

Free! ♦ Big Sur Guide ♦ Free!

Summer 2015 - Spring 2016



Big Sur Coastline ~ Partington Point Photo by Stan Russell

“The Greatest Meeting of Land and Sea”

Big Sur is located along Scenic Highway One approximately 150 miles south of San Francisco and 300 miles north of Los Angeles. Historically, the name Big Sur was derived from that unexplored and unmapped wilderness area which lies along the coast south of Monterey. It was simply called el país grande del sur, the Big South Country. Today, Big Sur refers to that 90-mile stretch of rugged and awesomely beautiful coastline between Carmel to the north and San Simeon (Hearst Castle) to the south. Highway One winds along its length and is flanked on one side by the majestic Santa Lucia Mountains and on the other by the rocky Pacific Coast.

Although there were two Mexican land grants awarded in the 1830's, which included most of the area north of the Big Sur Valley, neither grantee settled on the land. It was little more than a century ago when the first permanent settlers arrived in Big Sur. In the following decades other hardy persons followed and staked out their homesteads. The landmarks bear the names of many of those early settlers — Mt. Manuel, Pfeiffer Ridge, Post Summit, Cooper Point, Dani Ridge, Partington Cove and others. Some of their descendants still live in Big Sur.

At the turn of the century Big Sur sustained a larger population than it does today. A vigorous

redwood lumbering industry provided livelihoods for many. The Old Coast Trail, which had been the only link between homesteads, was still little more than a wagon trail. Steamers transported heavy goods and supplies and harbored at Notley's Landing, Partington Cove, and the mouth of the Little Sur River.

Navigation was treacherous, and in 1889, the Point Sur Lighthouse began sending its powerful beam to protect ships from the hazards of the coastline.

In 1937, the present highway was completed after eighteen years of construction at a considerable expense even with the aid of convict labor. The highway has since been declared California's first Scenic Highway, and it provides a driving experience unsurpassed in natural beauty and scenic variety.

Electricity did not arrive in Big Sur until the early 1950's, and it still does not extend the length of the coast or into the more remote mountainous area.

The proximity of the Pacific Ocean provides for a temperate climate. Winters are mild, and rainy days are interspersed with periods of bright sunshine. An average rainfall of over 50

inches fills the many streams that flow down the redwood-lined canyons. Coastal fog cools the summer mornings, but it usually lifts by early afternoon.

It is wise to include both warm and cold weather clothing when packing for Big Sur. A damp, foggy morning can be followed by a warm afternoon. In the interior valleys of the Wilderness Area, the temperatures are more extreme; the fog bank seldom crosses the coast ridge, so the days are likely to be hot and the nights chilly.

The scenic qualities and the natural grandeur of the coast which result from the imposing geography, the rich vegetative compositions, and the dramatic meetings of land and sea are the area's greatest single attraction to the public. Big Sur has attained a worldwide reputation for its spectacular beauty. Hiking, backpacking and scenic driving are major recreational activities.

Highway 1 through Big Sur is a designated American National Scenic Byway and California Scenic Highway, an honor reserved for highways that are so distinctive they are destinations unto themselves. For more information visit www.byways.org.



www.bigsurcalifornia.org

Big Sur Guide

The official, complete and definitive travel guide to California's Big Sur Coast Summer 2015 through Spring 2016.

Table of Contents

- Handling Big Sur with Care ... page 2
- Point Sur Lighthouse page 3
- Hunting & Fishing page 3
- Ventana Wilderness page 3
- Map..... page 4-5
- Big Sur Visitor Resources pages 6-7
- Reservations pages 6-7
- Where's the Beach? page 8
- Redwoods page 8

Acknowledgements

Big Sur Guide is a publication produced by Stan Russell. Provided as a public service by:

- Big Sur Chamber of Commerce
- Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau

Big Sur Chamber of Commerce editorial committee – Chris Counts, Stan Russell. If you have any questions about the articles, information or revisions of this publication, please send them to:

Big Sur Chamber of Commerce
 P.O. Box 87
 Big Sur, CA 93920
 Call (831) 667-2100
 www.bigsurcalifornia.org
 info@bigsurcalifornia.org

Photography

Stan Russell
 facebook.com/BigSurCalifornia
 Daniel Bianchetta bigsurphoto.com

About the Big Sur Guide

This publication is supported in part by the Monterey County Convention and Visitors Bureau. Through this guide we hope to answer your questions regarding the Big Sur Coast. The Big Sur Guide is printed on post consumer waste. Please recycle.

Emergency Information

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY DIAL 911. Other emergency phone numbers include:

- AAA (800) 400-4222
- Big Sur Health Center (831) 667-2580
- Big Sur Ranger Station, State Parks, U.S. Forest Service, Cal-Trans (831) 667-2315
- Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula (831) 624-5311

Community Hospital is the nearest hospital to Big Sur. It is located approximately 30 miles north of Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park. Follow Highway 1 to Carmel, taking the Highway 68 exit (west) to the hospital.

Monterey-Salinas Transit

Providing public transportation for the entire Monterey County and beyond. Line 22 bus runs daily between Monterey and Big Sur Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day.

www.mst.org
 1-888-MST-BUS1
 (1-888-678-2871)



Bixby Bridge from Hurricane Point ~ Aerial photo by Stan Russell



Lupine wildflower bloom on the Baronda Trail ~ Photo by Stan Russell

How to handle Big Sur with care

Big Sur is a special place to many people. To help keep it that way and ensure your own safety, observe some simple rules and follow these basic safety tips.

FIRES — Our biggest concern during the dry season is wildfire. Please extinguish cigarettes in your ashtray. Be extra careful, making sure that your fire is safe and legal. Be sure to extinguish your fire when you leave.

COLLECTING — Plants, animals, rocks and artifacts of Big Sur's cultural and natural history are protected by law and should not be disturbed. Rockhounding and collection of driftwood and firewood may be allowed in certain designated areas. Collectors should contact the nearest ranger station for specific information.

RECYCLE — Most businesses have blue recycling bins. Please treat Big Sur gently and with respect so that it will remain the beautiful place we all love.

PRIVATE PROPERTY — Please be mindful and respectful of the property rights of others. Most of the land adjacent to the highway is posted private property, and trespassing laws are strictly enforced.

