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# Up the Pacific Coast Highway

**WHY GO** Our top pick for classic California dreamin' hugs the coast from the border with Mexico all the way north to Oregon. Summer is the busiest, but still the best time to drive the PCH. Gawk at elephant seals, uncover secret beaches and touch the tallest trees on earth.

Even if you've lived in California all your life, you know there's no such thing as too much time by the beach. Once you get rolling on the Pacific Coast Hwy (PCH), it'll be almost painful to leave the sea behind for too long. This trip never strays far from the coast, except to be tempted by some easy detours inland, including through coastal California's three big cities – San Diego, LA and San Francisco.

Start at the bottom of the state map, just outside San Diego, where the pretty peninsular beach town of Coronado is connected to the mainland by a long, narrow spit of sand called the Silver Strand. If you've seen Marilyn Monroe cavort in *Some Like It Hot*, you may recognize the 1 **Hotel Del Coronado**. Dating from 1888, this National Historic Landmark has hosted US presidents, celebs from Babe Ruth to Brad Pitt, and the Prince of Wales, later King Edward VIII, who gave up his throne for the love of a Coronado divorcée, Wallis Spencer Simpson. Wander the labyrinthine corridors of this turreted timber palace, then sup at a table overlooking the sea or throw back margaritas at the founders' Babcock & Story Bar.

You can't help but feel a thrill while speeding over the 2-mile-long Coronado Bridge as it snakes its way across San Diego Bay. Turning north, you'll pass by San Diego's beach towns, each with its own quirky personality. After Ocean Beach ("OB" for short), SoCal's answer to boho Santa Cruz, comes Mission Beach, where an old-fashioned amusement park is dwarfed by SeaWorld, and then funky, surfer-

TRIP

1



TIME

5 – 7 days

DISTANCE

1050 miles

BEST TIME TO GO

Apr – Oct

START

San Diego

END

Crescent City

ALSO GOOD FOR



lonely planet



friendly Pacific Beach (“PB”). Suddenly, you’ll find yourself in hoity-toity La Jolla, like a Beverly Hills by the beach. Recently revamped, chic **2 Georges at the Cove** has ocean vistas to match the artistry of the contemporary Euro-Cal cuisine on your plate inside the California Modern restaurant, or upstairs at the parasol-shaded Ocean Terrace café.

Leaving the luxe life of La Jolla behind, roll downhill toward the sea and **3 Torrey Pines State Natural Reserve**, harboring the rarest pines in North America and a lagoon frequented by migrating seabirds. This stretch of coast is astonishingly wild, looking much as it must have done when Kumeyaay tribespeople made their seasonal camps here.

It’s a fast trip along I-5 into Orange County (aka the “OC”), about 75 miles from San Diego and less than 50 miles from LA. Life behind the conservative “Orange Curtain” is a lot different than in most other California beach towns, where the motto usually is “the more freaks, the merrier.” Here desperate housewives drive gas-guzzling SUVs over to Starbucks, and there are easily more shopping malls than museums. But here you can also ferret out the California beach resort culture of yesteryear. Just slingshot around Dana Point, then speed by the wealthy artists’ colony of Laguna Beach to Crystal Cove State Park. Hidden inside the park are the beautifully restored 1920s and ’30s beachfront **4 Crystal Cove Cottages** and the famous Shake Shack (try a date shake!). Time seems to stop and move backward here – it’s really that relaxing. Another tribute to California beach traditions is the **5 International Surfing Museum** in Huntington Beach, now legally trademarked “Surf City USA.” Oahu-born surfer George Freeth introduced the royal Hawaiian sport of wave riding on the beach here in 1908. Further north, Seal Beach pier has mild surf that’s perfect for riding your first wave, while **6 Walt’s Wharf** is everybody’s favorite place for fresh fish – some drive down from LA for it.

