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You are here: [Home](#) / [Travel](#) / An Easterner in Cali: Carmel-by-the-Sea

An Easterner in Cali: Carmel-by-the-Sea



October 12, 2015 By [Chanelle](#) — [71 Comments](#)

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It was a no-brainer for me when I was asked to come and visit [Carmel-by-the-Sea](#). I'd only been to California one other time for a research conference when I was in college, so I was excited to have the opportunity to visit for leisure.

Carmel is in the middle of the California coast, north of Los Angeles and south of San Francisco, and right near Big Sur, if you're familiar with that. It's a tiny city – just one square mile and only about 3,800 residents – and my favorite fact about it is that there are no street addresses. That's right, every business owner and resident must pick up their mail at the local post office because there are no street numbers.

My Carmel trip began with a flight to the Monterey airport which, happily, was just a 10 minute drive from my inn. I stayed at the quaint and charming [Carmel Garden Inn](#), which has only 10 rooms, all named after flowers. My mini-suite was called "Lavender" and had a kitchenette with wet bar, two beds, a nicely remodeled bathroom, and a private patio.





Yup, I had this all to myself.



Carmel has a mild climate, with an average high of 65 degrees and low of 48 degrees year-round, so I was advised to dress in layers while visiting. I like to travel as light as I can, so I only brought a carry-on sized suitcase and filled it with mostly neutral clothing with a few pops of color. For shoes, I packed [a pair of Toms](#), [a pair of dressy but comfortable sandals with a Cuban heel](#), and [a pair of workout sneakers](#). (Check out the links for the exact shoes I brought.)

Fun fact: don't even bother bringing high heels to Carmel. They're illegal! Seriously, if you really want to wear them, you have to apply for a permit!



Mostly neutrals



Blue jeans, white jeans, belts, and neutral shirts.

Two of the many awesome things about the Carmel Garden Inn were the totally free wine and cheese happy hour from 4 to 6 p.m. and the free breakfast from 8 to 10 a.m. every day. I took advantage of the happy hour two times while I was there, but I had the breakfast every day!



Wine and cheese on my first evening in Carmel



My room had a wood burning fireplace!



I was very excited to be in California.

After arriving, I had a couple of hours of R&R before walking to our first day dinner spot, [Vesuvio](#). Chef Pèpe has several business ventures, including this restaurant and another restaurant in town. The ambiance at Vesuvio was beautifully moody and the Italian fare hit the spot after a long day of traveling from coast to coast.





Chef Pèpe launched his own limoncello while we were in town!

I had the Cioppino Rosso. I did not regret it. It consisted of prawns, scallops, mussels, clams, calamari & crab in a spicy pescatore sauce over capellini.



Cioppino Rosso

For dessert, I ordered the spumoni alla napoletana gelato. The cherry and pistachio combination was the perfect nightcap, and I went to bed full and happy that night.



Admit it, you're booking your flight to Monterey now, aren't you? I don't blame you. Carmel is wonderful.

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About Chanelle

Chanelle is a twenty-something blogger, professional bodybuilder, and unsolicited advice-giver. To catch a Chanelle, set a trap containing one or more of the following: coffee, beer, wine, 70s music, internet memes, dumbbells.