ROADSIDE CAMPING — Roadside camping is prohibited along Highway 1 from the Carmel River to the Monterey-San Luis Obispo County line. This does not apply to tired motorists stopping for a temporary rest.

PETS — Pets frighten wildlife and disturb visitors. On U.S. Forest Service lands, pets must be leashed in developed campgrounds and picnic areas only. In the State Parks, they must be on a leash at all times and are not allowed on trails.

POISON OAK — This toxic plant is found in Big Sur in abundance. Exposure to the plant can be spread by hands, clothing, pets, or equipment which has come in contact with the plant or from the smoke generated when burning it. Much of the reactive substance can be removed by immediate washing with cool water and soap. Look for the triple leaf pattern, with prominent veins and a shiny surface. During the summer and fall, the leaves take on reddish hues. Try to avoid this plant.

DRIVING TIPS FOR HIGHWAY 1 State Highway 1 through the Big Sur is recognized internationally as one of the world's most beautiful highways. It is also one of the most maintained highways in America. Keep these tips in mind when you travel this route:

- 1) Drive defensively! You never know what hazard may be around a blind curve.
- 2) Buckle up! It's the law.
- 3) Keep your eyes on the road — if you want to enjoy the scenery, please use turn-outs.
- 4) Maintain your speed and abide by the posted speed limit which is 55 MPH unless otherwise posted. Slower traffic should pull over.
- 5) When pulling over, avoid quick stops on the unpaved turn-outs and shoulders.
- 6) Watch for touring bicyclists.

Tours Available at Historic Point Sur Light Station

The Point Sur Light Station, located on the Big Sur coast 19 miles south of Carmel, sits 361 feet above the surf on the seaward brow of a large block of volcanic rock. This rugged promontory has long been regarded as a navigational hazard. Prior to construction of the lighthouse (1887-1889), the area was the site of several disastrous shipwrecks.

Designated as a State Historic Landmark in 1980, Point Sur contains all the buildings necessary to maintain a self-sufficient 19th-Century lighthouse facility. It is the only intact light station along the California coast open to the public. As a part of the Big Sur coast for over 125 years, the picturesque buildings inspire an aura of mystery and haunting beauty, continuing to be an important landmark to modern day mariners as well as travelers along Highway 1.

Construction of the light station began in 1887 and was completed two years later. At that time Point Sur was one of the more remote light stations. In place of Highway 1 there was a horse trail—the Old Coast Road—which made trips to Monterey long and infrequent.

Pt. Sur remains an active US Coast Guard Lighthouse, although the last keepers left the Light Station in 1974. The U.S. Department of the Interior gifted the majority of the light station to the California Department of Parks and Recreation in 1984. The lighthouse itself and remaining parcels were gifted to State Parks in 2004. Restoration work began in 1985, and today, classified as a State Historic Park, weekends and Wednesday tours all year.

For information regarding guided tours, check the interpretive notices posted in the state parks, or call (831) 625-4419 for more information. Trained volunteer docents provide an informative and pleasurable tour to the visiting public, and provide access to the Point Sur Lightstation. Visit us on the web at www.pointsur.org



Point Sur Light Station ~ Aerial photo by Stan Russell

HISTORIC LIGHTSTATION — A landmark along the Big Sur Coast for over 100 years, the Point Sur Light Station is now a State Historic Park. Tours are available to the public.

Visitors will hear tales of service by generations of lighthouse keepers and their families, as well as the important role of the U.S. Lighthouse Service, which was the creator and administrator of the facility from 1889 to 1939.

POINT SUR LIGHTSTATION TOURS

WHEN: Docent guided tours. Summer (April through October) Wed. & Sat. 10am & 2pm, Sun. 10am. July and August; additional tours on Thursday, 10am. Winter (November - March) Sat. & Sun. 10am and Wed. at 1pm. Visitors should arrive at least one half hour before.

WHERE: Meet along the west side of Highway 1 at the locked entrance gate one quarter mile north of the former Point

Sur Naval Facility. Tours are limited to 40 people. No large motorhomes, trailers or busses. There is no public beach access. Please respect the right of private property owners.

ADMISSION: \$15 for adults, \$5 for ages 6 to 17. 5 and under are free (moonlight tours: \$20/\$10). A video featuring the Pt. Sur tour can be viewed at the Big Sur Station. Tours are not recommended for small children. Dogs, food, and smoking are prohibited.

TOURS: Each tour takes about 3 hours, and involves a one-half mile hike each way, with a 300-foot climb in elevation. Always be prepared for cold, windy weather even in the summer. www.pointsur.org

Big Sur Backcountry Offers a Bounty of Hiking Trails

The Ventana Wilderness owes its name to a dramatic mountain peak known as Ventana Double Cone. Legends relate that at one time the unique notch at the mountain's top was roofed over by a rock bridge. Because of this legend, the early Spanish inhabitants named the outcrop "Ventana," which means window in Spanish.

The Ventana Wilderness contains 240,026 acres straddling the Santa Lucia Mountains south of the Monterey Peninsula and is part of the Los Padres National Forest. Los Padres National Forest encompasses nearly two million acres in the beautiful coastal mountains of central California. The forest stretches across almost 220 miles from the Big Sur Coast in Monterey County to the western edge of Los Angeles County.

A unique area of rugged coastal mountains, the Ventana Wilderness is managed by the United States Forest Service.

Topography in the wilderness is characterized by steep-sided, sharp-crested ridges separating V-shaped valleys. Elevations range from 600 feet, where the Big Sur River leaves the wilderness, to about 5,862 feet at the wilderness at the summit of Junipero Serra Peak. Most streams fall rapidly through narrow vertical-walled canyons flowing on bedrock or a veneer of boulders. Waterfalls, deep pools and thermal springs are found along major streams.

The climate is mild. Precipitation falls primarily as rain from November to April and ranges widely from more than 100 inches annually along the Coast Ridge to less than 30 inches only a few miles inland. The cool marine influence does not extend past the coastal ridges, thus most areas east of the divide are hot and dry during the summer

and early fall.

Much of the wilderness is covered by chaparral. Contrasting annual grass meadows and open pine stands may be found throughout the wilderness. The deep canyons cut by the Big Sur and Little Sur rivers support virgin stands of coastal redwoods. Scattered stands of the endemic Santa Lucia Fir are found in rocky outcrops and rugged slopes at higher elevations. This rare spire-like tree is only found in the Santa Lucia Mountains.