Hwy 1 heads inland before Long Beach, but the more scenic route sticks to the coast. In Long Beach, the biggest stars are the touristy RMS *Queen Mary* ocean liner and the Aquarium of the Pacific. An often overlooked coastal pleasure is the **7 Long Beach Museum of Art**, sitting pretty on an ocean bluff. Exhibits focus on California modernism, with surprisingly cool contemporary art in mixed media. In an early-20th-century mansion, the museum’s gourmand café has killer weekend brunches and postcard-perfect views.

Wind your way slowly around the Palos Verdes peninsula, with its rocky precipices and rugged coastline. You may spy Catalina Island out there, if LA’s everyday haze doesn’t pitifully obscure the views. Hwy 1 rolls north from missable Redondo Beach into turbo-charged Hermosa Beach, where you can stay right on the paradisiacal SoCal sands at the blissful **8 Beach House**. Further north along the coast, Manhattan Beach has a swanky singles’ scene,





as does more urbane and sophisticated Santa Monica. If it's way-out, wacky and wild local flavor you're after, there's no place like **9 Venice**. Idiosyncratic and just as left-leaning as Berkeley, this beatnik haven was originally the dream of eccentric tobacco heir Abbot Kinney, who envisaged building an Italian seaside resort. Well, sort of. Although you'll find canals here, the main attraction is Venice's Ocean Front Walk,



If the plasticky, unholy pop culture of the "OC"

gets you down, detour 10 miles inland from Laguna Beach for a high-culture dose of history and art at **Mission San Juan Capistrano** ([☎949-234-1300](tel:949-234-1300); [www.missionsjc.com](http://www.missionsjc.com)), the best-preserved of California's many historic missions. It's located at 26801 Ortega Hwy, San Juan Capistrano; admission is \$9/5 per adult/child, and it's open 8:30am to 5pm. Every year on March 19, the Festival of the Swallows celebrates the migratory birds' return from South America to nest in the mission walls.

where a tragicomic carnival of humanity comes together in a cauldron of creativity. Amuse yourself with this surreal slice of life on the boardwalk, being sure to look up at the murals painted on the beachfront buildings.

Leaving LA, PCH really hits its stride on the breezy 20-mile drive north to Malibu. You'll feel like a movie star walking around here – except that real Hollywood celebrities live in gated compounds and are rarely seen in public. One mansion that you can

actually get a look inside is the **10 Adamson House**, next to Malibu Lagoon State Beach. Just west of Malibu Pier, this 1930s Spanish Moorish villa is awash in Arts and Crafts details such as colorful hand-painted tiles. Make time for frolicking on one of Malibu's famous beaches, like Point Dume, Zuma or Surfrider, too. At the Ventura County line, surfers, Harley riders and kids covered in sand chow down at **11 Neptune's Net**, a seafood shack with picnic tables

and fresh (sometimes live!) seafood cooked just the way you want it.

#### ASK A LOCAL

"For a fun way to cool off, bring the family out

to **Santa Monica Pier** ([www.santamonicipier.org](http://www.santamonicipier.org)). Not only do you get a great view of the ocean, you can get up close and personal with sea urchins, sharks and rays at the aquarium run by the nonprofit organization Heal the Bay. When you're done learning, head up top for a spin on the carousel used in *The Sting*, or the solar-powered Ferris wheel."

*Amy S, Los Angeles*

Back on Hwy 101 northbound, **12 Santa Barbara** has nearly perfect weather and a string of beautiful beaches, where surfers, kite flyers, dog walkers and cyclists mingle. Take a gander at the iconic Mediterranean-style architecture along State St downtown, including an innovative art museum, then clamber to the top of the county courthouse, rising

above the red-tiled rooftops, to gaze south toward the busy harbor or north to the historic Spanish mission. Skip the overpriced beachfront hotels to retreat to **13 El Capitan Canyon** resort, further north. Deluxe safari tents, yurts and cabins with fireplaces and Jacuzzi tubs are for those who love getting back to nature, but hate waking up with dirt under their nails.



