

Monterey Bay Region: Historic & Cultural Attractions



CAPTURING HISTORY IN THE MONTEREY BAY

As a city, Monterey is one of the most historic in California. It was the original capital of the state, and is the proud location of California Historic Monument #1, the Custom House. It has more historic buildings clustered in its downtown area than any other city west of Santa Fe!

Historic Trail

- Explore the **Path of History**, a two-mile, self-guided tour of Old Monterey. Marked by bright yellow tiles, the path leads through Monterey's quaint downtown, adobes, gardens, museums and other historic sites. Among other interesting stops is **Colton Hall**, where California's Constitution was developed and signed in 1849. Visit the **Monterey History & Maritime Museum**, celebrating Monterey's rich seafaring heritage. And be sure to include both **Old Fisherman's Wharf** and **Cannery Row** on your historic trail to get a feel for the region's turn-of-the-century fishing history. www.montereyhistory.org
- To complete your seaside tour, stop in Pacific Grove at **Point Pinos Lighthouse** to visit the oldest continuously operating lighthouse on the West Coast, or travel south on Highway 1 to visit its neighbor the **Point Sur Lightstation**.
- A quest to discover historic Monterey County isn't complete without a visit to at least one of the three California missions established by Spanish missionaries in Carmel, Soledad and Jolon in the late 1700s.
- Get transported to the late 19th century with a tour of the **Monterey County Agricultural & Rural Life Museum** in the Salinas Valley. Its historic train depot, school, and farmhouse along with early cultivating and irrigation equipment paint a vibrant picture of California's early days.
- **Pacific Grove's Museum of Natural History** is a great place to capture information on local wildlife and early Native American culture. www.pgmuseum.org
- Enjoy a blockbuster trip around the Monterey Peninsula on **Monterey Movie Tours'** luxury coach. Visit numerous movie set locations, along with must-see spots like **17-Mile Drive**. Or take **Tours Monterey's** "Ghost Tour of Old Monterey" and learn about the ghosts that haunt Old Monterey's adobes.

Museums

Monterey County offers museums dedicated to nearly every aspect of its rich history—agriculture, natural history, maritime, art, native inhabitants and more.

- Want to teach the kids about how a family farm operated in the 1800s? Head to the **Agricultural and Rural Life Museum**.
- What about the Dust Bowl years? The **National Steinbeck Center** has an interactive exhibit that explores *The Grapes of Wrath* and the journey of poverty-stricken families to California's Central Valley during the Great Depression.

Monterey Bay Region: Historic & Cultural Attractions



- Ever heard of a Fresnel lens? **The Monterey History & Maritime Museum** has the original Fresnel (pronounced “fray-NELL”) lens that magnified the Point Sur Lightstation's beam, helping guide ships to safety through treacherous seas. Museum closed for renovation, to reopen in 2011.
- Dubbed the “best small town museum in the United States,” the **Monterey Museum of Art** is home to works by famed artists Henri Matisse and Pablo Picasso and fêted photographer Ansel Adams.
- The museum at the **Carmel Mission Basilica** gives the visitor a glimpse into California mission life with displays of church vestments and other artifacts from the past.
- The **MY Museum (Monterey County Youth Museum)** features exhibits that awaken the creativity and sense of discovery in both adults and children. www.mymuseum.org
- Located 30 miles south of Carmel, the **Henry Miller Library** showcases the books and artwork of Henry Miller and other artists. Located in a small redwood grove, the library also hosts various music, art and literary events.
- At the **Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History**, visitors are greeted at the entrance by “Sandy,” a life-size sculpture of an adult female gray whale. Inside the museum are permanent exhibits that display local plants, animals, geology, and native human populations, as well as a temporary exhibit that changes every few months.