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CENTRAL CALIFORNIA COAST



A classic red convertible rides down the Pacific coast in California

GOING COASTAL

The Golden State's central coast is classic to the core

By Dawna L. Robertson



Alisal Guest Ranch, Solvang

From the moment you hit California's central coast, you're stirred by the blissful sensation that urban frenzy is light-years away. The 300 miles of Highway 1, which stretch from Santa Barbara and Ventura counties just north of Los Angeles to Monterey and San Luis Obispo counties south of the San Francisco Bay Area, merge laid-back sensibility with sophistication and style.

"Of all the world's great coastlines, none compare to California's central coast for its truly unique combination of beauty, variety, accessibility and extraordinary range of ways to enjoy the landscape," says Jane Howard, **Central Coast Tourism Council's** immediate past president. "Each region has thriving wine industries and gorgeous towns blending classic architecture and history with contemporary dining and shopping. Anyone who loves the outdoors will find plenty to do."

Tami Sherman of Santa Barbara-based Elements Meetings agrees: "I'm thrilled every time I have the opportunity to bring a meeting or an incentive to the central coast. When you pair the diversity of activities with first-class resorts, historic archi-

texture and natural beauty, it surpasses expectations.”

If you're California dreaming but debating where to converge, consider these 10 enticing reasons to go central coastal.

1. GRAPE ESCAPES

An oenophile's paradise, the central coast is plush with prospects for swirling, sniffing and sipping elite varietals. There are four American Viticulture Areas (AVA) in Santa Barbara County. Groups will enjoy the **Urban Wine Trail**, a series of 20 tasting rooms within blocks of the beach. “This is an amazing twist on your classic wine-tasting event,” Sherman says. “Planners can organize a fun experience without the commute to Santa Ynez Valley wineries.”

Stagecoach Wine Tours transports up to 10 to the source for blendings, pairing dinners and barbecues. Other juicy picks include **Grapeline Wine Country Shuttle** and **Santa Barbara Wine Country Cycling Tours**. **Captain Jack's Tours** arranges in-

teractive wine-making and transportation for 30.

The Paso Robles wine region sweetens the scene with more than 270 wineries. **Breakaway Tours** couples tastings with farm-to-fork feasts. “One of our top events is Beyond Wine 101 blind and blending trials,” says Jill Tweedie, owner of the event-planning company. “Teams name their winery and wine and are ultimately judged for the best flavor.”

Paso Robles' **First Crush** covers the industry from berry to bottle during wine-blending workshops. A winemaker shares history, process and nuances, then provides tools of the trade for attendees to create their own private-label blends.

In Monterey County, top purveyors have set up shop on the **Carmel Wine Walk**. Wine connoisseurs tote passports to nine sampling spots laced within four blocks of the Pacific. Newbie **Trio Carmel** enhances the affair with olive oils and vinegars.

Tasting rooms along Monterey's **River Road Wine Trail** specialize in limited-release vintages that can often be sipped with the winemakers.



Trio Carmel

RESOURCES

- **Big Sur Visitors Bureau**
bigsurcalifornia.org
- **Central Coast Tourism Council**
centralcoast-tourism.com
- **City of Carmel-by-the-Sea**
carmelcalifornia.com
- **Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau**
seemonterey.com
- **Paso Robles Chamber of Commerce**
pasorobleschamber.com
- **Pismo Beach Conference & Visitors Bureau**
pismo-beach.org
- **San Luis Obispo County Visitors & Conference Bureau**
sanluisobispo-county.com
- **Santa Barbara Conference & Visitors Bureau and Film Commission**
santabarbaraca.com
- **Ventura County Lodging Association**
ventura-county-west.com
- **Ventura Visitors & Convention Bureau**
ventura-usa.com

2. PLAYING A ROUND

Pebble Beach immerses groups with legendary ambience whether they tackle one of golf's most illustrious final holes or simply enjoy a walk in the footsteps of the sport's greatest stars. After a round or private tournament on one of five courses, groups of up to 250 can reconnect on **The Lodge at Pebble Beach** terrace overlooking its signature 18th green.