Keep following high-speed Hwy 101 or take scenic Hwy 1, which squiggles along the coastline; both highways meet up again at **14 Pismo Beach**, about 100 miles north of Santa Barbara. A classic California beach town, Pismo once laid claim to being the “Clam Capital of the World.” Turn up for the family-friendly clam festival every October, also when monarch butterflies return to their seaside grove. After walking out onto Pismo’s pier at sunset, revert to childhood with all of the retro attractions on nearby side streets, from bowling alleys, billiards halls and video arcades to fast-food stands.

Further north, the CalPoly student town of **15 San Luis Obispo** (aka “SLO”) comes alive every Thursday night for a downtown farmers market. Join throngs of locals as they demolish piping-hot dishes from fresh-food vendors, listen to live indie bands, and enjoy the street carnival.

Hwy 1 keeps cruising north through SLO County, passing landmark Morro Rock. Pull off the highway for the little surf town of Cayucos. **16 Ruddell’s Smokehouse** is a tasty place for fresh-off-the-boat seafood transformed into succulent smoked slabs; the fish tacos come slathered in an apple-and-celery relish. Make sure your gas tank is full before you blow by the hilltop mansion of Hearst Castle and plunge into the big-trees scenery of the Big Sur coast, where rocky headlands and precipitous cliffs with leaping waterfalls dominate the seascape. Known for its counter-cultural tendencies, Big Sur feels like a rural mountain community with an arty, hippie bent. Nature preserves and beaches beckon along Hwy 1, as do high-end resorts and hidden retreats where San Franciscans come to escape the noise. Only open to the public after midnight, the natural hot-springs baths of the **17 Esalen Institute** are worth the crazy effort of making reservations for, with au-naturel pools perched on an ocean ledge and stormy moonlit surf crashing below.

As Big Sur loosens its talons on the coastal highway, Hwy 1 rolls gently downhill toward Monterey Bay, about a 100-mile drive from Hearst Castle. This fishing community is the heart of Steinbeck country, and although Cannery Row today is a touristy claptrap, it’s worth strolling down solely to step inside the mesmerizing **18 Monterey Bay Aquarium**, inhabiting a converted sardine cannery. All kinds of aquatic denizens are on display here, from sea stars and sea dragons to pot-bellied seahorses and comical sea otters. Drive alongside the waterfront over to Pacific Beach for dinner at **19 Passionfish**, a down-to-earth, sustainable seafood restaurant with a phenomenal wine list.

**DETOUR**

The Mediterranean climate around Santa Barbara is perfect for growing grapes. About a 40-minute drive northwest of Santa Barbara along Hwy 154 lies the Santa Ynez Valley wine country, made infamous by the 2004 indie flick *Sideways*. Jump-start your grape-loving taste-buds at the **Los Olivos Tasting Room & Wine Shop** (☎ 805-688-7406). It’s located at 2905 Grand Ave, Los Olivos, and is open from 11am to 5:30pm. Then, strike out on your own along the Foxen Canyon wine trail, which eventually rejoins Hwy 101 north at Santa Maria.



Then dart north into the sand dunes outside Marina to the **20 Sanctuary Beach Resort**. Spoil yourself with a sleek, modern suite with an ocean-view balcony, so you can sleep soundly next to the surf.

Before making the 115-mile run up to San Francisco past Half Moon Bay and Pacifica, where Hwy 1 conquers the tricky, washout-prone Devil's Slide, stop briefly by **21 Santa Cruz**. Here the flower power of the 1960s lives on, and bumper stickers on surfboard-laden woodies loudly protest "Keep Santa Cruz weird." Built in 1907, the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk has a glorious old-school Americana vibe, with the smell of cotton candy mixing with salty sea breezes. The fun-for-all atmosphere is punctuated by squeals from nervous nellies on the stomach-turning Giant Dipper, a 1920s wooden rollercoaster that's a National Historic Landmark, as seen in the vampire cult classic movie *The Lost Boys*.