Hikers and backpackers can find solitude while enjoying the diverse natural features of the Santa Lucia Mountains. The 237 miles of trails provide access to the 55 designated trail camps.

The Pine Ridge Trail provides visitors to the Big Sur Valley with one of the most popular portals

Hunting and Fishing Guidelines in Big Sur

Hunting on public lands is limited to U.S. Forest Service property. For specific information in the Big Sur area, contact the Fish and Wildlife at (831) 649-2870.

Remember that firearms are prohibited in all Big Sur State Parks and within the California Sea Otter Refuge which covers all areas west of Highway 1 along the Big Sur Coast.

Fishing regulations can change from year to year, so contact the Fish and Wildlife at (831) 649-2870 for specific information. All anglers 16 years of age and older must have a valid California Fishing License in their possession.

Specific seasons, bag limits, size restrictions, and gear restrictions cover the take of most species. Specific regulations are contained in California Sportfishing Regulations available wherever you purchase your fishing license.

into the Ventana Wilderness. The trailhead at the Big Sur Station has excellent parking, plenty of water, and clean restrooms. The Nature Station Store, which is located at the Big Sur Station, provides hikers with maps and other literature associated with the natural history of the Big Sur region.

When hiking the trail please refrain from entering the campground section of the park. Try to keep your impact to a minimum. Pack out your trash and protect natural water sources. Water should always be boiled, filtered, or treated.

For local Big Sur trail information and for getting your backcountry fire and stove permits and where to pick them up in Big Sur, call (831) 667-2315. www.bigsurcalifornia.org/hiking.html

Shellfish can be toxic during certain seasons. If quarantine notices are posted, please heed the warnings.

Seasonal openings and closures of coastal streams are governed by Fish and Wildlife regulations. The major coastal streams east of Highway 1 bridges offer trout fishing from the last Saturday in April through November 15. Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park is closed to fishing on the east side of the Highway 1 bridge.

From December 1 through March 7 activity shifts to the west side of the Highway 1 bridges when steelhead trout are heading up the Big Sur river to spawn. Fishing is allowed on Saturdays, Sundays, legal holidays, Wednesdays, and the first and last day of the season.



McWay Falls, Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park Photo: Stan Russell



Little Sur River Photo: Stan Russell



Pfeiffer Beach Sunset Photo: Stan Russell



Bixby Bridge Sunset Photo: Stan Russell

Big Sur, California



Rare California Condor in flight (9.5 ft wingspan) - Photo by Stan Russell

Ventana Wildlife Society California Condor Recovery Program

In 1997, VWS began reintroducing California condors to the Big Sur coast, and the population has steadily risen each year. Condors are now breeding again in the wild and are feeding on their own on marine mammal carcasses and other large dead animals, including whales! The California condor is North America's largest land bird with a nearly 10-foot wingspan. They almost went extinct when at one time there were only 22 birds alive in the world. They remain highly endangered today but can be frequently seen along the Big Sur coast. Ventana Wildlife Society leads once-in-a-lifetime wildlife tours, including viewing opportunities for condors. Call (831) 455-9514 to find out more and sign up for tours. If you see condors on your own, please report your sightings to www.mycondor.org. You can also watch Big Sur condors in the wild through "Condor Cam" which is live, streaming video located at the VWS condor sanctuary.

While in Big Sur, visit the Discovery Center at Andrew Molera State Park to see the in-depth story of how condors are being saved. Condors in Big Sur are sometimes poisoned when having ingested lead fragments from spent ammunition in the carcasses they eat. Since they eat only dead animals, lead fragments are unfortunately often ingested which is a significant threat. If you hunt or know someone that does, please use nonlead ammunition. Also, trash is becoming a big problem for wildlife. Some condors, as well as other bird species, mistakenly feed their chicks small pieces of trash, which can kill the young birds before they can even leave the nest! Please be careful and discard all of your trash, no matter how small, in an appropriate way. Litter can harm condors and other wildlife and it fouls the beauty of Big Sur.

Ventana Wildlife Society is the only non-profit organization in California releasing the condor to the wild. Mission: to conserve native wildlife and their habitats through research, education, and collaboration. Contact us at 19045 Portola Dr., Suite F-1. Salinas, CA 93908. www.ventanaws.org

Henry Miller In Big Sur

One of America's most famous and controversial authors called Big Sur: "The face of the earth as the Creator intended it to look." From 1944 to 1962, he also called it "home." Nestled in the redwoods on Highway 1, between Nepenthe and Deetjen's you will find the Henry Miller Memorial Library. Like many things in Big Sur it is a place out of place and out of time. Not content to be a library or memorial, it is a place where you can still get free coffee or tea, free Wi-Fi Internet access or just relax among the towering redwoods that are an oasis for the weary traveler or hungry heart. Summer brings occasional Open Mic, Thursday night film screenings, Sunday night modern storytellers, live music, poetry, art and the eclectic with events every week. A sculpture garden to picnic or relax in, a wonderful bookstore, and no less than two free public restroom, makes you want to skip that trip to Hearst Castle. With its extensive archives it also pays homage to the many other great artists and writers who called Big Sur home like Jeffers, Ferlinghetti, Kerouac, Watts, Brautigan and dozens of others.

A 501(c) 3 non profit, HML champions the works of its namesake and also advocates the support of art, the creative life, and freedom of expression everywhere. Simple, unadorned and irreverent, this is the place to get away from what Miller called The Air Conditioned Nightmare, a place where you can still Stand Still Like the Hummingbird or simply Smile at the Foot of the Ladder. Open daily 11am-6pm, ph. 831.667.2574

Do Nothing in Big Sur!

Evenings offer the opportunity to dine in restaurants from fanciful to exquisite. Relax in lodging that ranges from rustic to ultra-luxurious. Camp out in the many well equipped campgrounds. Luxuriate at the health spas. And of course, one of the favorite ways to pass the time in Big Sur is to simply *Do Nothing*.



