

Monterey Bay Region: Family Adventures



FAMILY ADVENTURE IDEAS AROUND THE MONTEREY BAY

The most successful family vacations keep one essential component in mind: the grown-ups in the group have to feel as engaged, as excited, and as happy as the young ones—and vice versa. Theme park getaways often pall on parents by the umpteenth ride, while few children could trudge from art gallery to museum through sweltering city streets without becoming a bit surly. Monterey County has amusements for children that make parents smile, and attractions for adults that will have the young ones asking for another visit.

Family Entertainment

Monterey has so many intriguing options—your most difficult moment will be deciding what to do each morning.

- There's **MY Museum**, a real hands-on place where kids can make a TV program or run a country store.
- The **Dennis the Menace Park** is an adventure playground created for the city by the creator of 'Dennis,' Hank Ketcham.
- They can learn about local marine wildlife and watch sea otters roll and tumble at the **Monterey Bay Aquarium**. www.montereybayaquarium.org
- Then play 'eye-spy' during a drive through Pebble Beach's **17-Mile Drive**, home to shoreline birds, harbor and elephant seals, and more. You may never hear them say 'are we there yet?' again.
- 'Treasure hunt' the galleries of the **National Steinbeck Center**.
- Pack a picnic and head to **Marina State Beach** to fly a kite or build a family-sized sand castle.
- Pick luscious strawberries beneath the giant-sized field workers at **The Farm**.
- Rent a four-wheeled surrey and cruise along the coast between Cannery Row and **Fisherman's Wharf**.

The Great Shopping Compromise

- Children can be reluctant shoppers. To coax a little cooperation, choose a destination that makes browsing as much fun as possible, like **Cannery Row**.
- The old canneries are now packed with a dazzling array of shops, galleries and places to eat. You can reward patience while you do some bayside wine tasting at the end of **Steinbeck Plaza** by sampling every known flavor of saltwater taffy.
- Or honor their good humor while you shop in the **American Tin Cannery**, with a kite or wind toy. Who knows? You might even pique their curiosity about how the Row got its name and buy them a copy of John Steinbeck's *Cannery Row* to read on the way home. www.americantincannery.com