

Coastal California



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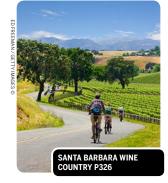
Sara Benson.

Andrew Bender, Alison Bing, Celeste Brash, Beth Kohn, Adam Skolnick, John A Vlahides

PLAN YOUR TRIP

Welcome to Coastal California4
Coastal California Map 6
Coastal California's Top 258
Need to Know 20
If You Like 22
Month by Month 26
Itineraries 28
Beaches, Swimming & Surfing 32
Outdoor Activities 35
Travel with Children 42
Deciens at a Clares 45





ON THE ROAD

SAN FRANCISCO... 48

	Sebastopol 179
MARIN COUNTY &	Occidental & Around 182
THE BAY AREA 88	Guerneville & Around 183
Marin County90	Santa Rosa188
Marin Headlands 90	Healdsburg & Around 190
Sausalito95	
Tiburon	NORTH COAST &
San Rafael	REDWOODS 195
Mill Valley101	Coastal Highway 1 197
Mt Tamalpais State Park102	Bodega Bay 197
Muir Woods National	Jenner200
Monument103	Salt Point State Park202
Bolinas 105	Sea Ranch 202
Olema & Nicasio106	Gualala & Anchor Bay 203
Point Reyes Station 106	Point Arena204
Inverness 107	Manchester205
Point Reyes National	Elk206
Seashore	Van Damme State Park206
East Bay109	Mendocino206
Oakland 109 Berkeley 118	Jug Handle State Reserve 211
Mt Diablo State Park 127	Fort Bragg 212
John Muir National	MacKerricher State Park 215
Historic Site128	Westport 215
Vallejo128	Along Highway 101 215
The Peninsula 128	Hopland 216
San Jose130	Clear Lake 217
Half Moon Bay to Santa Cruz136	Anderson Valley 219
Salita Cruz130	Ukiah 221
NADA 9 CONOMA	Willits
NAPA & SONOMA WINE COUNTRY 139	Southern Redwood Coast225
	Leggett225
Napa Valley	Richardson Grove
Yountville	State Park226
Oakville & Rutherford 154	Benbow Lake226
St Helena	Garberville227
Calistoga & Around 159	Lost Coast
Sonoma Valley 164	Humboldt Redwoods
Sonoma & Around 168	State Park & Avenue of the Giants230
Glen Ellen & Kenwood 173	of the Giants230
5.5 2 & Hollingood 170	

Russian River Area.....175

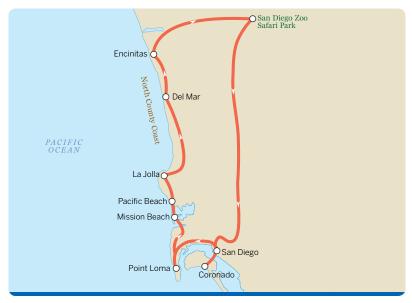
Contents

UNDERSTAND

Scotia232	SANTA BARBARA	Coastal California
Ferndale232	COUNTY308	Today 462
Eureka234	Santa Barbara 310	History 464
Samoa Peninsula 237	Santa Barbara Wine	California Flavor 472
Arcata237	Country	The People & Way
Northern Redwood Coast 241	Solvang	of Life 479
Trinidad	Buellton	Music & the Arts 484
Patrick's Point	Around Santa Barbara337	Redwoods &
State Park243	Montecito	Wild Things 489
Humboldt Lagoons State Park	Summerland338	Earthquakes & the
Redwood National &	Carpinteria338	Land 492
State Parks243	Ojai	
Klamath	Ventura341	SURVIVAL
Crescent City247	Channel Islands	GUIDE
	National Park343	
CENTRAL COAST 250	LOCANOFIEC 247	Directory A-Z 498
Along Highway 1252	LOS ANGELES 347	Transportation 506
Santa Cruz252		Index515
Around Santa Cruz260	DISNEYLAND & ORANGE COUNTY383	Map Legend 526
Monterey		Map Legenu 526
Pacific Grove 271	Disneyland & Anaheim 386	
Carmel-by-the-Sea 273	Old Towne Orange 396	
Big Sur	Seal Beach	
Point Piedras Blancas 284	Huntington Beach 401	
Hearst Castle284	Newport Beach403 Around Newport Beach408	
San Simeon285	Laguna Beach	
Cambria286	Dana Point423	
Morro Bay	Duna i omt	SPECIAL FEATURES
State Park	SAN DIEGO &	SFECIAL FEATORES
Along Highway 101 291	AROUND 425	Alcatraz 3D
San Juan Bautista 291	Central &	Illustration 54
Salinas	Coastal San Diego 427	San Francisco by Cable Car60
Pinnacles National Park 294	La Jolla450	
Mission San	Del Mar453	Southern California's Best Beaches 398
Antonio De Padua294	Cardiff-by-the-Sea 456	
Paso Robles295	Encinitas	Pacific Coast Highways409
San Luis Obispo 297	Carlsbad	
Avila Beach	Oceanside 459	

Pismo Beach......305

Itineraries





San Diego & North County

The best part about San Diego? It's almost always around 68°F (20°C) and sunny. Add insanely good Mexican food, beaches of all stripes, historic sites and one of the best zoos in the world (plus an open-range safari park). Are you sold yet?

