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Walk this way in Carmel-by-the-Sea

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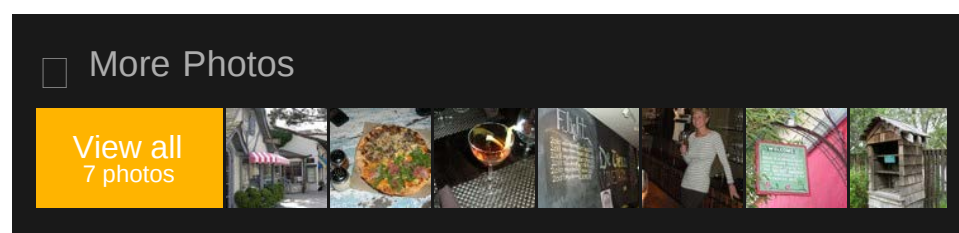
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April 2, 2014

Tasty tidbits. Locally made wine. Secret nooks and crannies. Pick your passion, then walk the walk through California's charming [Carmel-by-the-Sea](#).



Three diverse walking tours introduce visitors to the hidden gems and passageways of this magical village set on a sandy Pacific beach. Without a guide, you're not likely to stumble upon Vincent Van Gogh's dinner table, discover a milk shrine or sip a Manhattan in Doris Day's pet-friendly inn.

Forks

A guided food walk (now in its third season) takes you to cafes, wine tasting rooms and a chocolate shop—seven delectable stops in all. Staci Giovino, guide and tour chief, begins her morning rounds at Mundaka Café for an eye-opening glass of sangria accompanied by a slice of frittata. At quaint Casanova, not only can you indulge in secret recipe spinach gnocchi, you'll spot the rustic table where artist Van Gogh supped. Ask Staci how the table found its way from a boarding house in France to Carmel's "most romantic restaurant."

Next stop, Terry's Lounge in Doris Day's Cypress Inn. As it's lunch time, it's OK to enjoy a classic

Manhattan cocktail and lamb meatball with curry. Yum! Still feeling hungry? Not to worry. Staci has you moving on to La Bicyclette for more treats—wood-fired butternut squash and ham pizza plus several decadent deserts.

Did I mention the olive oil, sparkling wine and chocolates? Contact Staci to learn more about her three-hour [Carmel Food Tour](#). The price of \$69 includes your guide and all food and drink samples. 800-979-3370. www.CarmelFoodTour.com

Corks

The new Wine Walk by-the-Sea is a self-guided one, taking in the growing list of downtown tasting rooms. There's sure to be one located steps from your hotel or inn. We wandered into [De Tierra Vineyards](#) where Cris poured samples of Tondre Pinot Noir and Vindegard Chardonnay, to name just two of the winning possibilities. De Tierra also produces a smooth olive oil, offered for sale here at \$25 a bottle.

Pick up your [Wine Walk](#) passport at the [Carmel](#) Visitor Center on San Carlos (between 5th and 6th). For \$65 per person you'll receive nine tastings, each worth \$10. Fortunately, your value-priced wine tasting passport never expires. Don't forget to bring it along on future visits. www.CarmelWineWalk.org

Surprises

Secret nooks are revealed during an entertaining wander into Carmel-by-the Sea's colorful past. "This town pops architecturally and aesthetically," says Gael Gallagher of [Carmel Walks](#).

Here's a sampling of what makes this one-square-mile such a fairytale kind of place.

First, you can walk everywhere, including the dog-friendly, white sand beach. Originally, a plank sidewalk along Ocean Avenue (the dusty main street) led down to the shore. Ocean Avenue was eventually paved, but not until 1930.

Carmel-by-the Sea has no street numbers. You find a place by its street and cross street. Individual homes—many are small cottages—have names like Hansel, Gretel and Snow White. And there are no mail boxes. Locals still pick up their mail at the post office, a social gathering spot.

"When you come into courtyards, you find the secrets," quips Gael. She leads her groups through

winding passageways behind the easy-to-reach main sidewalks. You may discover an outdoor restaurant, fountains, gardens, art gallery or quirky shop. It's always an adventure.

Walking tours are offered every Saturday at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.; Tuesday through Friday at 10 a.m. The cost is \$25 per person. 831-642-2700 www.CarmelWalks.com

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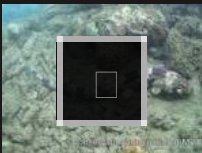


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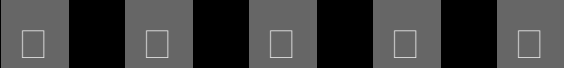
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