Quail Lodge & Golf Club in Carmel Valley allows amateurs to hone skills like the pros with Monterey Peninsula's only Motion Analysis Technology by TaylorMade (MAT-T). Fresh from a \$28 million retool, the 93-room lodge reopened in March. Northern California's sole Pete Dye-designed course at **Carmel Valley Ranch** is also coming off a multimillion-dollar makeover. It's a golfer's paradise at **Hyatt Regency Monterey Hotel & Spa**, which is adjacent to the renowned Del Monte Golf Course, the oldest course in continuous operation west of the Mississippi River.

Rambling amid hills and along the bay in San Luis Obispo, **Avila Beach Golf Resort's** 18-hole course arranges private tournaments for a full field of 144. With three distinct nine-hole layouts, nearby Blacklake Golf Resort delivers multiple combos where each round provides an original experience.

Ventura County's **Buenaventura Golf Course** can accommodate 144-player shotguns and multi-day events. Sister property **Olivas Links** is a high-ranking municipal course with views of the Channel Islands. Post-competition, the adjacent Olivas Adobe hosts groups of up to 450 for award ceremonies in a historic outdoor courtyard, rose garden and grape grotto spaces. Santa Barbara's greens scene includes **Rancho San Marcos Golf Course**, **Sandpiper Golf Club** and **Glen Annie Golf Club**.

3. HISTORY HAPPENINGS

Groups can bask in the 1920s and '30s grandeur ensconcing newspaper mogul William Randolph Hearst and his Hollywood cronies at palatial **Hearst Castle** in San Simeon. “After guided tours of this luxe estate, you can stroll the gardens, see the iconic indoor and outdoor swimming pools and enjoy spectacular coastal views,” says Jim Allen, Hearst Castle director of marketing. Up to 250 can wine and dine on a terrace overlooking the grounds.

East of Ventura in Simi Valley, **The Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation & Library** hosts intimate meetings for 10 or galas for 1,500. Following docent-led tours, planners can elect a traditional White House luncheon or barbecue buffet presented beneath the wings of a retired *Air Force One*.

Carmel has launched a Hospitality Improvement District to beef up its small-meetings focus. As part of the initiative, historic **Sunset Cultural Center** has added general meeting and executive spaces to its 700-seat performing arts venue.

Once the site of a booming canning industry that merited its “Sardine Capital of the World” moniker, Monterey's Cannery Row is a natural for progressive dinners in a setting that embraces historic roots. The Row's behemoth **Monterey Bay Aquarium** has space for strolling dinners amid its 200 galleries and exhibits. Seated affairs for groups of up to 200 front a 90-foot window, where sharks glide, sardines swirl and turtles cruise.



Left: The Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation & Library, Simi Valley; right: Bacara Resort & Spa, Santa Barbara

4. EPICUREAN EVENTS

The mighty grape isn't the only crop flourishing in central-coast regions. In "The Salad Bowl of the World" that inspired Salinas native John Steinbeck to pen *East of Eden* and *Of Mice and Men*, excursions to working farms are offered by **Ag Venture Tours**. Participants observe field harvesting, irrigation, planting and organic farming.

"Food tours are a great way to get a well-rounded view, especially for those short on time," says **Carmel Food Tours'** Staci Giovino. "Not only do you learn the lay of the land, but you also anchor experiences and locations through your senses." Groups of up to 32 graze in waves along a 1.2-mile tasting trail sprinkled with cultural, historical and architectural highlights.

Groups of up to 200 go gourmet at **Limoneira** during orchard dinners or chuck wagon barbecues in its Citrus Pavilion, where there's picnic-table seating for 144. Planners can garnish with packing-house tours, horseback rides, trolley treks and hot-air ballooning.

Ventura Food Tours tailors edible outings for 50



ranging from food-fueled scavenger hunts to mixing chocolate treats and tasting beer at Ojai Beverage Company. And in Oxnard, **Farmer Phil** spearheads "pick your own produce" sessions for cooking classes at his McGrath Family Farm.