McWay Rocks & kayakers, JP Burns State Park Photo: Stan Russell



California poppies. Old Coast Road to Point Sur Photo: Stan Russell



Gray whale and calf on annual migration to Alaska Photo: Stan Russell



Monarch butterfly on its annual migration photo: Daniel Bianchetta



Big Creek Bridge and Big Sur coastline Photo: Stan Russell

Art Galleries & Gift Shops

BIG SUR COAST GALLERY Established in 1958, Coast Gallery was the first gallery in Big Sur. Located on Hwy 1, 30 miles south of Carmel and 60 miles north of Hearst Castle, the gallery is nestled in a redwood canyon beside a mountain stream. A historic landmark with distinctive water-tank architecture, the 7,500 sq. ft. gallery features prominent local artists, Loet Vanderveen & James Hunolt, and international favorites, Henry Miller and Marc Chagall. Open daily 10 AM - 5 PM. (831) 667-2301 coastgalleries.com

BIG SUR GARDEN GALLERY Features small-batch crafts and one of a kind art pieces drawn primarily from local artisans. Handcrafted keepsakes include jewelry; sculpture; soaps and perfumes; clothing and accessories; cards; prints; and original fine art painting and photography. 10:00am - 6:00pm Closed Tuesday. (831) 667-2000 bigsurgardengallery.com

BIG SUR LODGE GIFT SHOP An array of eclectic gifts, State Park souvenirs, jewelry, pottery & the largest selection of T-shirts & sweatshirts in the area. 8:00am - 9:00pm daily. (831) 667-3108 bigsurlodge.com

BROOKS GALLERY Showcases one of a kind pieces of hand crafted furniture constructed from salvaged trees by Brooks Lawrence as well as sculpture, paintings, jewelry and ceramics by local artists. Located 2 miles south of Hearst Castle. (805) 924-1506 brooksgalleryonline.com

FERNWOOD GIFT SHOP & CAMP SUPPLY STORE Providing camping gear, clothing and outdoor equipment. Maps & backcountry information, books, bicycle repair equipment. Everything you need! (831) 667-2422 fernwoodbigsur.com

HAWTHORNE GALLERY Representing the work of Gregory Hawthorne and six additional talented members of the Hawthorne family & ten other nationally known artists in contemporary painting, sculpture, blown glass, ceramics and cloissoné. Located across from Nepenthe. Open daily 10:00 am - 6:00 pm. (831) 667-3200 hawthornegallery.com

HEARTBEAT GIFT GALLERY the unusual, exotic, and erotic. Great variety, choice, and quality of jewelry, clothing, and collectibles from around the world. Big Sur landscape photography. Next to the Big Sur River Inn. (831) 667-2557 heartbeatbigsur.com

HENRY MILLER LIBRARY a non-profit organization championing the works of Henry Miller. A treasure of fine books, art and history of the area. Rare books. Available for special events. Wi-Fi Internet access. (831) 667-2574. henrymiller.org

LOCAL COLOR Central Coast Artisans Gallery. Featuring fine art as well as handcrafts by local artists. Large variety of Big Sur Jade, redwood bowls, and tie-dyed clothing. Open everyday. Open since 2000. (831) 667-0481 bigsurlocalcolor.com

LUCIA LODGE STORE General store and gift gallery. (831) 667-2391 lucialodge.com

NEW CAMALDOLI HERMITAGE Located near Lucia we offer an combination of art, paintings, gifts, and fine religious and spiritual books. Open 7 days a week. Features art created by members of our community and local artists. Jewelry, cards, candles, and more, including our Holy Granola and famous brandy-dipped fruitcakes and date-nut cakes. (831) 667-2456 X 105 contemplation.com

PHOENIX SHOP is a unique gift shop featuring exceptional merchandise from around the world as well as from local artisans. Handcrafted fine jewelry, home décor and furniture, boutique clothing, books, toys, textiles, ceramics and personal care products are just some of the wide array of creative items for sale. The Phoenix is proud to feature Erin Gafill's plein aire oil paintings & Kaffe Fassett's one-of-a-kind knits and fabric artwork. Open 10:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily. (831) 667-2347 nepenthe.com

POST RANCH MERCANTILE offers fine goods from Post Ranch Inn, featuring collections of all-natural clothing, natural body care products, organic cotton bedding and towels, distinctive pottery and glass, unusual home accessories, hand-made jewelry, painting, sculpture and more. Located at Post Ranch Inn. 9:30am-5:00pm daily. (831) 667-2795 postranchmercantile.com

THE GALLERY AT VENTANA offers a unique collection of original works by local artists and craftspeople. Here you'll find painting, sculpture, photography, jewelry, glass, ceramics and fiber art. There is also a selection of books, cards, prints, music, candles and gourmet food items as well as Ventana logo wear. (831) 667-4298 ventanagallerybigsur.com

Camping

ANDREW MOLERA STATE PARK at mouth of Big Sur River. Walk in 1/4 mile to 24 campground sites in open meadow setting. Bicyclists welcome. 4-people/site, non-reservable. 4,800 acres hiking, surfing, and picnic tables. (831) 667-2315 parks.ca.gov

BIG SUR CAMPGROUND & CABINS Year-round family camping among the redwood trees along the Big Sur River. Store, laundry, playground, and basketball court. Inner tubing on the river. Tent camping with hot showers. RV camping w/water & electric hook-ups as well as a dump station. (831) 667-2322 bigsurcamp.com

BOTTCHERS GAP U.S. Forest Service campground featuring 12 sites. Tent sites only. Winter & Summer. Bring water. (805) 434-1996 campone.com

FERNWOOD CAMPGROUND Tent and RV camping on both sides of the Big Sur River. Forest cabins with kitchens. Bordering Pfeiffer State Park with towering redwoods and beautiful mountain views. Adventure tents under the redwoods and tent-cabins on the river, access to hiking trails, horse shoes, volley ball, store, restaurant, tavern, and espresso bar. Home of the albino redwood tree. Free Wi-Fi. (831) 667-2422 fernwoodbigsur.com

JULIA PFEIFFER BURNS STATE PARK Two very popular walk-in environmental campsites at this 3,762 acre park. Requires early reservations. Reservations: (800) 444-7275 Info: (831) 667-2315 www.parks.ca.gov & reserveamerica.com

KIRK CREEK CAMPGROUND U.S. Forest Service campground featuring 34 sites. Hike & Bike Camp. Reserved and first come, first served camping. (805) 434-1996 campone.com

