





# Central California Trips

**THE FAIRYTALE STRETCH OF COAST BETWEEN SAN FRANCISCO AND LA** is too often dismissed as 'flyover country.' But it's packed with beaches, historic lighthouses and tall redwoods hiding forest waterfalls.

Get acquainted with central California's agricultural heartland while driving along inland highways. Roll past vineyards and farms where you can taste the goodness of the land, from juicy strawberries to wines to artichokes.

Further east rises the Sierra Nevada, uplifted along faultlines and weathered by glaciers, wind and rain. Soothe your soul with natural wonders, from Yosemite Valley to Lake Tahoe. Then drop into the foothills to trace California's Gold Rush history and take a dip in summertime swimming holes or crystal lakes.



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**13 Big Sur 2 Days**  
Get lost at wild beaches and bohemian camps along coastal Hwy 1. (p153)

**14 Along Highway 1 to Santa Cruz 2–3 Days**  
Cruise south from San Francisco past light-houses, tidepools and monster surf. (p161)

**15 Around Monterey & Carmel 2–3 Days**  
Putter around the idyllic peninsula fronting wildlife-rich Monterey Bay. (p169)

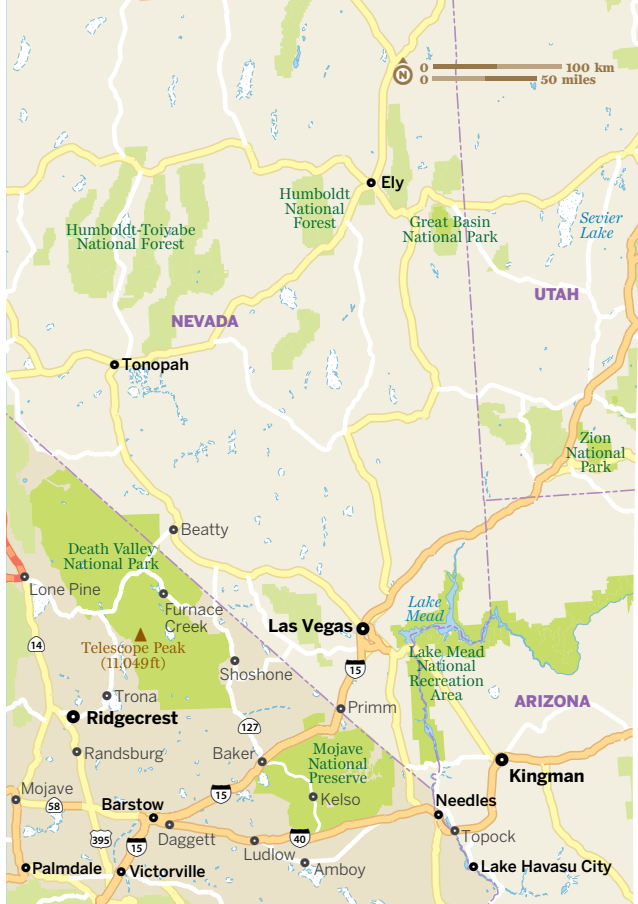
**16 Around San Luis Obispo 2–3 Days**  
Laid-back beach towns and outdoor adventures mix with break-out wineries. (p179)

**17 Santa Barbara Wine Country 2–3 Days**  
Spend a weekend in pastoral Foxen Canyon and the Santa Rita Hills. (p187)

**18 Lake Tahoe Loop 2–3 Days**  
Drive round ‘Big Blue’ to reach mountain-framed beaches and bays. (p197)

*Classic Trip*  
**19 Yosemite, Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks 5–7 Days**  
Be awed by Sierra Nevada peaks, wildflower meadows, sequoias and waterfalls. (p205)

**20 Eastern Sierra Scenic Byway 3–5 Days**  
A rugged wilderness gateway to hot springs, hikes and ghost towns. (p217)



## DON'T MISS

### Pfeiffer Beach

Catch sunset shining through a sea arch and dig down into the purple-tinged sand on Trip **13**

### Kings Canyon Scenic Byway

Wind down into the USA's deepest river canyon carved by glaciers to Road's End in Cedar Grove on Trip **19**

### Alabama Hills

Where famous Western movies and TV shows were filmed outside of Lone Pine, just below Mt Whitney, on Trip **20**

### South Yuba River State Park

Swim, hike and photograph the USA's longest covered wooden bridge, west of the 19th-century mining town of Nevada City, on Trip **21**

### Kingsburg

A global melting pot of immigrants have farmed California's Central Valley, including the Swedes of Kingsburg, a whistle-stop on Trip **25**

### Classic Trip

#### **21** Highway 49 Through Gold Country 3–4 Days

Head for the hills and California's historic pioneer mining towns. (p227)

#### **22** Ebbetts Pass Scenic Byway 2 Days

Cross the Sierra Nevada at heady elevations on hidden Hwy 4. (p237)

#### **23** Feather River Scenic Byway 3–4 Days

Cool off with a swim or paddle around sunny lakes and rivers. (p245)

#### **24** Lazy Delta Dawdle 2 Days

Ride the Sacramento River Delta on lazy backcountry explorations. (p253)

#### **25** Highway 99 Through Central Valley 3 Days

Country-and-western music, cow towns and farms fill California's sun-baked flatland. (p261)