Embracing Santa Barbara's locavore movement, **Market Forays** merges farmers market tours with cooking classes during which groups of up to 40 savor locally sourced produce, seafood, artisan foods and vinos. Competitive cook-offs spice up team building.

5. SURFIN' TURF

Dubbed "The American Riviera," Santa Barbara dazzles from rugged cliffsides to expansive sandy beaches. Groups of up to 42 can catch shoreline scenery during regatta races and sunset sails aboard **Santa Barbara Adventure Company's** *Double Dolphin*. The operator also shoots for the stars with sunset astronomy kayaking.

"Our Iron Chef Meets Surf's Up is a great team-building option," Sherman says. "One set of teams creates appetizers, beverages and decor items while the others construct cardboard boats that are raced as a finale."

John Flaherty, owner of Morro Bay's **Central Coast Outdoors**, says: "One of my favorite things about our new Dinner on the Dunes is that you're in this wonderful isolated setting with basically no one else

MEETING SPOTLIGHT

Who: Monex Precious Metals; 19 attendees

What: Company Symposium for Top Producers

When: June 2013

Where: Sycamore Mineral Springs Resort, San Luis Obispo

Why: "The resort was the perfect location for our group. After an adventurous day riding in sun buggies, attendees were able to soak in their suites' private Jacuzzis, book a massage or facial in the spa or hop on a beach cruiser and head to Avila Beach on the gorgeous Bob Jones Trail. Breakaway Tours truly helped to make our group events memorable, from ziplining through the historic Santa Margarita Ranch followed by a Santa Maria barbecue and wine tasting at Eberle Winery to a Mexican lunch on the beach complete with bocce ball and volleyball."

—Vicky Carabini, promotions coordinator

GETTING THERE

Tucked between Los Angeles and San Francisco, California's central coast is accessible from three major airports: **Los Angeles International Airport (LAX)**, **San Francisco International Airport (SFO)** and **Mineta San Jose International Airport (SJC)**.

Planners can also book flights to regional airports that include **San Luis Obispo County Regional Airport (SBP)**, **Monterey Peninsula Airport (MRJ)**, **Santa Barbara Airport (SBA)** and **Oxnard Airport (OXR)** in Ventura County.

MISSIONS ACCOMPLISHED

Of the 21 Spanish missions founded in Alta California from 1769 to 1823, 11 are located within the central coast region. Settlements were established roughly 30 miles apart to accommodate a single day's horseback ride or a three-day venture on foot. The California Missions Foundation was created in 1998 to help preserve these historic treasures, among the oldest surviving structures in the state. For details on tours and events, visit californiamissionsfoundation.org.

Ventura Region

Mission San Buenaventura

211 East Main Street, Ventura

Founded in 1782 as the Mission by the Sea, San Buenaventura was Father Junipero Serra's ninth and final settlement. Destroyed by fire in the 1790s, the church was rebuilt over a 16-year period and rededicated in 1809. Self-guided tours meander through a museum and a quiet courtyard with a fountain.

Santa Barbara Region

Mission Santa Barbara

2201 Laguna Street, Santa Barbara

The only mission to be occupied continuously by the Franciscans from its founding in 1786, the Queen of the Missions is both a National and a California



Historic Landmark. Self- and docent-guided tours explore 10 rooms of historic artifacts and interpretive displays. Other missions in the area are Santa Ines (1804) and the extensively restored La Purisima Concepcion (1787).

San Luis Obispo Region

Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa

782 Monterey Street, San Luis Obispo

Founded by Father Serra in 1772, this fifth mission was secularized in 1834 and became a parish church in 1842. Covered with clapboard from 1881, deteriorating wooden buildings were restored to their original appearance in 1936. Today, it represents one of the largest parishes in the Diocese of Monterey. Also visit San Miguel Mission (1797).



Monterey Region

San Carlos Borromeo del Rio Carmelo

3080 Rio Road, Carmel

Originally founded by Father Serra in 1770, the crown jewel of the mission system was relocated from Monterey to Carmel the following year. Today, it remains a place of worship and education. Other regional missions include San Antonio de Padua (1771), Nuestra Senora de la Soledad (1791) and San Juan Bautista (1797).