*"...with au-naturel pools perched on an ocean ledge with stormy moonlit surf crashing below."*

The gridlock of San Francisco may shock your system after hundreds of miles of wide-open, rolling coast. But don't despair. Hwy 1 runs straight through the city's biggest and most breathable green space, **22 Golden Gate Park**, which dates from the Victorian era. You could easily lose yourself all day in the conservatory of flowers, arboretum and botanic gardens, perusing the galleries of the de Young Museum of fine arts, then taking tea underneath pagodas in the Japanese Tea Garden, or romantically renting a rowboat at petite Stow Lake.

To get out of the city, drive over the **23 Golden Gate Bridge**. Guarding entry to San Francisco Bay, this iconic 2-mile-long bridge is named after the straits it spans and not for its color, which is "international orange." Thanks to the saltiness of the air and the whipping winds, repainting the bridge is a never-ending job. Dash into the parking lot before the toll plaza on the south side of the bridge, then out onto the brick-laden pedestrian walkway for a photo.

On the other side of the bridge lies Marin County, an enclave of rich folks who passionately love the outdoors – and all the cosmopolitan perks of the good life, like exceptional food and wine and, yes, hot tubs. At **24 Cavallo Point**, an eco-conscious lodge built on the grounds of old military Fort Baker inside Golden Gate National Recreation Area, guests can enjoy all kinds of freebie activities, from fireside chats with park rangers to yoga in the healing-arts spa and guided walking tours with green-living, art and architectural themes.

Past Sausalito, abandon Hwy 101 for torturously twisted Hwy 1, which sets a slow pace for the next 200 miles along a gloriously uninterrupted stretch of PCH. Along the coasts of Sonoma and Mendocino Counties you will uncover wild NorCal beaches and lagoons where rare birds flock, laid against emerald pasturelands where dairy cows and goats graze. Fishing communities still eke



out a living, with Tomales Bay prized for its oysters. At the historic Valley Ford Hotel, **25 Rocker Oysterfeller's** kitchen and saloon has a sense of humor, but is dead serious about satisfying even picky eaters with its artisan cheeses, raw seafood plates and organic beef and seasonal veggies sourced from local farms.

The fishing fleets of Bodega Bay and Jenner's harbor-seal colony are the last things you'll see before PCH dives into California's great rural northlands. Hwy 1 twists past a lineup of state parks packed with hiking trails, sand dunes and beaches, rhododendron groves and a 19th-century Russian fur-trading fort. At Sea Ranch, don't let the exclusive-looking vacation homes prevent you from following public-access trailhead signs down to more remote beaches and across windy ocean bluffs. Don't linger so long that you miss seeing **26 Point Arena Lighthouse**, the only lighthouse in California that you can actually climb to the top of. Check in at the museum, then ascend the 115ft tower to inspect the Fresnel lens and view the jagged San Andreas Fault below.

More like Cape Cod than California, the too-quiet town of Mendocino blooms with rose gardens, while white picket fences surround New England-style cottages with redwood water towers. Since this yesteryear timber town and shipping port was "discovered" by artists and bohemians in the 1950s, the not-so-humble community, with its dramatic headlands jutting into the Pacific, has served as a backdrop in over 50 movies. After you've browsed the treacly sentimental streets lined with souvenir shops selling everything from driftwood carvings to housemade fruit jams and preserves, relish the **27 Joshua Grindle Inn**, Mendo's very first B&B and a must for aficionados of historic homes. Or dash north to workaday Fort Bragg, with its simple fishing harbor, roadside motels and brewpub.

**DETOUR**

A rough-hewn beauty, **Point Reyes National Seashore** ([www.nps.gov/pore](http://www.nps.gov/pore)) lures marine mammals and birds, as well as scores of shipwrecks. It was here that Sir Francis Drake repaired his ship the *Golden Hind* in 1579 and, while he was at it, claimed the land for England. North of Olema, follow Sir Francis Drake Blvd out to the edge-of-the-world lighthouse, whipped by ferocious winds, where you can observe migrating gray whales in winter, near the Chimney Rock elephant seal colony.