NACIMIENTO CAMPGROUND, 11 miles from Kirk Creek Campground up Nacimiento Ferguson Road. Open Year Round. Bring Water. No Reservations. 1st come 1st serve. Forest Service Campground, 8 sites. (805) 434-1996 campone.com

PFEIFFER BIG SUR STATE PARK This 1,006 acre park offers camping (169 campsites, no hook-ups, sanitation station), picnic tables, hiking & swimming. Bicyclist camp. (800) 444-7275 Reservations, (831) 667-2315 for information. parks.ca.gov & reserveamerica.com

PLASKETT CREEK CAMPGROUND U.S. Forest Service Campground. 44 Sites. Winter & Summer, Hike & Bike Camp. Reserved and first come first served. Group site reservations (877) 444-6777, (805) 434-1996 campone.com

PONDEROSA CAMPGROUND 13 Miles east from Kirk Creek campground on Nacimiento-Ferguson Road. Enjoy mountain trout stream located under a canopy of trees. Accessible through Highway 101 or Highway 1. Open year round. Bring water in winter. 1st come 1st serve. (877) 444-6777, (805) 434-1996 campone.com

RIVERSIDE CAMPGROUND & CABINS Our beautiful 16-acre dog friendly property offers RV & tent camping as well as 12 cozy cabins nestled in majestic redwoods along the Big Sur river. Hiking & beach access are just minutes away. Enjoy seasonal catch & release fishing, swimming and inner tubing in the river. (831) 667-2414 riversidecampground.com

TREEBONES RESORT Features 16 yurts and 5 campsites with breathtaking views of the Pacific Ocean & Cape San Martin. Amenities include gas fireplaces, generous redwood viewing decks, swimming pool, hot tub, massage services, gift shop and the Wild Coast Restaurant and Sushi Bar. Reservations (877) 4BIG SUR, (877) 424-4787 treebonesresort.com

Big Sur Events

BIG SUR CHAMBER OF COMMERCE Complete activities guide. (831) 667-2100 bigsurcalifornia.org

BIG SUR FOOD & WINE FESTIVAL November 5-7, 2015 (831) 667-0800 bigsurfoodandwine.org

BIG SUR INTERNATIONAL MARATHON April 24, 2016 (831) 625-6226 bsim.org

BIG SUR RIVER RUN October 25, 2015 BigSurRiverRun.org or call (831) 624-4112

HENRY MILLER LIBRARY Summer calendar of music, and family entertainment. henrymiller.org (831) 667-2574

JADE FESTIVAL October 9-11, 2015 at Pacific Valley School. (831) 659-3857 FREE. bigsurjadefest.com

BIG SUR FORAGERS FESTIVAL January 15-17, 2016 bigsurforagersfestival.org

Wedding Services

A BIG SUR AFFAIR CATERING Full service catering and event planning. (831) 667-1050 abigsuraffair.com

BIG SUR / CARMEL WEDDINGS & ELOPEMENTS WITH KEN ROBINS Specializing in intimate & personalized ceremonies that embrace the beauty of Big Sur. (831) 298-7353 weddingsinbigsur.com

BIG SUR CEREMONIES BY SOARING STARKEY Interfaith minister performs heartfelt and personalized ceremonies for weddings, commitments, and special life events with a keepsake script of the service. (831) 667-2928 bigsurceremonies.com

ELEGANT EVENTS - Specializing in Big Sur weddings and receptions with exclusive sites to choose. (831) 625-3523 bigsurweddings.com

HELIOS IMAGES - Top ranked wedding photography. (415) 325-2020 heliosimages.com

IAN MARTIN WEDDING PHOTOJOURNALISM has photographed more than 500 weddings. (831) 601-5344 ianmartinphotography.com

KATE HEALEY FLOWERS Simple, elegant, whimsical and wild. Flowers for all occasions. Also offering a large and varied collection of containers and vessels. (831) 667-2649 bigsurflowers.com

LOMA VISTA INN Weddings, parties, and gatherings in the historic gardens located just off Highway 1 in the heart of Big Sur. (917) 991-0126 lomavistainn.com

PEER JOHNSON WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHY Easy going, fun and professional w/make up artist. (805) 395-1075 peerjohnson.com

SEA STARS BIG SUR CATERING Specializing in full service wedding catering. Creating memorable food for weddings, private parties, backstage green rooms and music festivals. Sea Stars uses organic and sustainable meat, seafood and produce from local sources. (831) 915-8477 seastarsbigsur.com

Real Estate Services

A BIG SUR HOME Nancy Sanders - Sotheby's International Realty. abigsurhome.com (800) 779-7967

BEN HEINRICH, COLDWELL BANKER REAL ESTATE (800) 585-6225 bigsurhomes.com

BIG SUR COAST PROPERTIES Hillary Lipman (831) 596-4607 bigsurproperties.com

Additional Services

BIG SUR GUIDES & HIKING Stephen D. Copeland (831) 594-1742 bigsurguides.com

BIG SUR JADE CO. Creating commissioned pieces from small sculptures, wood bases to jewelry. Selection of ocean polished specimens, rare colors. (831) 241-1154 bigsurjadeco.com

BIG SUR PHOTOGRAPHY Daniel Bianchetta. Elegant Big Sur coastal images and Native American rock art in fine art color prints. Studio visit by appointment. bigsurphoto.com (831) 667-2502

BIG SUR TOURS & MORE, Customized tours of Big Sur, Monterey, Pebble Beach and beyond in a luxury automobile. Ideal for 2-4 people. (831) 241-2526 bigsurtoursandmore.com

BLAZE ENGINEERING INC. Construction (831) 667-2697 blazeengineering.com

BLUE SKY CINEMATOGRAPHY Quadcopters w/4k resolution. Video & stills. (831) 915-2082 blueskycinematography.com

MONTEREY COUNTY BANK (831) 649-4600 montereycountybank.com

PALISTRY WORKS HAND ANALYSIS (831) 915-6547 palmistryworks.com

PINNEY CONSTRUCTION Design, building and planning and permit solutions for custom home construction, remodeling, repairs and improvements. (831) 667-2584

Public Service Announcement

BIG SUR is a fragile environment visited by more than four million visitors each year. Please help us maintain the stunning beauty of this coastline by using the trash and Recycling Stations provided at the businesses throughout Big Sur and by using public restrooms. PLEASE do not discard cigarettes along Highway 1. California condors are known to pick them up and take them back to their nests and this road trash can be deadly for a condor chick. With your help we can improve the visitor experience for everyone.

