



Santa Barbara County

Includes →

Santa Barbara	347
Santa Barbara Wine Country	367
Solvang	373
Buellton	376
Montecito	377
Summerland	377
Carpinteria	378
Ojai	379
Ventura	382
Channel Islands National Park	384

Best Places to Eat

- Santa Barbara Shellfish Company (p361)
- Mesa Verde (p361)
- Bouchon (p362)
- Knead (p381)
- Yoichi's (p362)

Best Places to Sleep

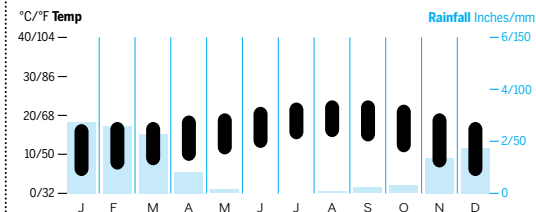
- Belmondo El Encanto (p358)
- Pacific Crest Hotel (p357)
- Inn of the Spanish Garden (p359)
- Landsby (p374)
- Hotel Californian (p357)

Why Go?

Frankly put, this area is damn pleasant to putter around. Low-slung between lofty mountains and the shimmering Pacific, chic Santa Barbara's red-tiled roofs, white stucco buildings and Mediterranean vibe give credence to its claim of being the 'American Riviera.' It's an enticing place to loll on the beach, eat and drink extraordinarily well, shop a bit and push all your cares off to another day. The city's car-free campaign has brought electric shuttle buses, urban bike trails and earth-friendly wine tours. Mother Nature returns the love with hiking, biking, surfing, kayaking, scuba-diving and camping opportunities galore, from offshore Channel Islands National Park to arty Ojai, in neighboring Ventura County. Meanwhile, winemaking is booming in the bucolic Santa Ynez Mountains, west of Santa Barbara, where over a hundred wineries vie for your attention.

When to Go

Santa Barbara



Apr Balmy temperatures, fewer tourists than in summer. Wildflowers bloom on Channel Islands.

Jun Summer vacation and beach season begin. Summer Solstice Celebration parade.

Oct Sunny blue skies and smaller crowds. Wine Country harvest festivities.



Santa Barbara County Highlights

- 1 Eyeing panoramic views atop the *Vertigo*-esque clock tower of the **Santa Barbara County Courthouse** (p347).
- 2 Following the **Foxen Canyon Wine Trail** (p367) to taste top-rated Pinot Noir.
- 3 Kayaking sea caves, hiking windswept cliffs and watching for whales in **Channel Islands National Park** (p384).
- 4 Rejuvenating your body and soul in **Ojai** (p379).
- 5 Strolling out to sea along **Stearns Wharf** (p348), California's oldest pier.
- 6 Ambling between wine-tasting rooms, hip bars and eateries, art galleries and unique shops in Santa Barbara's **Funk Zone** (p355).
- 7 Exploring Spanish-colonial history at **Mission Santa Barbara** (p347).
- 8 Pedaling past vineyards and organic farms through the **Santa Ynez Valley** (p371).
- 9 Eating *aebleskivers* (pancake popovers) by a kitschy windmill in the Danish village of **Solvang** (p373).