



MONTEREY™

COUNTY CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

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SEASIDE & SAND CITY, -- TWO CALIFORNIA ESCAPES PACKED WITH ARTS & ADVENTURE.

Call them coastal cousins – Sand City and Seaside, two California playgrounds perched along the Monterey peninsula. A haven for bikers, golfers and naturalists, these two cities offer both beachfront beauty and outback access to some of the state's most pristine environs.

Ten miles north of Monterey, Sand City also lays claim to a vibrant artists' community, dubbed "SoHo West." One of the state's leaders in the live-work movement, the city's creative rehabilitation of old properties into artist's lofts and retail/residential units is a study in lifestyle ergonomics. For a snapshot of all things art, the light industrial-cum-loft area in the West End offers a great escape for enthusiasts. The region also sports a Theatre District, bevy of coffee shops, bookstores, boutiques and of course – plenty of sand. It's a tight-knit, friendly community, proving that big is not always better and the backdrop of the Pacific seems to soothe everyone's palate.

Part of the city's allure is its spectacular dunes, not your garden variety, but lunar-like formations created during the Pleistocene era at the tail end of the last Ice Age. Get off grid, kick on the iPod and stroll the undulating fields of sand—dating in the neighborhood of 6,000 to 15,000 years ago. Then tap into the tiny hamlet's terra firma with a walk about the city's arts scene. A great time to visit is the annual West End Celebration, staged every August when artists open their lofts backed with music, performance, dancing and distinctive food. This mixed-use funk zone is a fun walk anytime; mix it up with an alfresco meal then rev up at the Ol' Factory's After Dark Espresso Bar and catch a first-run film at one of the theatres.

Seaside, also along scenic Highway 1, is a top stop for families looking to re-bond and re-boot along the shoreline, swing a few golf clubs or hit the bike trails. Just seven miles from Carmel-by-the-Sea and three miles from historic Cannery Row and the Monterey Bay Aquarium, this quaint city is quietly undergoing an evolution into a resort destination anchored by Seaside State Beach and Ford Ord, the former military base now open for exploration.

A haven for cyclists, Seaside is home to the AMGEN Tour of California, a statewide bicycling race held every February. This Tour de France-style bicycle race featuring elite professional cycling teams from around the world is reason enough to pack the bike and go to the city-wide events surrounding the race. Nearby, total two-wheel nirvana is on tap at Ford Ord, which offers an impressive network of trails including 86 miles of scenic mountain bike trails and roads. Experts can head for the Hurl Hill Trail or Staircase Trail, often compared to the great rocky trails in Moab, Utah. Flat tracks winding around ponds and forests festooned with wildflowers cater to the leisure rider. For hikers, Fort Ord also boasts one of the largest

maritime chaparral areas in all of California, as well as oak woodlands, rolling grassy hills, wetlands and ponds. Forty-six different rare plants and animals thrive in the rugged hills, including the coast wallflower, marine chaparral, tiger salamander, fairy shrimp and mountain lion.

Seaside is also a hot stop for golfers seeking to hammer down their handicap. Bayonet and Blackhorse Golf Courses -- two beautifully groomed courses rated among the top on the Monterey Peninsula -- feature challenging play along with stunning views of the bay. Both courses were made public in 1997 and have quickly emerged as popular championship level public courses, steeped in rich tradition and have played host to PGA Tour greats such as Palmer, Nicklaus, and Watson, as well as several U.S. Presidents. The recently-renovated back nine of Blackhorse is a sure bet for testing that new three iron. In the near future, a Fairmont resort hotel, spa and residential complex will grace the region, making Seaside a sure bet for living the California lifestyle.

VISITOR INFO.

Monterey County is located 120 miles/192 km south of San Francisco and 345 miles/552 km north of Los Angeles along the classic California corridor. The region boasts 99 miles of prime Pacific Coastline, the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, three historic missions, 40,000 acres of premium vineyards, 25 golf courses and over 200 lodging properties. Monterey County includes the Monterey Peninsula, Big Sur, North County and the Salinas Valley. The Monterey Peninsula Airport (MRY), just three miles from historic downtown Monterey and minutes from the area's major attractions, is served by non-stop flights to and from Denver (DEN), Las Vegas (LAS), Phoenix (PHX), Los Angeles (LAX), and San Francisco (SFO). www.seemonterey.com.

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In partnership with Monterey County and the cities of Carmel-by-the-Sea, Del Rey Oaks, Marina, Monterey, Salinas, Sand City, Seaside and Soledad

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