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around." Up to 40 kayakers explore wildlife hangouts before beaching for dinner. Paddlers return to the docks as the sun slips behind the dunes.

For that quintessential surf vibe, **Ventura Makos** tutors up to 100 in shifts at San Buenaventura Beach Park. Before adding water, wave warrior wannabees catch a beach lesson on entry, paddling, the "pop up" and surfing mechanics. **Yellow Umbrella Company** will provide shade and seating for landlubbers.

"We can also set up a tent with class-style seating for 100, then walk onto the beach for yoga, jogging and a catered meal," says founder Donna Moore. "Or we'll throw a luau for 300 with beach chairs, umbrellas and music."

Island Packers launches from Ventura Harbor with sunset cat cruising aboard its 64-foot *Island Adventure*. Groups of up to 75 can relish coastal views while feasting on Greek or Italian cuisine and grooving to live music.

Steps from downtown, **Monterey Beach Party** stages outdoor events, featuring s'mores by a bonfire or play days at its Del Monte Beach House. Outdoor lanterns, fire dancers and a big-wave surf prop for cool photos create good vibrations.

6. INSPIRING VIEWS

As expected, central coast retreats burst with expansive panoramas. In Monterey County, you'll find top rooms with a view at **Monterey Plaza Hotel**, **Sanctuary Beach Resort**, **Ventana Inn & Spa**, **The Lodge at Torrey Pines** and **Hyatt Carmel Highlands**.

Rubbing shoulders with the Monterey Bay Aquarium, **InterContinental The Clement Monterey** lets attendees mosey from receptions on its Ocean View Terrace or Pacific Courtyard to a Cannery Row clam-bake with a treasure hunt for groups of up to 225.

Pismo Beach's 60-room **Dolphin Bay Resort & Spa** welcomes 40 for chef demonstrations in its Pacific-view penthouse suite. Lido Restaurant executive chefs also get into the act with fireside patio cooking classes.

Stretching along 78 acres of stunning coastline,



Left: Jim Hall Kart Racing School, Ventura; right: Santa Barbara Polo & Racquet Club

the 360-room **Bacara Resort & Spa** delivers 70,000 sq. ft. of event space that includes an executive conference center. "We're the only true oceanfront resort in Santa Barbara," says Kathleen Cochran, general manager. The Ocean and Miro lawns unfold to sweeping views, while the Santa Ynez Room indulges with two-story vaulted ceilings and an exterior terrace.

Coastal eye candy also satiates at the 207-room **Four Seasons Resort The Biltmore Santa Barbara**, the town's only AAA Five Diamond property. Fresh top-to-bottom revamps are featured at the 171-room **Hyatt Santa Barbara** and 92-room **El Encanto**. A luminary hideaway during Hollywood's golden age, El Encanto arranges alfresco receptions and elegant dinners at luxurious indoor and outdoor venues.

7. NATURAL HIGHS

Geared to adventure junkies, the central coast is chock-full of fixes for natural highs. Hikers can hoof it along a megadose of trails at Los Padres National Forest. At Pinnacles National Monument, ancient formations present primo rock-climbing challenges. Dedicated trekkers can also tackle Pfeiffer Big Sur trails winding through imposing redwood forests.

"Thar she blows" remains a common central coast refrain, especially December through March as gray whales migrate from Alaska to Baja. Groups of up to 250 can search for spouts with **Princess Monterey Whale Watching**. **Condor Express** hauls 120 gawk-

MEETING SPOTLIGHT

Who: John E. Fetzer Memorial Trust; 50 attendees

What: Decline Effect Conference (scientific symposium)

When: October 2012

Where: The Canary Hotel and UCSB Mosher House, Santa Barbara

Why: "Things done well look easy. Both The Canary Hotel and the UCSB Mosher House were ideal venues for this meeting. The level of hospitality created a delightful experience for participants. The execution of logistics by Elements Meetings was flawless. Elements also capitalized on the most bucolic views and social settings to encourage and support relationship building among the participants. Scientists who didn't know each other actually created collaborations from this symposium."