Amid roaring surf and endless sightlines, Westport is the last hamlet along this rugged stretch of Hwy 1. The coastal route rejoins Hwy 101 northbound for 200 miles through the Redwood Empire up to the Oregon border. Don't miss the exit for the "Avenue of the Giants," a 32-mile-long parkway with two narrow lanes passing among incredible stands of redwoods, the tallest trees on earth. In the early morning, the heavenly light filtering through the dense greenery of the forest is transcendent; many visitors walk out into the Founders Grove with a respectful silence usually not seen outside of a cathedral. Much of the land belongs to **28 Humboldt Redwoods State Park**, which maintains a worthwhile natural- and human-history museum at the visitor center in Weott.





Hwy 101 trundles past the company logging town of Scotia and the turnoff for Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge, a major stopover for migratory birds. Next comes the sleepy railroad town of **29 Eureka**. Check out the ornate Carson Mansion (corner of M and 2nd Sts), built in the 1880s by a timber baron and adorned with dizzying turrets, towers and gables. Opposite is an almost equally impressive Queen Anne Victorian, painted in cake-frosting pink.

While prim-and-proper Eureka rolls up the sidewalks at 9pm sharp, its trippy-dippy northern neighbor **30 Arcata** may just be getting started. It's a bastion of student-led radicalism and, let's be honest, a helluva lot of pot smoking. The more scenic route north travels across the lonely, windswept Samoa Peninsula before reaching Arcata's town square, ringed with bohemian coffee shops, global fusion eateries, student bars and outdoor outfitters. If you want to converse about politics or metaphysics, just about anyone on the street will oblige you.

Before the scent of patchouli knocks you out, keep motoring up Hwy 101 into **31 Trinidad**, where a trim lighthouse keeps watch over the bluffs that tumble down into a deep harbor. After touching the tide-pool critters at the university-

**ASK A LOCAL**

"To find the best hidden redwood groves, **Grizzly Creek Redwoods State Park** ([www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov)) is the place. It's smaller than other parks, but so out of the way that it's pristine. The Cheatham Grove in particular has the most lush sorrel carpets under the trees. And it's along the Van Duzen River, which has great summer swimming holes. Bonus factoid: scenes in *Return of the Jedi* were shot here."

*Richard S, Eureka*

run marine laboratory and traipsing on the beach at Trinidad Cove or white-sand Moonstone Beach, continue north. Hwy 101 drops out of the trees by the Humboldt Lagoons, where kayakers wend their way across the marshy waters. At long last the highway reaches **32 Redwood National & State Parks**. Commune with the coastal giants on their own mossy turf inside the Lady Bird Johnson Grove or the majestic but less-accessible Tall Trees Grove (free permits required). For more un-

touched virgin redwood forests, drive along the 8-mile Newton B Drury Scenic Parkway, passing tempting trailheads and meadows where Roosevelt elk roam.

Giant cast-metal golden bears stand sentry over the bridge leading into tiny Klamath. Watch out for Paul Bunyan and his blue ox Babe outside the **33 Trees of Mystery**, a shameless tourist trap with a gondola ride through the redwood canopy. The free End of the Trail Museum displays Native American art and artifacts; enter through the gift shop. If you can't bear to leave the big trees behind, **34 HI Redwood Hostel** awaits inside an early-20th-century farmhouse, tucked into a craggy section of truly wild coast overlooking blustery Klamath Cove. Further north, Crescent City is a utilitarian stopover just before you reach the beach-resort towns of the Oregon coast.

*Sara Benson*

## TRIP INFORMATION

### GETTING THERE

From Los Angeles, take I-5 south to San Diego.