Spend a couple of days at San Diego's Pearl-like beaches, stretching all the way up the North County Coast. But before you head northward, drive out to **Point Loma** for sweeping views, or take a ferry over to old-fashioned **Coronado**, with its famous 'Hotel Del.' Ride the Giant Dipper roller coaster at family-friendly **Mission Beach**, join the funky surfers at **Pacific Beach**, dive or snorkel in gorgeous **La Jolla**, bet on horse races or soar in a hot-air balloon at **Del Mar**, and get new-agey in **Encinitas**.

On day three, if you have kids, make a beeline to the suburban **San Diego Zoo Safari Park**, where giraffes, lions and zebras roam. Otherwise, head back to **San Diego** to explore the zoo at museum-loaded Balboa Park and the atmospheric Spanish-Mexican Old Town. End your trip with a wild night out in the city's Gaslamp Quarter downtown.





San Francisco, Marin County & Wine Country

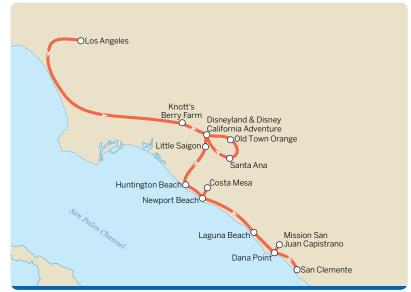
Clamber around the hilly 7-sq-mile peninsula that is dashing, innovative and everevolving San Francisco. Then soak up the natural beauty of Marin County before indulging in a wine-splashed weekend in Napa and Sonoma.

Start with a day in **San Francisco** uncovering the alleyways of Chinatown, wandering the Mission District and climbing Coit Tower. Brave the fog on a cruise to Alcatraz from Fisherman's Wharf, or lose yourself on a sunny day in Golden Gate Park, stopping to smell the flowers where hippies danced during 1967's 'Summer of Love.' Wherever you roam, eat everything in sight – especially at the waterfront Ferry Building Marketplace.

Escape the city on day two via the landmark Golden Gate Bridge, which you can trek, cycle or drive across. On the far side of the bay, photograph the floating houseboats of picturesque **Sausalito**, or go hiking and mountain-biking across the **Marin Headlands**, where a swinging footbridge leads to historic Point Bonita Lighthouse. To really get away from it all, hop aboard the ferry from Tiburon over to **Angel Island**, within view of San Francisco's skyscrapers.

Meander north along the Marin County coast on day three, passing the tall redwood trees of **Muir Woods National Monument**, crescent-shaped **Stinson Beach** and the turnoff to quirky small-town **Bolinas**. Veer inland to conquer **Mt Tamalpais** or make your way to wildly beautiful **Point Reyes National Seashore**, where end-of-the-world beaches lead to long rambles, and you can spy whales in winter from the historic lighthouse. Save time for sea kayaking at nearby **Tomales Bay**.

Finish with two days in wine country. From Bodega Bay, country roads wind inland to charming **Occidental** and the vineyards of the **Russian River Valley**. Paddle a canoe downriver to **Guerneville**, with its redwood cottages and swimming by the beach in summer. Truck east across Hwy 101, then head south into Northern California's wine country, orbiting stylish **Napa** and its countrified but still-chic cousin **Sonoma**. Soak your road-weary bones in a volcanic mud bath at a hot-springs spa in **Calistoga** before winding down in posh **Healdsburg**.





Los Angeles & Orange County

Kick things off in Los Angeles, where top-notch attractions, miles of beaches and tasty food form an irresistible trifecta, before tripping through OC's theme parks and beaches.

On your first two days in **Los Angeles**, traipse along the star-studded sidewalks of clubby Hollywood, dive into the arts and cultural scenes Downtown, and browse the Mid-City's many museums and West LA's hilltop Getty Center. Out at the Pacific's edge, sophisticated Santa Monica beckons with a carnival seaside pier and creative restaurants, while alternative Venice lives and breathes beachy boho-chic style.

Heading inland on day three, make a date with Mickey at perfectly 'imagineered' **Disneyland** and next-door **Disney California Adventure**, celebrating the Golden State. Both parks are in Anaheim, not far from **Knott's Berry Farm**, America's oldest theme park, which pairs Old Western cowboy themes with high-tech roller coasters. If it's too darn hot, cool off at Knott's Soak City Orange County water park.

