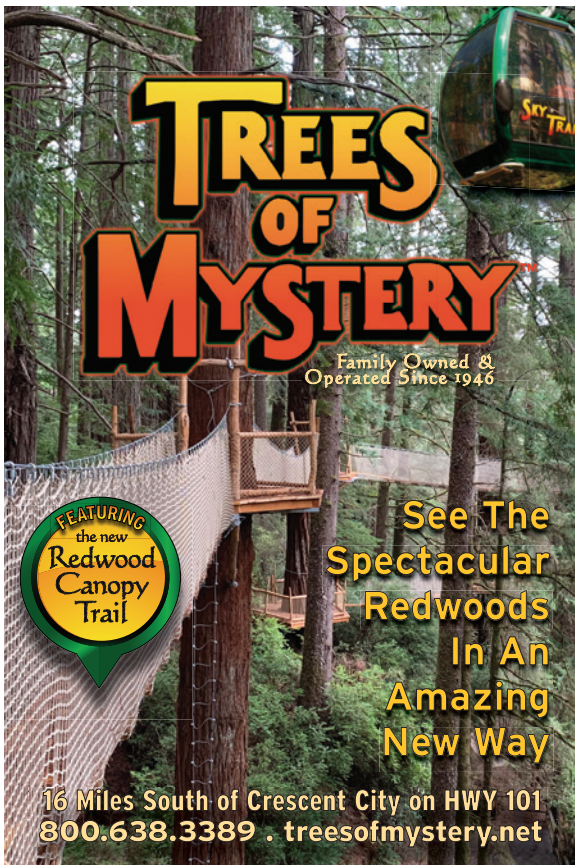
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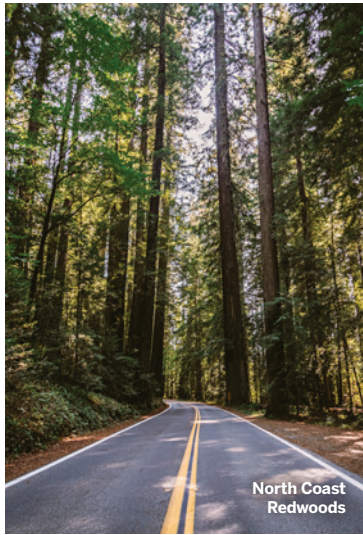


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Harbor House Inn



North Coast Redwoods



Nick's Cove



Jessica Wright

Blogger **Jessica Wright** chronicles her trips around the world for bontraveler.com, but recently she's focused on exploring her own backyard: Northern California. "I've come to realize just how many incredible places there are here," says the Sacramento resident. "The best part? The diversity of landscapes, cities, and coastline." Wright shared photos from some of her favorite road trips, including a solo drive up Highway 1, a day in Yosemite National Park, a girls' trip to the redwoods, and a weekend wine tasting in Gold Country.



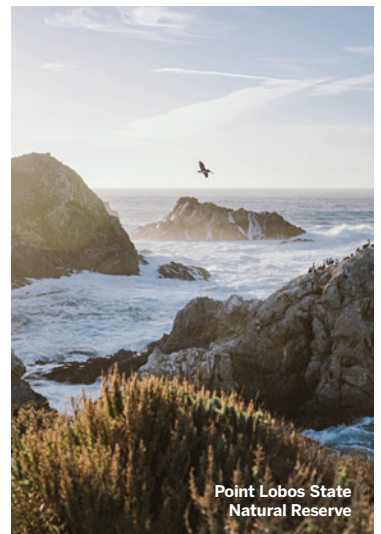
Gold Country




Mendocino



Yosemite National Park



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