### DO

#### Adamson House

Informative guided tours of the beachfront mansion are first-come, first-served. ☎ 310-456-8432; [www.adamsonhouse.org](http://www.adamsonhouse.org); 23200 Pacific Coast Hwy, Malibu; adult/child \$5/2, cash only; ☎ 11am-3pm Wed-Sat, last tour 2pm

#### Esalen Institute

Reservations are required for the clothing-optional hot-springs baths. ☎ 831-667-3047; [www.esalen.org](http://www.esalen.org); 55000 Hwy 1, Big Sur; admission \$20; ☎ public bath entry 1am-3am

#### Hotel Del Coronado

Pretend to live like royalty at this historic seaside resort. ☎ 619-435-6611; [www.hoteldel.com](http://www.hoteldel.com); 1500 Orange Ave, Coronado; ☎ 24hr

#### Humboldt Redwoods State Park

Be amazed by a canopy of the tallest trees you may have ever seen. ☎ 707-946-2263, camping reservations 800-444-7275; [www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov), [www.reserveamerica.com](http://www.reserveamerica.com); Avenue of the Giants; ☎ visitor center 9am-5pm Apr-Oct, 10am-4pm Nov-Mar; ♿

#### International Surfing Museum

Chronicles the iconic sport's history through photos, film, music and memorabilia. ☎ 714-960-3483; [www.surfingmuseum.org](http://www.surfingmuseum.org); 411 Olive Ave, Huntington Beach; admission free; ☎ noon-5pm Mon-Fri, 11am-6pm Sat & Sun

#### Long Beach Museum of Art

Ever-changing exhibitions of California art range from pinhole photos to giant sculptures. ☎ 562-439-2119; [www.lbma.org](http://www.lbma.org); 2300 E Ocean Blvd, Long Beach; adult/child \$7/free; ☎ 11am-5pm Tue-Sun

#### Monterey Bay Aquarium

Avoid long lines by going early or purchasing tickets online in advance. ☎ 831-648-4800; [www.mabyaq.org](http://www.mabyaq.org); 886 Cannery Row, Monterey; adult/child \$25/16; ☎ 10am-6pm; ♿

#### Point Arena Lighthouse

Still standing on an unbelievably windy point since 1908. ☎ 707-882-2777; [www.pointarenalighthouse.com](http://www.pointarenalighthouse.com); 45500 Lighthouse Rd, Point Arena; adult/child \$5/1; ☎ 10am-3:30pm; ♿

#### Redwood National & State Parks

Get oriented to the big trees at the visitors center south of Orick, or along the scenic Newton B Drury Parkway. ☎ 707-464-6101; [www.nps.gov/redw](http://www.nps.gov/redw); state park day-use fee \$6; ☎ visitors centers 9am-5pm; ♿

#### Trees of Mystery

Leave your cynicism at home; it's retro family-vacation fun. ☎ 707-482-2251, 800-638-3389; [www.treesofmystery.net](http://www.treesofmystery.net); 15500 Hwy 101, Klamath; adult/child \$13.50/6.50; ☎ 8am-6:30pm Jun-Aug, 9am-4:30pm Sep-May; ♿ ☐

#### Torrey Pines State Natural Reserve

Breathe in the fresh marine air, perched high above the beach. ☎ 858-755-2063; [www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov); Hwy 1, btwn La Jolla & Del Mar; day-use fee \$6; ☎ 8am-sunset, visitors center from 9am; ♿

### EAT

#### Georges at the Cove

Reservations are essential at La Jolla's top-tier epicurean destination. ☎ 858-454-4244; [www.georgesatthecove.com](http://www.georgesatthecove.com); 1250 Prospect St, La Jolla; mains \$10-40; ☎ café 11am-10pm, restaurant 5:30-10pm

#### Neptune's Net

Order up lobster, crab and jumbo shrimp at this 1950s roadhouse. ☎ 310-457-3095; [www.neptunesnet.com](http://www.neptunesnet.com); 42505 Pacific Coast Hwy, Malibu; mains \$4-17; ☎ 10:30am-8pm Mon-Thu, 10:30am-9pm Fri, 10am-8:30pm Sat & Sun, closes 1hr earlier Nov-Mar; ♿ ☐



## Passionfish

Fresh, inventive seafood dishes and organic, slow-food produce earn a devoted following.

☎ 831-655-3311; [www.passionfish.net](http://www.passionfish.net); 701 Lighthouse Ave, Pacific Grove; mains \$17-24; 🕒 5-8:45pm Sun-Thu, 5-9:45pm Fri & Sat

## Rocker Oysterfeller's

Cozy up to the Old West bar for oyster shooters and some spicy Sonoma-grown zinfandel.