Lodging

BIG SUR CAMPGROUND & CABINS A variety of cabins in a redwood grove along the Big Sur River. Most with fully equipped kitchens and fireplaces. Summer tent cabins along the river. Inner tubing on the river. Store, laundry, playground, and basketball court. Reservations recommended. (831) 667-2322 bigsurcamp.com

BIG SUR LODGE Located within ancient groves of redwoods and oaks in Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park. Gorgeous views of the Santa Lucia Mountains, 61 cottage style units, many with fireplaces and/or kitchens, accommodate up to 6 people. Resort includes scenic Big Sur river and hiking trails, heated pool, gift shop, restaurant & general store. (831) 667-3100 or (800) 424-4787. bigurlodge.com

BIG SUR RIVER INN Features 20 cozy guest-rooms, full service restaurant & bar and heated swimming pool on the Big Sur River. Also features a gas station and general store stocked with natural foods and convenience items. High speed wireless internet access is available on the property. (831) 667-2700 or (800) 548-3610. bigsurriverinn.com

DEETJEN'S BIG SUR INN Offering lodging in a picturesque, historic Big Sur setting. Nestled in the redwoods of Castro Canyon, the Inn has 20 rooms and offers a quiet, retreat atmosphere. Reservations suggested. (831) 667-2377 deetjens.com

ESALEN INSTITUTE The pioneering educational institute dedicated to personal and social transformation. Weekend and 5-day programs are offered year-round, and personal retreats may be reserved when available. Reservations available for nighttime bathing in the natural hot springs 1am-3am. Property visits limited to guests only. 1-888-8ESALEN esalen.org.

FERNWOOD RESORT Twelve Unit motel, some with hot tubs and gas fireplaces. Cabins with kitchens on the meadow and nestled in the redwoods bordering Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park. Immediate access to hiking trails. Tent Cabins as well as tent and RV camping along the Big Sur River. Pets are allowed in the tent cabins and campsites only. Family friendly Fernwood Bar & Grill with tavern atmosphere, big screen TV's and outside dining on the deck under the redwoods. General store with groceries, espresso bar and Lapperts Ice Cream. Gift shop and Camping Supply store. Free Wifi in the bar & grill with live music on Saturday nights. Ping Pong table behind the bar. Open year round. (831) 667-2422 fernwoodbigsur.com

GLEN OAKS BIG SUR Modern post adobe hotel and cabins in gracious garden setting and serene redwood grove. 24 uniquely designed guest rooms and romantic cabins; available year round. Moderately priced. (831) 667-2105 glenoaksbigsur.com

GORDA SPRINGS RESORT offers beautifully appointed cottages. 65 miles south of Carmel, 75 miles north of San Luis Obispo. (805) 927-3918 gordaspringsresort.com

LUCIA LODGE Coastal cabins with views of the rugged South Coast. Overnight accommodations range from single units with double beds, to the honeymoon cottage's breathtaking view, queensize four poster bed, and sitting room. (831) 667-2391 Reservations (866) 424.4787 lucialodge.com

NEW CAMALDOLI HERMITAGE is a monastery located on a mountainside above the Pacific Ocean. The hermitage offers guests several options for private and silent retreats, which include rooms with ocean views and all meals. Guests are not required to be of any faith, and are welcome to join the monks in beautiful daily prayers in our chapel if they wish (831) 667-2456 x100 contemplation.com

POST RANCH INN Ocean front boutique hotel hideaway with luxurious guest rooms and ocean view villas with private decks, spa tubs, fully stocked complimentary pantries, and select amenities. This award winning romantic retreat is a perfect escape for special occasions and private retreats. The unique architecture fits harmoniously into the Inn's 100 acres of naturalistic landscape and offers hiking trails, swimming pool, two cliff-edge soaking pools, as well as complimentary guest activities such as yoga, guided nature walks, stargazing. A five star resort that produces a majority of its electricity with a solar array. 831.667-2200 or 800.527.2200 postranchinn.com

RAGGED POINT INN & RESORT Seventeen cliff-side acres overlook the rugged Pacific, across from Sur Sur Ranch in south Big Sur. Most of our 35 rooms feature magnificent ocean views, fireplaces, decks or balconies. Cliff House has 5 bedrooms, 6 baths, gourmet kitchen, private dining room, sitting room, lawn, great views. Restaurant. Wedding and conference facilities. Sandwich stand. Espresso and wine bar. Gift Shop. Minimart. Gas station. Sunday concerts throughout the summer. WiFi. Dog-friendly. (805) 927-4502 raggedpointinn.com

RIPPLEWOOD RESORT is a rustic resort property located in Big Sur featuring a General Store, Café, a Chevron Gas Station, and 17 Cabins, eight of which are perched over the Big Sur River. Most of the free standing cabins have modestly equipped kitchens and wood burning fireplaces. Kitchen amenities include refrigerator, four burner stove with oven, basic utensils, and cookware. All of the cabins include housekeeping daily, and are provided with bedding and bath amenities. (831) 667-2242, (800) 575-1735, ripplewoodresort.com

RIVERSIDE CAMPGROUND & CABINS Our beautiful 16-acre dog friendly property offers RV and tent camping as well as 12 cozy cabins nestled in majestic redwoods along the Big Sur river. Hiking and beach access are just minutes away. Enjoy seasonal catch & release fishing, swimming and inner tubing in the Big Sur river. (831) 667-2414. riversidecampground.com

SAN SIMEON LODGE Three miles south of Hearst Castle. 65 rooms with panoramic ocean view and 1-block from easy beach access. Heated pool, infrared sauna, free wireless Internet. Next to large restaurant and cocktail lounge with entertainment. Market, coffee bar, ATM (866) 990-8990, (805) 927-4601 sansimeonlodge.net

TREEBONES RESORT Features 16 yurts and 5 campsites with breathtaking views of the Pacific Ocean & Cape San Martin. Amenities include gas fireplaces, generous redwood viewing decks, swimming pool, hot tub, massage services, gift shop and the Wild Coast Restaurant and Sushi Bar. For reservations (877) 4BIG SUR, (877) 424-4787 treebonesresort.com

