WINE COUNTRY THIS WEEK

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Visiting Carmel-by-the-Sea: *Wine Walk by-the-Sea™ Passports*

Artist Colony Turned World-Class Wine Destination

Situated along the rugged cliffs of Monterey Peninsula, with stunning views of the Pacific Ocean only blocks from the city center, sits the charming hamlet of Carmel-by-the-Sea. Built on a network of steep hills and root-bound sidewalks, an eclectic mix of fairytale cottages, Craftsman bungalows and Mission Revival architecture dot the landscape in and around the main shopping plaza. Originally founded as a nature and artist colony back in 1916, this self-proclaimed 'village in a forest overlooking a white sand beach' has successfully preserved its bohemian character while quietly becoming a world-class destination for small wine producers. Visitors can indulge over a long weekend in ultra-premium and limited-release bottlings with an emphasis on Monterey County cool-climate Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and sparkling wines.

Wine Walk by-the-Sea™ Passports

It's not often that one can park the car and find 19 boutique wine tasting rooms waiting to be explored by foot in a one-square mile radius. And it's even more rare to pay once, and then enjoy an afternoon (or two) exploring Monterey County's best small wine producers. With the Carmel-by-the-Sea's Wine Walk by-the-Sea™ Passport, all of the above are at your fingertips. The Passport includes ten prepaid tasting cards good for four, 1-ounce pours per location at 10 of the 13 participating wineries. Simply present a Passport card at the beginning of your tasting and explore a collection of wines highlighting the best of regional and international varietals. And bonus, your Passport extends a 10% discount on wine purchase with that winery. This self-paced, self-guided tour can be used over several days, weeks or even months, as the Passport does not expire. Genius! Passports are $100 each and are available in-person at the Carmel Visitor Center [Carmel Plaza, 2nd Floor] or can be purchased in advance on-line from the Carmel Chamber of Commerce website [carmelchamber.org/store/wine-walk-by-the-sea] or by calling 1-800-550-4333.

Things To Do and Explore

Carmel-by-the-Sea has over 100 galleries with artists hailing locally and worldwide-all of whom credit their daily inspiration to the unspoiled beauty of the area's coastline and seascapes, its natural flora and native wildlife. Every medium and genre is represented from Monterey Peninsula motifs and rural American landscapes to coastal gem jewelry, carved Redwood sculptures and a large collection of glass, sea glass and ceramic art.

Need to unplug? Carmel-by-the-Sea is also now a mindfulness destination offering exclusive Mindful-by-the-Sea retreats. From guided meditation sessions to miles of easy walking trails along the beach, this seaside hideaway encourages visitors to enjoy the sounds of the crashing waves or simply the peace and quiet of its natural surroundings.

Learn more at carmelcalifornia.com/MindfulTools.

— TANYA SEBOLLO

DON'T MISS

Carmel Cheese Shop
Offering a sample (or three, or four!) of an impressive selection of local and imported cheeses. Wine tasting also offered. Carmel Plaza, Bottom Floor. thecheesesharpllc.com

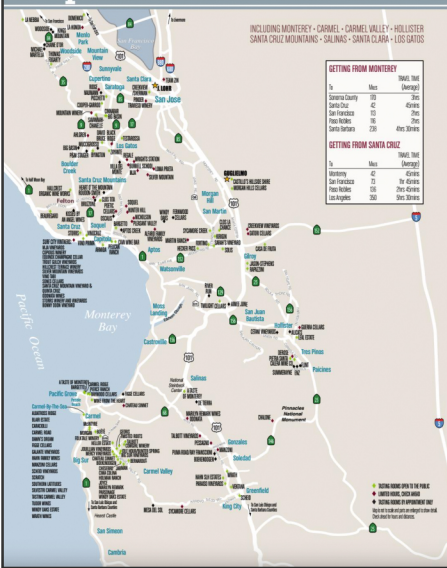
Walking Food Tours
Guided walking tour of the best eateries and culinary shops in village. Wear comfortable shoes and come hungry! carmelfoodtours.com

Carmel Bakery
Carmelis the size of your hand, fresh brewed coffee, light lunches and the best sugar cookies you've ever tasted. Their number is (831) 626-6665

FUN FACTS

Permit Required to Wear High Heels Shoes heels more than two inches in height or with a base of less than one square inch require a permit. Enacted in 1920, this still-current regulation is meant to prevent lawsuits from trips over tree roots in the sidewalks. Visitor can obtain a complimentary permit at City Hall.

Ice Cream Ordinance: An unusual law prohibiting the selling and eating of ice cream on public streets was on the books until Mayor Clint Eastwood (1986-1988) and his newly elected council overturned the ordinance in 1986, finding it too restrictive to businesses and visitors alike.

Carmel-by-the-Sea Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center
Open Daily 10am- 6pm
Carmel Plaza, Second Floor
carmelchamber.org | (831) 624-2522

Explore North-Central Coast