

Pacific Grove Walking Tour

Butterflies, Victorian gingerbread homes and flower shops in bloom lend a mystical quality to Pacific Grove, lovingly dubbed “America’s Last Hometown” and known as “P.G.” to locals. Guests will be tempted to spend more than just a day in this inviting coastal community in the heart of the Monterey Peninsula, but this walking tour will give them a delectable introductory taste of its charm and the opportunity for boutique and antique shopping, unique art shops and galleries, and diverse restaurants.



Begin the day by teeing off with a round of golf at the **Pacific Grove Municipal Golf Links**, located about a quarter of a mile north of Lighthouse Ave on Asilomar Boulevard. Offering spectacular views of the Pacific Ocean, Lovers Point, Point Pinos, Crespi Pond and the natural sand dunes of **Asilomar State Beach** for a fraction of other area green fees, this course is considered a best-kept secret among locals. Afterward, return on Asilomar Boulevard in the direction of Lighthouse Avenue to swing by **Point Pinos Lighthouse** (at the intersection of Lighthouse and Asilomar), the oldest continuously-operating lighthouse on the West Coast.



You can’t visit Pacific Grove without a trip to the **Monarch Grove Sanctuary**. From Point Pinos Lighthouse, head east on Lighthouse Avenue to Ridge Road and make a right, where you’ll find this magnificent overwintering habitat for the insects on their journey north from Mexico. Each winter, thousands of monarch butterflies cluster together on the pines and eucalyptus of the Sanctuary. Arriving in October, these resilient insects stay through the winter until February, when they join the spring monarch migration, spreading northward and eastward, hunting for milkweed plants on which to lay their eggs.

As the lunch hour approaches, point your nose east on Lighthouse Avenue in the direction of downtown P.G. and the quaint restaurants lining Lighthouse Avenue. Choose an intimate café or cheerful bistro featuring an array of cuisines ranging from Mediterranean to Mexican, seafood and more.

After lunch, peruse the antique shops along Lighthouse Avenue and surrounding streets in search of treasures from the past. Later, walk to the **Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History**, located at the corner of Forest and Central Avenues. “Sandy,” a life-sized sculpture of an adult female gray whale, greets visitors at the museum’s entrance. Dedicated to exhibiting and interpreting the natural history of Monterey County, the museum has permanent exhibits that interpret the native plants, animals, geology, and indigenous populations of Monterey and also features a variety of special visiting exhibits throughout the year. Every April, volunteers and members of the Monterey Bay Chapter of the California Plant Society search the Central Coast for all types of wild, flowering beauties for the museum’s annual **Wildflower Show**. The hundreds of blooms are categorized by family, genus and species and displayed with their botanical names at the museum.



Just one block south, the **Pacific Grove Art Center** beckons with free exhibits, art classes, occasional concerts, poetry readings and lectures. Stop in to see the latest works on display.

Round out the day with an exploration of the P.G. coastline via bike, kayak or surrey, easily rented at Lover's Point Park (from Lighthouse Avenue, walk north on 17th Street for a few blocks until you reach the park). If you're lucky, you'll catch a spectacular sunset. It's not unlikely that by this time, guests will begin planning their return trip to Pacific Grove. The community's event-filled calendar won't leave them wanting for excuses. March brings the **Great Taste of P.G.**, a culinary feast featuring the best of local wineries and restaurants, while April's **Good 'Ol Days Celebration** features a festive parade, carnival rides, local arts and crafts and more. July packs a punch with the **Antiques and Collectibles Show**, which transforms historic St. Mary's-by-the-Sea Episcopal Church into a marketplace of booths for more than 25 vendors of fine silver, jewelry, collectible books, fine art, glassware, vintage clothing, toys and small furniture; the **July 4 City Barbeque**, an old-fashioned, down-home celebration; and the **Feast of Lanterns**, a Pacific Grove tradition of more than 100 years that features a pageant, lantern parade to the beach and fireworks over the Monterey Bay.



Each September, more than 1,600 athletes compete in the **Triathlon at Pacific Grove**, an Olympic distance event that begins with a swim course at Lovers Point, a bike course to Asilomar State Beach and a run to the **Monterey Bay Aquarium**. October heralds the return of the monarch with the **Butterfly Parade and Bazaar** while celebrating its colorful, storied abodes with the **Historic Home Tour**. December caps off the year with **Christmas at the Inns**, a tour of Pacific Grove's bed & breakfast inns decorated in all their Victorian splendor, and the **City Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony**, followed by the **Holiday Parade of Lights**, an illuminated parade

featuring local marching bands, holiday floats and carolers. And don't miss **Snow in the Park**, when Caledonia Park in downtown P.G. is blanketed in snow and decorated with glittering lights and Santa makes his grand entrance on a shiny Pacific Grove fire truck!

For more information about any of the stops on this tour, visit www.MeetInMonterey.com.

Pacific Grove Municipal Golf Links	www.ci.pg.ca.us/golf
Asilomar State Beach	www.parks.ca.gov/asilomar
Point Pinos Lighthouse	www.ci.pg.ca.us/lighthouse
Monarch Grove Sanctuary	www.ci.pg.ca.us/monarchs
Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History	www.pgmuseum.org
Annual Wildflower Show	www.pgmuseum.org
Pacific Grove Art Center	www.pgartcenter.org
Great Taste of P.G.	www.pacificgrove.org
Good 'Ol Days Celebration	www.goodolddaysparade.com
Antiques and Collectibles Show	www.stmarys-by-the-sea.org
July 4 City Barbeque	www.pacificgrove.org
Feast of Lanterns	www.feast-of-lanterns.org
Monterey Bay Aquarium	www.mbayaq.org
Butterfly Parade and Bazaar	www.pacificgrove.org
Historic Home Tour	www.pacificgroveheritage.org
Christmas at the Inns	www.pacificgrove.org
City Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony	www.pacificgrove.org
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