VENTANA INN & SPA Nestled on a hillside overlooking the dramatic Pacific coastline, Ventana Inn & Spa features 60 guestrooms and suites. Full service restaurant and spa. Two outdoor swimming pools, Japanese Hot baths, dry sauna and fitness center. (831) 667-2331 or (800) 628-6500 ventanainn.com

Restaurants

BIG SUR COAST GALLERY CAFÉ presents award-winning, locally inspired bistro-styled fare inside and on a deck with spectacular views of the Big Sur Coast. Enjoy a glass of wine or beer with a charcuterie board of fresh local cheeses. Dog friendly with water and treats. (831) 667-2301 coastgalleries.com

BIG SUR DELI & GENERAL STORE Located at the center of Big Sur next to the US Post Office. Family owned and operated full service deli, serving the local community with good food at affordable prices for over 25 years. Featuring made to order and specialty sandwiches, burritos, tamales, calzones, salads, baked potatoes, BBQ chicken and much more! Opens early for coffee, chorizo burritos, breakfast sandwiches, and pastries. Featuring a huge selection of micro-brews and wine, Big Sur souvenirs and T-Shirts. Open daily from 7:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. bigsurdeli.com

BIG SUR LODGE RESTAURANT & ESPRESSO HOUSE Indoor and patio dining on the banks of the Big Sur River. Freshly prepared foods served in a spacious, airy atmosphere with views of the redwoods. Children welcome. Breakfast, lunch and dinner. Fresh pastries, speciality coffees and teas. Take out. (831) 667-3111 bigurlodge.com

BIG SUR RIVER INN Enjoy breakfast, lunch & dinner served daily alongside the Big Sur River or in front of the huge stone fireplace. Children welcome. Take out available or enjoy freshly prepared fast food at our Big Sur Burrito Bar. Live entertainment on Sunday afternoons. (831) 667-2700 (800) 548-3610 bigsurriverinn.com

BIG SUR TAPHOUSE Family owned and operated beer and wine bar offering a wide selection of microbrews on tap and bottled beers from breweries across the country. Stop in and enjoy a light meal by the fire or catch a game on either of our two large flatscreens. The quintessential Big Sur stop with unique woodwork and a warm inviting atmosphere. The Taphouse is a great place to stop by and unwind. Come check out our pet-friendly garden patio with a beautiful view of the Santa Lucia Mountains. Free WIFI! Open daily from 12:00 p.m. - 12:00 a.m. bigsurtaphouse.com

CAFE KEVAH offers brunch & light lunch in an outdoor setting. Located on a terrace just below Nepenthe. Open mid-February through December, 9am-4pm. (831) 667-2344. nepenthe.com

DEETJEN'S BIG SUR INN Fine dining in cozy, historic Big Sur. Breakfast daily from 8 am - Noon. Dinner from 6:00 - 9:00 pm. Reservations recommended. (831) 667-2378 deetjens.com

FERNWOOD BAR & GRILL A family friendly atmosphere and home style food. Featuring house cured and smoked meats, hand tossed pizzas and hearty soups all made from scratch. Local seafood and creative specials round out a fun and approachable menu that includes plenty of vegetarian options. Serving from 11 am to 11 pm daily in the rustic dining room or on the deck built around towering redwoods. A great selection of micro brews, reasonable prices and live music on weekend nights makes Fernwood Resort a local's favorite. (831) 667-2129 fernwoodbigsur.com

LUCIA LODGE RESTAURANT Lucia Lodge restaurant offers spectacular deck dining, as well as a charming and historic dining room. Our coastal cuisine is recognized for the great quality and generous portions. Fish & Chips were judged Top 10 in the US. Summer; lunch is served between 11:00 am & 4:30 pm. Dinner, 5 to 9 pm. Continental breakfast is available to our cabin guests. Off-season hours vary. (831) 667-2391 lucialodge.com

NEPENTHE One of the most picturesque dining spots in California, this restaurant overlooks 50 miles of coastline. Family owned since 1949. Open daily, 11:30 am -10 pm (831) 667-2345 nepenthe.com

RAGGED POINT RESTAURANT Original gourmet cuisine presented in an enchanting garden setting with a 360 degree ocean/mountain view. (805) 927-5708 raggedpointinn.com

RIPPLEWOOD CAFE Serving home-style breakfast & lunch & a grocery store with coffee & sandwiches to go. (831) 667-2242 ripplewoodresort.com

SAN SIMEON BEACH BAR & GRILL. 3 miles South of Hearst Castle in Southern Big Sur. Panoramic ocean view. Indoor & outdoor dining (pet ok), exotic decor, stage & sound. From burgers, pizza & sandwiches to steak & lobster. Cocktail lounge w/crystal fireplace, pool table, TV's, live entertainment, Karaoke & open mic. Coffee bar. Take-out, gift shop, mini-market, ATM. Free wireless Internet. Next to San Simeon Lodge. (805) 927-4604 sansimeonrestaurant.com

SIERRA MAR RESTAURANT Located at Post Ranch Inn and overlooking the Pacific Ocean with a spectacular view of the Big Sur coastline, Sierra Mar serves innovative cuisine in an awe inspiring setting. The prix fixe dinner menu changes daily and focuses on organic seasonal fare. Our Wine Spectator Grand Award wine list features one of the most extensive collections in North America. Lunch from 12:15 to 3:00 pm. Reservations suggested. Bar and snack menu from 3:00 - 5:30 pm. Dinner begins at 5:30 pm; reservations required. (831) 667-2800 (800) 527-2200 postranchinn.com

THE GRILL AT TREEBONES RESORT, casual dinners nightly starting at 7 PM. Enjoy grilled specialties from our ocean view dining room. (805) 927-2390 treebonesresort.com

THE RESTAURANT AT VENTANA features a menu created with local, sustainable ingredients from California's Central Coast, for memorable dishes to pair with our award-winning wine list. Located at Ventana Inn & Spa, advance reservations are recommended. Please call 831.667.4242 ventanainn.com

WHALE WATCHERS CAFE, GORDA SPRINGS RESORT Dine in or takeout. Enjoy an ample selection of local and imported wines and beers on tap. Open 7-days a week 7:30 AM - 9:00 PM (805) 927-3918 gordaspringsresort.com

WILD COAST RESTAURANT AND SUSHI BAR AT TREEBONES RESORT. Award winning restaurant features the freshest local ingredients including vegetables from our on-site organic garden. Innovative cuisine in our dining room and Sushi Bar are enhanced by spectacular ocean views and the personalized Treebones touch. (805) 927-2390 treebonesresort.com

Ancient Redwoods thrive along the Big Sur Coast

Redwood, also known as Coast Redwood, grows in a very narrow strip along the coast of California from the extreme southwestern corner of Oregon to 150 miles south of San Francisco in the Soda Springs drainage of Big Sur. This area is about 500 miles long and rarely more than 20 or 30 miles wide in a region of frequent thick summer fog, moderate year-round temperature, and considerable winter rainfall. Redwood does not grow naturally beyond the belt affected by this combination.

