

By: Ronnie Greenberg
Photos by: Joe Hilbers

Dazzling gold and orange hues on vines that were once green spread across the crisp and delicious Highway 1 Discovery Route along the California Coast on the way to San Simeon. The Route, midway between Los Angeles and San Francisco connects ten artisan communities that are known for beautiful beaches, abundance of outdoor adventure, rugged landscapes, a variety of wildlife viewing, award-winning wineries, and authentic farm-to-table cuisine.

Before reaching San Simeon, make a delightful short turnoff from the Discovery Route to the beach town of Cayucos, for a step back in time. Walk around the area, stroll along the beach and explore downtown Cayucos.

Visit Brown Butter Cookie Company owned by the Hozie sisters, where you are welcomed with the aroma of freshly baked cookies and given samples right off the baking tray. Watch the team of bakers and dough makers hand roll each Brown Butter Sea Salt cookie. **Take some home or have them shipped.** Located at 98 N. Ocean Avenue in Cayucos (805)995-2076

www.brownbuttercookies.com

Once you get to San Simeon check into the Cavalier Oceanfront Resort situated along Highway 1, set on a scenic seaside bluff overlooking the Pacific Ocean. It is the perfect springboard to beautiful beaches, the Whale Trail, Pacific Coast Wine Region and minutes away from the world famous Hearst Castle.

The Cavalier has 90 spacious rooms, many with wood burning fireplaces, patios with Adirondack chairs, coffee makers, binoculars, complimentary wi-fi, pet friendly grounds and accommodations. Outdoor amenities include three oceanfront fire pits, two outdoor heated pools and hot tubs, direct beach access, outdoor games that include giant chess and checker sets, a deck with telescopes for whale watching, and beach volleyball.

On site and so very convenient is the Cavalier Coastal Kitchen open for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Lunch and dinner highlights include: cream of cauliflower soup; tartare of Angus ribeye; roasted heirloom beet salad; smoked Dungeness crab and shrimp; Swiss chard ravioli; baked Oyster; and

top it off with breadcrumb ice cream sundae or coffee creme brulee.

Located at 9415 Hearst Drive (805) 927-4688 www.cavalierresort.com

Sites to see: Piedras Blancas Lighthouse

The light at Piedras Blancas was first illuminated in 1875, at which point the tower stood 100 feet tall. Its unique appearance, flash pattern, and later, its fog signal made it easily identifiable to mariners traveling this rocky stretch of coastline. Owned and operated by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) since 2001, the light station is still in use as a navigational aid and for scientific research. Today, the BLM and Piedras Blancas Light Station Association are working together to restore the light station to a period of historical significance. The final phase of the restoration of the Fog Signal Building built in 1906 and just completed this August has been a significant journey in itself.

Tours are offered year round on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. Tours last about 2 hours and include the historic Piedras Blancas lighthouse and support building, along with a half mile interpretive trail that provides spectacular ocean views and opportunities to view wildlife.

For tour information reservations www.recreation.gov or www.blm.gov please do not wait at the gate of the lighthouse, but follow the instructions when making reservations.

Located at 15950 Cabrillo Hwy, San Simeon (805) 927-7361 www.piedrasblancas.org. Ryan Cooper Manager-US Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management

Piedras Blancas Elephant Seals Rookery
Witness the power of the ocean as waves crash the surf and sea otters frolic in crystal blue waters while the fascinating blubbery northern elephant seals bask on the sand. From December to March they can easily be seen nesting, having pups, battling, and mating on the beach up the road from San Simeon Bay at scenic vista points on the coast side of Highway 1. Friends of the Elephant Seals Blue Jacketed docents are delighted to interpret, answer questions and relate the fascinating story of the seals, and can be found at the elephant seals vista points located on Highway 1, about 10 miles North of Cambria (805) 924-1628 www.elephantseal.org



Hearst San Simeon State Park and Castle

Hearst Castle that sits on top of what is known as "Enchanted Hill," is the 60,645 square foot, 115 room luxury estate that looks like a castle in Spain, and is now a museum



that lures visitors from all over the world. The Castle is the end result of the vision of William Randolph Hearst, the newspaper magnate, movie producer and world class art collector who built the historic estate, along with world-renowned architecture Julia Morgan. Construction began in 1919 continuing until 1947- and was not fully complete before Hearst's death in 1951. There are guesthouses, pools, (the indoor Neptune pool features an ancient Roman temple as its centerpiece), 8 acres of cultivated gardens and a private zoo on property.

Descendants of some of the zoo animals including zebras, can some times be seen today grazing on the green hillside of the nearby 80,000 acre working cattle Hearst Ranch, that is still privately owned.

www.hearstranch.com

Additional recreational activities are available including a trip to the Hearst Castle Visitor Center viewing a movie at the Hearst Castle Theater, or taking one of

the multiple guided tours. Other activities are camping, hiking, picnicking, walking the beach, windsurfing, kayaking, fishing, surfing and tide pooling. For camping reservations phone (800)444-7275.

Located at 750 Hearst Castle Road in San Simeon (805)927-2093
www.hearstcastle.org

Wine and Dine in nearby Cambria

Stop at the Stolo Family Winery for a tasting and tour. The winery has 22 acres of vineyards, a tasting room and a patio for a picnic or snack. Get to meet the very knowledgeable and personable General Manager, Diego Aguirre who along with Winemaker Nicole Bertotti Pope can walk you through their sustainable growing practices and how they craft their Garagiste wines.

Located at 3776 Santa Rosa Creek Road in Cambria (805) 924-3121
www.stolofamilywinery.com

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Dinner is a special treat at Robin's Restaurant owned by Shanny Covey, and was originally built in 1935 by Frank Souza who was the construction foreman at Hearst Castle. This best-of-all-world eatery has been a favorite among locals and visitors alike. With its trumpet vine covered patio and cozy interior, Robin's is one of those rare kitchens that can combine many different cuisines and do them all well. With an emphasis on using farm-fresh ingredients, Robin's features such eclectic choices as Vietnamese spring rolls; fettucine prawn Alfredo; salmon bisque; cocoa crusted filet mignon; Zoodles made with zucchini and yellow squash noodles, eggplant, roasted red bell peppers, roasted garlic, red bell pepper pomodoro, walnut parmesan and garlic crostini; duck mole; and blackened salmon. The curries include tofu Panang; Thai green chicken; Roghan Josh a dish of North Indian lamb curry, and all simply delicious. Located at 4095 Burton Drive in Cambria (805)927-5007
www.robinsrestaurant.com

Linn's Restaurant owned by John and Renee Linn, and housed in a old brick building, is a mainstay of locals and visitors. What once started as simple fare based on fresh fruits and vegetables from Linn's Santa Rosa Creek and neighboring farms in 1989 has grown over the years, but Linn's Restaurant in Cambria still retains its country roots with contemporary American recipes. Open daily for breakfast, lunch and dinner from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Located at 2277 Main Street in Cambria (805)927-0371
www.linsfruitbin.com

For your additional information
www.highway1discoveryroute.com
 Includes Ragged Point, San Simeon, Cambria, Cayucos, Los Osos/Baywood Park, Avila Beach, Oceano, Nipomo, Arroyo Grande Valley and Edna Valley.