

Fun things to do this fall and winter

Listed in alphabetical order by city

Carmel

Taste of Carmel. Oct. 2-5. Fresh from last year's successful 25th anniversary, Taste of Carmel has announced a big expansion for 2014. Typically held for one evening, the event will now be held over four days. Festivities will begin with "The Royal Bash" on Thursday evening, Oct. 2, which will feature dozens of area restaurants and wineries offering food and wine, as well as live music, at the Carmel Mission Courtyard. The event's expansion will be evident beginning the next day with a food tour in downtown Carmel and a bicycle tour through Carmel Valley wineries. Other Taste of Carmel highlights include a Winemaker Dinner, Dessert and Wine Tasting Lunch and several auctions. For more information, or to purchase tickets, call 800.550.4333 or 831.624.2522 or visit tasteofcarmel.com. FYI: This festival is most appropriate for adults.

Carmel Mission Fiesta. Sat. Sept. 28, 11-6. This year will mark its 50th year of the Fiesta, scheduled from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 28. Located on the beautiful grounds of the Carmel Mission, the Fiesta will feature a barbecue, drinks, live music, arts and crafts, and games for children. Location: 3080 Rio Road, Carmel. For more information, call 831.624.8322. For details see www.carmelmission.org.

Half Moon Bay

Art and Pumpkin Festival. Weekend of Oct. 18-19, 9-5. The World Pumpkin Capital of Half Moon Bay celebrates its bountiful fall harvest and autumn splendor with a special display of gigantically enormous/heavyweight champion pumpkins, smashing entertainment with three stages of stellar live music throughout downtown, the Great Pumpkin Parade (Oct. 18 at 12 noon), a bone-chilling Haunted House, harvest-inspired crafts, homestyle foods, expert pumpkin carver Farmer Mike sculpting a monster 1,200+ pound pumpkin into a one-of-a-kind masterpiece, photos with the grand champion mega-gourd, pie-eating and costume contests, pumpkin carving for fun, "Smashing Pumpkins: Battle of the Bands", the Take 5 Lounge with giant screen TV, ultra-thrilling zip-line and bungee jump, the Sunday-only "Made on the Coast" locals artists block with fine art and live music, tasty varietals from Half Moon Bay Winery, Mavericks Pumpkin Harvest Ale from Half Moon Bay Brewing Company, and pumpkin spice syrup infused margaritas. Admission is free. Pets are not allowed. Location: Main Street between Mill and Spruce Streets in Half Moon Bay. Call 650-726-9652. Log onto <http://www.pumpkinfest.miramarevents.com>.