Redwood is a rapidly growing tree, and some individual trees have been measured at more than 360 feet in height, making it the tallest measured tree species on earth. In favorable situations, trees 20 years old may average 50 feet in height and 8 inches in diameter. Average mature trees are from 200 to 240 feet high with diameters of 10 to 15 feet at 4 feet 8 inches above the ground. Exceptional individuals sometimes reach a height of 350 feet, a diameter of over 20 feet, and an age of approximately 2000 years.

Redwood leaves are green, flat, and sharp-pointed. The brown cones are egg-shaped and only one-half inch in diameter. Their seeds average about 123,000 to a pound.

The soft, reddish-brown bark, six to twelve inches thick, is one of the Coast Redwood's most distinguishing characteristics and, together with the wood, names the species. On older trees the bark has a grayish tinge, and is deeply furrowed, giving the trees a fluted appearance. Although the thick bark of older trees is relatively fire resistant, repeated fires can damage these trees considerably. The large hollows or "goose-pens" frequently found in the base of large trees give evidence of this fact. Fire also either seriously injures the young growth or kills it outright. However, redwood is exceptionally free from fungus diseases, and there are no insects which materially harm it. Human demand for lumber is responsible for most of the destruction of first growth Coast Redwood forests.

Adjacent to the softball field at Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park is one of Big Sur's largest redwood trees. The size of this ancient tree, known locally as the "Colonial Tree," is deceiving — due to lightning strikes, this majestic specimen's top has been severed.

Big Sur Beaches — hard to reach, but worth the effort

While Big Sur's beaches hardly resemble the vast stretches of sun-baked sand that dot Southern California's easily-accessible coastline, they offer the visitor a wide variety of recreational possibilities.

Even during the summer, Big Sur's beaches are subject to generally cool weather. Sunny days are sporadic as a blanket of seasonal fog often hugs the coastline, dropping the temperature in the process. To be prepared, bring a change of warm clothes. Also, bring a pair of sturdy shoes — Big Sur's beaches require at least a short hike.

Private property and Big Sur's steep terrain makes most of its coastline inaccessible to the public. Fortunately for the visitor, however, several State Park and U.S. Forest Service beaches are open to the public all year. The following beaches are recommended due to easy access and breath-taking scenery:

ANDREW MOLERA STATE PARK — Located 23 miles south of Carmel, Andrew Molera State Park is the largest State Park on the Big Sur Coast. A wide, scenic, mile-long path leads to a sandy beach that is sheltered from the wind by a large bluff to



Limekiln Falls, Limekiln State Park
Photo: Stan Russell



1,100 year old Colonial Redwood tree in Pfeiffer Big Sur State State Park Photo: Stan Russell

The Big Sur Coast — an off-season treat!

The summer months in Big Sur offer the traditional summer treats — warm weather, refreshing dips in the river and general good fun. What many people don't realize, however, is that the months of October through May offer a special experience in Big Sur and chance to enjoy the natural splendor at a more relaxed pace.

The second half of September and the month of October bring reduced crowds, Indian summer weather fall colors and the Big Sur River Run. The poison oak displays its deep red leaves and the Maple, Sycamore and Cottonwood trees all contribute with their golden yellows and oranges.

December through April is the time to watch

for migrating Gray whales offshore as they travel to and from the warm lagoons of Baja California.

The spring months are a wonderful time to visit Big Sur if you have a love for greenery and wildflowers. Wildflowers abound in March and April as lupines and poppies brighten the grassy hillsides.

May provides a great opportunity to enjoy the off-season peace and solitude before the summer season begins in June.

Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park has been voted "America's Top 100 Campgrounds." Visit Big Sur during the off-season. You'll be pleasantly surprised by the experience!

the north. The path itself is as much a delight as the beach, taking you through a meadow filled with wildflowers and sycamore trees, offering fine views of the coastal mountain range to the east. The path parallels the Big Sur River, which enters the sea adjacent to Molera's beach.

PFEIFFER BEACH — Big Sur's most popular coastal access point, the U.S. Forest Service's Pfeiffer Beach is hard to find if you've never been to it before. The trick is locating unmarked Sycamore Canyon Road. Here's a tip — Sycamore Canyon Road is the only paved, ungated road west of Highway 1 between the Big Sur post office and Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park. Once you find the turnout, make a very sharp turn. Then follow the road for about two miles until it ends. Drive carefully as this is a narrow and winding road unsuitable for trailer traffic. From a large parking area at the end of the road, a short, well-marked path leads to the beach. Cliffs tower above this breathtaking stretch of sand, and a large arch shaped rock formation just off shore makes for great photo opportunities and some of the most spectacular sunsets. Watch for the purple sand on the beach along the cliffs.

SAND DOLLAR BEACH — Just a mile south of the U.S. Forest Service Station in Pacific Valley and 14 miles north of the San Luis Obispo County line lies Sand Dollar Beach.

From a large parking lot across the Highway One from Plaskett Creek Campground, a well-built stairway leads to a crescent-shaped beach that's protected, like Andrew Molera State Park's beach, from the wind by bluffs. Sand Dollar offers visitors the widest expanse of sand along the Big Sur Coast, and possibly the mildest weather. Standing on the beach and looking northeast, towering 5,155-foot Cone Peak is visible.

For an interesting side trip, visit Jade Cove, which is located two miles south of Sand Dollar Beach. Big Sur's south coast is famous for its jade reserves. Jade Cove is a popular spot for beachcombers and rockhounds.

Other points of public coastal access in Big Sur include Garrapata Beach, Partington Cove, Mill Creek and Willow Creek. Visit us on the web for information about more local beaches.

www.bigsurcalifornia.org