

Big Sur Driving Tour

This driving tour of Big Sur offers spectacular views of the rugged coastline south of Carmel-by-the-Sea. Guests will be amazed at the jaw-dropping vistas that greet them along the way.



permits, hike the .8-mile Cypress Grove Trail, which winds its way through coastal scrub and woods to cliffs with dramatic and unforgettable ocean views.

From Carmel, drive three and a half miles south on Highway 1 to **Point Lobos State Reserve**. This crown jewel of the California state park system encompasses 400 acres of rare plant communities, endangered archeological sites, unique geological formations and incredibly rich flora and fauna and has been lauded as “the greatest meeting of land and sea.” According to local lore, author Robert Louis Stevenson was so inspired by the Point Lobos landscape that he used it as the foundation for the setting of *Treasure Island*. If time

Back on Highway 1, continue south through the Carmel Highlands, which mark the northern reaches of Big Sur. Guests will marvel at the multi-million dollar homes nestled into the hills and cliffs high above the jewel-toned waters of the Pacific below. Approximately two miles south of the Carmel Highlands, **Garrapata State Park** offers two miles of easily accessible beachfront as well as glimpses of sea lions, harbor seals and sea otters frolicking in coastal waters.

Another seven miles south lies Bixby Creek Bridge, a reinforced concrete single-span arch bridge whose height is not for the faint of heart. Connecting Highway 1 across Bixby Canyon, the bridge rises more than 280 feet above the canyon floor and stretches 714 feet from end to end. It’s also one of the most photographed landmarks along the West Coast and frequently appears in car commercials. Encourage guests so snap their own photos at turnouts on either side of the bridge.



Rising 361 feet out of an outcropping of volcanic rock five miles south of Bixby Bridge is **Point Sur Lightstation** and surrounding **Point Sur State Historic Park**. Perched atop the rock, 361 feet above the rough waters below, Point Sur is the only complete turn-of-the-century lightstation open to the public in California. The lightstation was established in 1889 and has remained in operation ever since. Three-hour walking tours of the facilities are available on weekends year-round and seasonally on Wednesdays.

Just three miles south, **Andrew Molera State Park** offers visitors miles of trails that wind through meadows, beaches and hilltops. The park is still somewhat undeveloped and is a popular hiking, fishing and beach destination.

Next up along Highway 1 is the village of **Big Sur**, which includes a post office, a few eateries, campgrounds and lodging. About two miles past the village, **Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park** features redwoods, conifers, oaks, sycamores, cottonwoods, maples, alders, willows and open meadows. Wildlife includes black-tail deer, gray squirrels, raccoons, skunks, and birds, such as water ousel and belted kingfishers. Hikers will enjoy the many scenic trails, including a self-guided nature trail, and a number of campsites are located along the Big Sur River.



Another two miles south are some excellent restaurants perched 800 feet above the Pacific. The **Henry Miller Memorial Library** sits about a quarter of a mile south of Nepenthe. Founded in 1981 by Emil White, a close friend of Miller's, the library occupies White's former home. Today the library's mission is to promote the literary and artistic works of Henry Miller and to serve as a cultural and educational resource for residents of and visitors to Big Sur.

Burns State Park, named for a well-respected Big Sur pioneer woman. The park stretches from the Big Sur coastline into nearby 3,000-foot ridges. It features redwood, tan oak, madrone, chaparral, and an 80-foot waterfall that drops from granite cliffs into the ocean from the Overlook Trail. A panoramic view of the ocean and miles of rugged coastline is available from the higher elevations along the trails east of Highway 1.

Past this point, Highway 1 continues through a largely untouched portion of Monterey County. A few small villages dot the coastline to the south. Guests may choose to make it an overnight trip or return north to Monterey for a magnificent visual reprise of their journey.



Points of Interest:

Point Lobos State Reserve
Garrapata State Park
Point Sur Lightstation
Point Sur State Historic Park
Andrew Molera State Park
Big Sur Chamber of Commerce
Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park
Henry Miller Memorial Library
Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park

<http://pt-lobos.parks.state.ca.us/>
http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=579
www.pointsur.org
http://www.parks.ca.gov/Default.asp?page_id=565
http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=582
www.bigsurcalifornia.org
http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=570
www.henrymiller.org
http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=578

Restaurants:

Rocky Point Restaurant
Nepenthe Restaurant/Café Kevah
Big Sur River Inn Restaurant
Deetjens Restaurant
Cielo Restaurant
Big Sur Lodge Restaurant
Ripplewood Resort
Sierra Mar at Post Ranch Inn

www.rocky-point.com
www.nepenthebigsur.com
www.bigsurriverinn.com
www.deetjens.com/restaurant.htm
www.ventanainn.com/dining_themenu.asp
www.bigsurlodge.com/
www.ripplewoodresort.com/restaurant.htm
www.postranchinn.com/dining.shtml