—Jimyo L. Ferworn, manager, finance and grants

ers from Santa Barbara's Harbor & Sea Landing. Island Packers departs from Ventura and Oxnard for encounters along the 25-mile journey to Channel Islands National Park, nicknamed the American Galapagos. Before heading to the rugged archipelago, book guided kayaking tours through **Santa Barbara Adventure Company**, **Aquasports**, **Channel Island Kayak Center** and **Channel Islands Outfitters**.

Alisal Guest Ranch delivers the mother lode of rushes at its 10,000-acre Santa Ynez Valley spread. Dudes and dudettes can hit 50 miles of trails and tackle fishing, canoeing and kayaking on a 100-acre spring-fed lake.

Adventures by the Sea gears and guides up to 100 bikers along Monterey County's stellar 17-Mile Drive, with a rider-to-guide ratio of 8-to-1. "There's a bike lane, so it's very safe," says owner Frank Knight. "From Cypress Point, it becomes an intermediate-advanced ride since there's no lane." Knight customizes shorter routes with box lunches or stops at Pebble Beach eateries.

"Our Horse, Fork & Whine is a wonderful outing for experiencing San Luis Obispo's vast beauty," Tweedie says. "It's an uplifting way to explore nature." A dozen can saddle up for a three-mile loop trail, then tap into the company's Seriously Fun Wine Education.

In the Santa Ynez Valley, **Vino Vaqueros** caters to equine and vine lovers with riding followed by wine tasting. Other operators providing horse-riding include **Circle Bar B Guest Ranch & Stables** and **Santa Barbara Adventure Company**.

8. BREWS CRUISE

For attendees craving grain over grape, the central coast's burgeoning brew culture has hopped onto the scene, satisfying craft-beer enthusiasts and those who simply dig quaffing a cold one. Amid a plethora of local surf and beer memorabilia, **Surf Brewery** in Ventura can accommodate groups of up to 70. Arrange edibles from local fave The Jolly Oyster to pair with South Swell and Surf Black IPAs.

In a 120-year-old brick building on Ventura's Main Street, **Anacapa Brewing Company** pours fresh handcrafted ales and lagers produced in its 12-tank brewery. Other hop stops generating buzz include **Phestival Barrel House**, **Lil' Man Brewing**, **Barrelhouse 101** and **Social Tap Pub and Grill**.

Those meeting in Santa Barbara will enjoy popular pubs such as **Hollister Brewing Company**, **Brewhouse** and **Telegraph Brewing Company**.

In Paso Robles, **Firestone Walker Brewing Company** has reopened with a new brewhouse and visitor center. "Since you're walking among brewers, you see the process from their perspective," says Jason Schmidt, Paso Robles Visitors Center manager. **Central Coast Brewery** in San Luis Obispo

ups the area's libation ante with its Brewmaster For A Day program.

At Monterey's **Cannery Row Brewing Company**, planners can arrange beer garden pairings for groups of up to 100 with home-style chow such as Makin' Cheese and Slow Smoked Baby Back Ribs. Also check out Peter B's Brewpub at **Portola Resort & Spa** next to the **Monterey Conference Center**.

9. OOHS AND AHHS SPAS

After a night of liquid luxury, attendees can reboot via the thermal therapy route at Carmel Valley's **Refuge**. The sanctuary's circuit game plan is about heating up, cooling down and relaxing. Groups of up to 100 can reach nirvana after hours amid alfresco mineral pools, meditation rooms and a Finnish cedar sauna.

At **Bernardus Lodge**, also in Carmel Valley, spa



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enthusiasts linger over a glass of vino before slipping further into decadence. Infused with ingredients from the ocean, vineyards and onsite organic gardens, therapies include the Vineyard Romance with cabernet grape seed exfoliation, alfresco lavender bath and warm grape-seed oil massage.

Santa Barbara also shines with exotic day havens. The Moroccan-style **Alchemy Arts Center** tailors full- and half-day agendas. "Alchemy is about bringing balance back into all aspects of our lives, whether through diet, lifestyle changes or traditional therapeutic spa treatments," says owner Emma Narachi.

