

Insight MONTEREY

Discover the Charms of California's Central Coast



McWay Falls in Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park near Big Sur is one of Monterey County's awe-inspiring sights. Top left: Pacific Grove Municipal Golf Links. Top right: Wines from the Heart.

Contents

136 Lay of the Land Find your way around the Monterey Peninsula.

140 Dining Delicious dishes.

142 Accommodations A base for your adventures, or a hotel that's a vacation in itself.

148 Health Care Staying healthy never felt so good.

151 Agriculture The county is the nation's top produce grower.

157 Real Estate You'll find a home here.

161 Business A region transforms itself.

166 Golf A pro recommends the area's best unknown golf courses.

171 Education In such a pretty place, learning comes naturally.

174 Tourism There's more to do here than you ever imagined.

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Insight MONTEREY



Writer John Steinbeck's world is on display at the National Steinbeck Center in Salinas.

Land Plays Literary Role

Central Coast locals often refer to Monterey County as Steinbeck country, in honor of Nobel and Pulitzer prize winner John Steinbeck, who wrote so eloquently about the region where he was born and raised. Some of his most famous novels, including *East of Eden*, *Cannery Row*, *The Red Pony*, and *Of Mice and Men*, were set in Monterey County. Along with creating memorable characters, Steinbeck drew on the land that he loved to provide the backdrop for his literature. A self-taught naturalist, he explored the countryside, absorbing thousands of details about the region.

Steinbeck country is expansive, stretching through the fertile farmlands of the Salinas Valley, down the coast from Watsonville through the southern end of Big Sur, and into the Gabilan Mountains.

"One of the things that impresses people is how he writes about the county," says Herb Behrens, a volunteer archivist at the National Steinbeck Center in Salinas. Located downtown, a few blocks from the family home where Steinbeck was born in 1902, the center opened in 1998. For anyone wishing to explore Steinbeck country, it's a perfect place to begin learn-

ing about the landscape that set the scene for many Steinbeck novels.

While Steinbeck took some liberties in describing the region, combining elements from different areas to create the settings for several novels, some of his works describe the streets he walked as a young man. *Cannery Row* and *Sweet Thursday*, for example, were set along the waterfront of Monterey. That area, which Steinbeck

frequented during the 1930s while living in nearby Pacific Grove, has developed into a major tourist attraction, thanks largely to his influence.

Steinbeck also set a good portion of his 1952 masterpiece, *East of Eden*, in his hometown of Salinas and on his grandfather's

ranch in King City. The novel, which Steinbeck wrote partly as a family history for his two sons, was originally titled *Salinas Valley*, says Behrens.

"*East of Eden* is really Steinbeck's book of the Salinas Valley and all the things he remembered and wanted to draw on," says Behrens.

Steinbeck, who died in 1968, was buried in the family plot in Salinas, next to his mother, father, sister, and uncle. — Terri Morgan

East of Inspiration: Steinbeck's World

Some of the novels and short-story collections that feature parts of Steinbeck country:

- *Cannery Row*
- *East of Eden*
- *In Dubious Battle*
- *The Long Valley*
- *Of Mice and Men*
- *The Pastures of Heaven*
- *The Red Pony*
- *Sweet Thursday*
- *To a God Unknown*
- *Tortilla Flat*

Insight MONTEREY



The city's global heritage comes to life at the Monterey Institute of International Studies.

Many Languages, One City

Listen closely in Monterey's many hotels, restaurants, and shops, and you'll hear a variety of different languages being spoken. This bayfront town has been attracting people from around the globe for more than four centuries. Explorers and immigrants from Spain, Portugal, Japan, China, the Philippines, and Italy have contributed to the area's rich international mix—and businesses have responded.

Language Line Services, the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, and the Monterey Institute of International Studies are three institutions that capitalize on the area's multilingual power.

"Monterey is the language capital of the world," says Dale Hansman, Language Line's manager of public relations. "It's one of the reasons people come here."

The company provides over-the-phone interpretative services in more than 170 languages. It was founded 25 years ago by a San Jose police officer who asked a friend at the Defense Language Institute to help police communicate with non-English speakers. Today, Language Line has about 2,000 interpreters and provides telephone and document translations to more than 20,000 business clients.

The Defense Language Institute began as a Japanese-language school, established by the U.S. Army during

World War II. After the war, the school continued, with headquarters at the Presidio of Monterey. Today, the institute teaches 24 languages to nearly 4,000 military students. In addition to intensive language study, the institute offers an associate's degree.

The Monterey Institute, which opened in 1955, teaches modern languages within their cultural context. The graduate program serves about 700 students, with about one-third coming from outside the U.S. Instruction is offered "in any language, at any level, at any time," according to the school, along with programs in international business, public administration, policy studies, and environmental policy.

"The richness of language on the Monterey Peninsula adds to the international dimensions of the Institute education," says Monterey Institute President Clara Yu.

Even early in its history, business in Monterey was done in several languages. Under Mexican control in the 1800s, the city was an important trade center. The Mexican government opened the Monterey Custom House at the foot of Fisherman's Wharf to tax goods heading into of the country. French, British, and Russian officials frequently visited the region, which served as an economic center. —Terri Morgan



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China Cove, on the southern side of Point Lobos, is lined with dramatic cliffs.

Nature's Best, Unvarnished

Local legend has it that Robert Louis Stevenson used Monterey County's Point Lobos State Reserve as the setting for his best-known novel, *Treasure Island*. With jagged cliffs, thick forests, and hidden inlets, the park seems tailor-made for a gang of pirates, and Stevenson did spend a short time in Monterey County in 1879 before publishing the adventure novel in serial form beginning in 1881. No one can say whether the legend is true. But either way, the Scottish writer would have been just one of many inspired by this spectacular headland just south of Carmel, which juts into the Pacific between Carmel Bay and Carmel Highlands.

Landscape painter Francis McComas, an Australian known for his watercolors who settled in Carmel in 1912, described Point Lobos as "the greatest meeting of land and water in the world." The rugged shoreline, rocky coves, rolling meadows, and tree-studded hills provide picture-postcard views in all directions.

The park is a favorite of both visitors and locals. "You just can't beat Point Lobos," says Doug Phillips, the executive assistant manager at the Monterey Plaza Hotel and Spa. "It's got some of the most beautiful scenery, and it's a great place to take a quick day hike."

More than a dozen trails, ranging from a half-mile loop to a six-mile perimeter walk, let visitors fully

appreciate the more than 350 different plants and trees—including rare Monterey pines and cypress trees—that cover the park.

Point Lobos is also an animal watcher's paradise. Sparrows, cormorants, and the American black oyster-catcher nest at Point Lobos year-round. Majestic, prehistoric-looking brown pelicans feed offshore in the summer, fall, and winter, and great blue herons spend the spring months at Point Lobos' Bluefish Cove. Squirrels, rabbits, bobcats, and other animals roam the woods and meadows, while the waters host a variety of marine mammals. Between December and May, California gray whales swim past during their annual migration. Sea lions, harbor seals, and southern sea otters feed in the waters year-round. The sea lions are so abundant that the region's early Spanish settlers named the peninsula the *Punta de los Lobos Marinos* ("Point of the Sea Wolves").

Designated as the nation's first marine reserve in 1960, the park includes nearly 550 acres of land and 750 underwater acres. Its crystal-clear waters, rocky reefs, 70-foot kelp forests, and abundance of marine life draw thousands of divers to Point Lobos each year. The reserve itself draws about 350,000 visitors each year.

—Terri Morgan

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