Drop by the family-friendly, interactive Discovery Science Center or peruse the art galleries of the Bowers Museum in **Santa Ana**. Catch your breath in time-warped **Old Town Orange**, clustered with antiques stores, or **Little Saigon**, where you can trade theme-park hot dogs for a steaming bowl of pho.

On day four, motor west toward the ocean. In **Huntington Beach**, aka 'Surf City, USA,' rent a board, play beach volleyball, build a bonfire after sunset. Hit **Newport Beach** for soap opera–worthy people-watching by the piers. Make a quick stop for power shopping in **Costa Mesa**, then roll south to **Laguna Beach**, a former artists' colony with more than two dozen public beaches to spoil you, plus fashionable downtown boutiques.

Slingshot back toward the I-5 on your last day, stopping off at **Mission San Juan Capistrano** for a glimpse of Spanish colonial and Mexican history. Or keep up the beach-bum attitude by slacking south to **Dana Point**, with its yacht-filled harbor and beach, and retro **San Clemente**, near Trestles, a year-round surf break.



Top: Hollywood Walk of Fame (p349), Los Angeles. Hollywood Walk of Fame™ & Design © 2014 H.CC. All Rights Reserved Bottom: Dana Point harbor (p423)



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Beth Kohn
Marin County & the Bay Area A lucky long-time resident of San Francisco, Beth lives to be playing outside or splashing in big puddles of water. For this and the California guide, she hiked and biked Bay Area byways, backpacked Yosemite and Lake Tahoe in winter and soaked in myriad mountain view hot springs. An author of Lonely Planet's Yosemite, Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks and Mexico guides, you can see more of her work at www.bethkohn.com.



Adam Skolnick

Los Angeles Adam Skolnick has written about travel, culture, health, sports, human rights and the environment for Lonely Planet, New York Times, Outside, Men's Health, Travel & Leisure, Salon.com, BBC.com and ESPN.com. He has authored or co-authored 25 Lonely Planet guidebooks. Find him on Twitter and Instagram (@adamskolnick).



John A Vlahides

Napa & Sonoma Wine Country John A Vlahides co-hosts the TV series Lonely Planet: Roads Less Travelled, screening on National Geographic Channels International. John studied cooking in Paris, with the same chefs who trained Julia Child, and is also a former luxury-hotel concierge and member of Les Clefs d'Or, the international union of the world's elite concierges. He lives in San Francisco, sings tenor with the Grammy-winning San Francisco Symphony, and spends free

time biking SF and skiing the Sierra. For more, see JohnVlahides.com, twitter.com/JohnVlahides.

Read more about John at: lonelyplanet.com/members/johnvlahides



DUR STORY

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that's all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime - across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end - broke but inspired - they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, Across Asia on the Cheap. Within a week they'd sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born. Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Franklin, London,

Melbourne, Oakland, Beijing and Delhi, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse'.

OUR WRITERS



Sara Benson

Coordinating Author, Santa Barbara County, Central Coast, Southern California's Best Beaches After graduating from college, Sara jumped on a plane to California with just one suitcase and \$100 in her pocket. After driving tens of thousands of miles to every corner of this state, she settled in a little beach town halfway between San Francisco and LA. She's an avid hiker, backpacker, cyclist and allseasons outdoor enthusiast who has worked for the National Park Service in the

Sierra Nevada Mountains. The author of more than 65 travel and nonfiction books. Sara is the lead writer for Lonely Planet's California, California's Best Trips, Coastal California and Los Angeles, San Diego & Southern California guides. Follow her latest adventures online at www.indietraveler. blogspot.com, www.indietraveler.net, @indie_traveler on Twitter and indietraveler on Instagram.

> Read more about Sara at: lonelyplanet.com/members/Sara Benson



Andrew Bender

Disneyland & Orange County, San Diego & Around Andy is a true Angeleno, not because he was born in Los Angeles but because he's made it his own. This native New Englander drove cross-country to work in film production, and eventually realized that the joy was in the journey (and writing about it). He writes the Seat 1A travel site for Forbes, and his writing has also appeared in the Los Angeles Times, in-flight magazines and over three dozen LP titles. Current obsessions: discover-

ing SoCal's next great ethnic enclave, and photographing winter sunsets over the Pacific.



Alison Bing

San Francisco Over 10 guidebooks and 20 years in San Francisco, author Alison Bing has spent more time on Alcatraz than some inmates, become an aficionado of drag and burritos, and willfully ignored Muni signs warning that "safety requires avoiding unnecessary conversation."



Celeste Brash

North Coast & Redwoods Celeste's ancestors moved to Northern California in 1906 and this is the region she will always consider home. After 15 years in French Polynesia she now lives in the Pacific Northwest and was thrilled to head south to explore and imbibe the treasures of her old stomping grounds, hike snowy peaks, find petroglyphs in caves, be awed by redwoods and seduced by the wild coast. Find out more about Celeste at www.celestebrash.com.

OVER MORE PAGE WRITERS

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