☎ 707-876-1983; [www.rockeroysterfellers.com](http://www.rockeroysterfellers.com); 14415 Hwy 1, Valley Ford; mains \$9-34; 🕒 10am-2pm Sun, 5-9pm Wed-Sun

## Ruddell's Smokehouse

Grab-and-go, made-to-order tacos and seafood jerky made by "Smoker Jim." ☎ 805-995-5028; [www.smokerjim.com](http://www.smokerjim.com); 101 D St, Cayucos; mains \$4-10; 🕒 11am-6pm; ♿ □

## Walt's Wharf

Oak-grilled surf-and-turf platters pack the house, especially on weekends. No reservations. ☎ 562-598-4433; <http://waltswharf.com>; 201 Main St, Seal Beach; mains \$9-41; 🕒 11am-3:30pm & 4pm-close; ♿

## SLEEP

### Beach House

Fall asleep to the sounds of the surf in lofty condo-like suites with high-tech modern amenities. ☎ 310-374-3001, 888-895-4559; [www.beach-house.com](http://www.beach-house.com); 1300 The Strand, Hermosa Beach; r \$305-485; ♿

### Cavallo Point

Sleep inside a former military officer's house or more contemporary rooms on the hillside, which have Golden Gate views. ☎ 415-339-4700, 888-651-2003; [www.cavallopoint.com](http://www.cavallopoint.com); 601 Murray Circle, Fort Baker, Sausalito; r \$250-750; ♿

### Crystal Cove Cottages

Reservations sell out immediately by phone and online, starting at 8am on the first day of the month, six months prior to your stay.

☎ reservations 800-444-7275; [www.crystalcovebeachcottages.org](http://www.crystalcovebeachcottages.org), reservations [www.reserveamerica.com](http://www.reserveamerica.com); 8471 North Coast Hwy, Laguna Beach; r \$52-345; ♿

### El Capitan Canyon

Go "glamping" in Santa Barbara; a two-night minimum stay applies on weekends. ☎ 805-685-3887, 866-352-2729; [www.elcapitan-canyon.com](http://www.elcapitan-canyon.com); 11560 Calle Real, Santa Barbara; r \$145-350; ♿

### HI Redwood Hostel

Basic shared and private rooms in an unbeatable locale. ☎ 707-482-8265; [www.norcalhostels.org/redwoods](http://www.norcalhostels.org/redwoods); 14480 Hwy 101, Klamath; dorms/r \$21/52; 🕒 check-in 4-10pm Mar-Oct, some weekends Nov-Feb; ♿

### Humboldt Redwoods State Park

Roadside campgrounds come with hot showers, potable water and hike-in "envirosites." ☎ 707-946-1811, reservations 800-444-7275; [www.reserveamerica.com](http://www.reserveamerica.com); Avenue of the Giants; campsites \$12-20; 🕒 most campgrounds mid-May-mid-Oct, some year-round; ♿ □

### Joshua Grindle Inn

Bright, airy and uncluttered rooms in a Victorian house, weathered saltbox cottage and water tower are perennially full. ☎ 707-937-4143, 800-474-6353; [www.joshgrin.com](http://www.joshgrin.com); 44800 Little Lake Rd, Mendocino; r \$189-425; ♿

### Sanctuary Beach Resort

Deluxe rooms and suites next to the beach, without any maddening crowds or traffic. ☎ 831-883-9478, 877-944-3863; [www.thesanctuarybeachresort.com](http://www.thesanctuarybeachresort.com); 3295 Dunes Dr, Marina; r \$169-279; ♿

## USEFUL WEBSITES

[www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov)  
[www.visitcalifornia.com](http://www.visitcalifornia.com)

[www.lonelyplanet.com/trip-planner](http://www.lonelyplanet.com/trip-planner)

## LINK YOUR TRIP

TRIP

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**33** All Wet in Big Sur p215

**55** Beach Towns of the OC p329