At Santa Barbara's **Salt Cave**, attendees delve into underground dens crafted from 200-million-year-old Himalayan crystal minerals imported from Pakistan. "It's not every day that a group can experience a venue like this," Sherman says. "We'll arrange events for 60 with massages, yoga and a party in a private cave."

The Cliffs Resort in Pismo Beach offers sea-inspired treatments that soothe sun-damaged skin. The invigorating full body antioxidant grape seed scrub gently exfoliates, regenerates and moisturizes skin, followed by a steamed towel rinse.

10. WALK ON THE WILD SIDE

Strapped into 160-pound hyper-performing karts, thrill-seekers gain the inside track on wheel-to-wheel racing skills at **Jim Hall Kart Racing School**. Groups of up to 32 lap it up with team building along the track's 14-turn, .55-mile paved circuit at Ventura County Fairgrounds' Seaside Park.

At **Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca** in Salinas, events shift into high gear with Skip Barber Racing School. "Our optimal group size is 15 to 24," says Jacqueline Ginsburg, the school's business development manager. "But we've also done open houses for 200. Those opting out sit on the edge of the track and enjoy the fun."

Established in 1911, **Santa Barbara Polo & Racquet Club** lets attendees edge up to the action during private exhibitions with a player and mount meet and greet. Team building twists and turns with Golf Cart Polo. "Polo players drive six carts while six guests swing mallets out the other side," says Alison Hansen, event and sales director. "Attendees can rotate in for chukkers. It's a real crowd pleaser."

Breakaway Tours merges thrill and chill with its Zip and Sip option. "We'll take up to 40 to Santa Mar-

garita Ranch for four ziplines spanning more than 3,000 total feet," Tweedie says. "Afterward, they'll have lunch in a rustic barn with winemakers, then head off for a winery or dairy farm tour."

San Luis Obispo County has lots to offer adrenalin junkies. There's **Skydive Pismo Beach** and **Pacific Adventure Tours**, which offers Hummer rides through the Pismo Dunes.

Elkhorn Slough Safari's 27-foot pontoon transports up to 22 nature lovers into central Monterey Bay's wetlands. Winding inland, eagle eyes can spot endangered species, nesting birds, feeding sharks and giant slugs, among other animals. Groups can go responsible with wetland conservation via fieldwork and gardening.

California's central coast may be smack in the middle between Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay Area, but attendees will be anything but stuck during meetings held throughout this varied and extraordinary West Coast region. 

Dawna L. Robertson is a San Diego-based freelance writer who frequently contributes to trade and consumer publications across the United States.



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Monterey County	Rooms/Meeting Space	What's Distinctive
Asilomar Conference Grounds	313 rms/33,000 sq. ft.	A 107-acre lodge-style setting known as the Refuge by the Sea; shoreline location in Pacific Grove; indoor space includes 750-capacity dining hall.
Carmel Valley Ranch	139 rms/45,000 sq. ft.	Located downtown within easy walking distance of shops, restaurants and galleries; fitness center and heated indoor pool with mountain views.
Hyatt Regency Monterey Hotel & Spa	550 rms/45,000 sq. ft.	Located on the championship Del Monte Golf Course; 12,000-square-foot Accista Spa; 4-bedroom presidential suite is a stand-alone home with a heated pool.
Inn at Spanish Bay	269 rms/14,000 sq. ft.	Fronted by a Scottish-style links golf course; recently renovated guest rooms offer private patio or balcony and fireplace.
InterContinental The Clement Monterey	208 rms/16,000 sq. ft.	Waterfront hotel located on Cannery Row next to Monterey Bay Aquarium; 3,500-square-foot Pacific View Courtyard for sunset functions.
Monterey Marriott Hotel	341 rms/56,000 sq. ft.	Connects to Monterey Conference Center via footbridge; full-service Escape Day Spa; Ferrante's Bay View Ballroom offers Monterey's highest viewpoint.
Monterey Plaza Hotel & Spa	290 rms/47,000 sq. ft.	Perched over Monterey Bay along historic Cannery Row; Forbes Four Star, AAA Four Diamond ratings; rooftop Vista Blue Spa; 2 waterfront restaurants.
Portola Hotel & Spa at Monterey Bay	379 rms/50,000 sq. ft.	Recipient of LEED Silver certification and AAA Four Diamond rating; waterfront location adjacent to Monterey Conference Center; newly renovated Spa on the Plaza.
Seascape Beach Resort Monterey Bay	285 rms/17,000 sq. ft.	Fully equipped kitchens, fireplaces and bay view balconies in all suites and villas; most function spaces offer sweeping ocean views; championship golf.
San Luis Obispo County		
Dolphin Bay Resort & Spa	60 rms/10,200 sq. ft.	Centrally located on Pismo Beach; 1- and 2-bedroom suites with private terraces or patios; farm-to-table cuisine with local wines at Lido; full-service Spa at Dolphin Bay.
The Cliffs Resort	160 rms/10,000 sq. ft.	Perched atop bluffs overlooking Pismo Beach; heated oceanfront swimming pool; Spa at the Cliffs; 12,000+ sq. ft. of outdoor terrace and lawn space.
The Inn at Morro Bay	98 rms/9,385 sq. ft.	Newly renovated on 4,000 acres just inside Morro Bay State Park; 4,860-square-foot Bay View Deck offers ocean panorama; surrounded by an 18-hole golf course.
The Madonna Inn	110 rms/20,000+ sq. ft.	Landmark property with individually decorated guest rooms; beach-entry pool, whirlpool spas, fitness room and day spa; largest of 6 banquet rooms seats 200.
Santa Barbara County		
Alisal Guest Ranch & Resort	73 rms/6,800 sq. ft.	Nestled in the Santa Ynez Valley on a 10,000-acre working cattle ranch; lakeside deck and rodeo arena for outdoor functions; activities include golf and fishing.
Bacara Resort & Spa	354 rms/70,000 sq. ft.	A 78-acre oceanfront property with 2 miles of natural beach; 42,000-square-foot luxury spa; executive conference center; 211-seat screening room.
El Encanto	92 rms/9,820 sq. ft.	Recently reopened after extensive renovation; celebrity retreat during Hollywood's golden age; all bungalows include a fireplace, private patio and garden space.
Four Seasons Resort The Biltmore Santa Barbara	207 rms/10,000 sq. ft.	Santa Barbara's only AAA Five Diamond resort; Spanish Colonial style architecture; full-service spa; Coral Casino Beach & Cabana Club overlooks Butterfly Beach.
Hotel Corque	122 rms/7,500 sq. ft.	Located in charming Solvang; luxury boutique hotel is owned by the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians; complimentary shuttle to the Chumash Casino Resort.
Ventura County		
Crowne Plaza Ventura Beach	258 rms/19,000 sq. ft.	Ventura's only beachfront property; adjacent to historic pier; newly renovated Top of the Harbor Ballroom offers views of the Channel Islands; heated beachfront pool.
Four Points by Sheraton Ventura Harbor	175 rms/14,000 sq. ft.	Designed by the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation; heated outdoor pool and atrium jet tub; spa and fitness center; most guest rooms have private balconies or patios.
Marriott Ventura Beach	285 rms/16,676 sq. ft.	Located steps to the beach and San Buenaventura State Beach Park; near harbor cruises and shops; Las Brisas Ballroom features outdoor courtyard with fireplace.
Ojai Valley Inn & Spa	308 rms/35,000 sq. ft.	AAA Five Diamond Spanish-style resort and spa set on 220 acres in Los Padres National Forest; 18-hole championship golf course; 4 outdoor pools.
The Clocktower Inn	50 rms/2,000 sq. ft.	In the heart of historic downtown Ventura; formerly a 1940s California-Spanish style firehouse and clocktower; outdoor spa and local health club privileges.
The Pierpont Inn & Spa	77 rms/10,000 sq. ft.	Situated on a bluff overlooking the Pacific; historic property built in 1910; executive retreat center; walking distance to San Buenaventura State Beach & Pier.