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For Immediate Release



Pirates, Movie Stars, Egg McMuffins and Bubble Gum: Fun Facts about California's Central Coast

The Central Coast of California is home to one of the most famous road trips in the country – Highway #1/101. Below is a list of surprising facts and anecdotes about this beautiful region of California.

Ventura Region

The Ventura Pier is one of **California's longest wooden piers**, in 1993, the 121 year old historic landmark underwent a 3.2 million restoration which restored the pier to its original grandeur.

The "**Flute Playing Mermaid**" statue, at the entrance to Ventura harbor, welcomes all those returning to safety back to the harbor.

Channel Islands National Park, a string of five islands off the coast, is known as the **American Galapagos**.

The Channel Islands and surrounding waters are **filled with marine and island wildlife** ranging from dolphins and whales, to foxes, bald eagles, bottlenose dolphins, hammerhead sharks and even the magnificent blue whales.

In January and February alone, Oxnard strawberry growers produced more than **649 million** strawberries.

The Ventura Harbor is the site of one of the **largest squid offloading harbors** in North America. Market squid is California's largest and most lucrative commercial fish making Ventura Harbor the largest squid harbor on the west coast.

Hollywood Beach in Oxnard got its name not just from the **film stars** who have beach houses along the coast, but also from the hundreds of productions that have filmed here, from 1921's *The Sheik* through to 90210.

The Woolworth's Museum in downtown Oxnard is home to Fresh & Fabulous, an upscale, modern diner located in the restored Woolworth's restaurant space.

Oxnard is home to Herzog Wine Cellars – **the largest Kosher winery in the US**. Also at Herzog – Tierra Sur, the West Coast's only 28-Point Zagat rated Kosher fine-dining restaurant.

Santa Barbara Region

The original **#1 Motel 6** opened in Santa Barbara in 1962 and is still operating today, offering affordable lodgings just steps from the beach.

Serving only lunch and dinner before 1971, the **McDonalds' Egg McMuffin** was invented in Santa Barbara by a franchise owner, Herb Peterson.

The Oscar-winning film *Sideways* was filmed throughout the vineyards of Santa Barbara County and in Solvang, capturing the beauty of the wine country and further putting the quaint town of Solvang on the map.

America's most popular salad dressing, **Hidden Valley Ranch**, is named after "Hidden Valley Ranch" in rural Santa Barbara County.

Solvang was founded in 1911 by Danish-American educators on 9,000 acres of land surrounding Old Mission Santa Ines purchased for \$75,000.

The **Legend of Zorro** was based on the life of Solomon Pico, a murderous bandit who camped in the Santa Maria hills. To this day, people climb the Solomon Hills looking for treasure that Pico allegedly buried.

The Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Complex boasts the **highest beach dunes** in the Western United States, with some towering as high as 500 feet. It is also the second largest stretch of dunes in California.

In 1978, the Santa Maria Valley Chamber of Commerce copyrighted the famous **Santa Maria Style Barbecue** recipe.

Lompoc has over **32 major commissioned murals** painted by noted artists, plus 40 additional murals, all located in Lompoc's historic old town area.

San Luis Obispo Region

In 1990, Juice Club, the **first Jamba Juice** was started in San Luis Obispo and remains a favorite today.

The 15-foot high by 70-foot long **Bubblegum Alley** on Higuera Street is covered in an estimated 1.7 million pieces of gum.

SLO County is home to two of the **21 historical California Missions** - Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa and Mission San Miguel Arcangel

SLO County is home to one of the West Coast's greatest tourist attraction, the famed **Hearst Castle**, located in San Simeon and built by newspaper publisher William Randolph Hearst

Wine lovers can taste wines from over **250 wineries** throughout SLO County both in in-town tasting rooms and at the vineyards.

There are more than **10 farmers markets** each week throughout SLO County where visitors and locals can rub elbows with restaurant chefs, choosing ingredients for fresh farm-to-table cuisine

From November to February, San Simeon beaches are home to over **17,000 elephant seals**

Marilyn Monroe and Joe DiMaggio spent their first night as husband and wife in Paso Robles

In 2014, Splash Café in Pismo Beach sold over 200,000 bread bowls and approximately **30,000 gallons of chowder!** In the summer, Splash Café in Pismo Beach goes through 200 pounds of fish per day.

The largest living **Pismo Clam** on record is 7 3/8 inches and 3-inch Pismo Clam filters an average of 5,800 gallons of water per year.

Monterey Bay Region

Neon signs, billboards and **hot dog stands are prohibited** in the quaint village of Carmel-by-the-Sea, and a permit is required to wear high-heeled shoes.

The Monterey Peninsula is home to **26 public and private golf courses**. Three courses located in Pebble Beach—Spyglass, Poppy Hills and Pebble Beach itself—are consistently ranked among the top ten courses in the nation.

As the #1 agricultural region in the United States, the Salinas Valley earned its nickname "**Salad Bowl of the Nation**," due to the wide variety of fruits and vegetables grown here. The total economic contribution of Monterey County agriculture is \$8.2 billion.

The **Bixby Bridge in Big Sur** was built by prisoners eager to earn "good time" off their prison sentences. It is one of the world's highest single-span bridges at 714 feet long by 260 feet high.

In 1948, a young woman by the name of Norma Jean was crowned Castroville's first "Artichoke Queen." She later gained fame as actress **Marilyn Monroe**. Castroville, located on Monterey Bay, produces 85% of the nation's artichokes.

The Monterey County wine region actually produces the **most premium grapes** in North America, spread over 40,000 acres.

Carmel-by-the-Sea has one **art gallery** for every 34 residents.

The widely acclaimed **Monterey Jazz Festival** occurs each September and is the longest continuously running jazz festival in the world.

Santa Cruz is the **birthplace of mainland surfing** in the United States, when in 1885 three Hawaiian princes, attending military academy in what is now Silicon Valley, came to Santa Cruz on vacation. They saw the size of the waves, and went to a local lumber mill to have surfboards crafted out of redwoods trees. They surfed the beaches of Santa Cruz, and California's signature sport was born on the mainland!

The **longest wooden pier in California** and the longest Pacific Ocean Pier of any type, the Santa Cruz Wharf is also one of the oldest piers in the state.

More than 100,000 servings of **Garlic Ice Cream** are dished up at the Gilroy Garlic Festival, held annually the last full weekend each July.

Visitors to Mt. Madonna State Park in west Gilroy can view a herd of **rare white deer** donated by William Randolph Hearst.

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For more information please visit: www.theoriginalroadtrip.com

California's Central Coast consists of:

VENTURA REGION: Ventura County, Heritage Valley, Ojai, Oxnard

SANTA BARBARA REGION: Santa Barbara County, Buellton, Carpinteria Valley, Lompoc Valley, Santa Maria Valley, Solvang, Santa Ynez Valley

SAN LUIS OBISPO REGION: San Luis Obispo County, Arroyo Grande/Grover Beach, Cambria, Morro Bay, Nipomo, Paso Robles, Pismo Beach

MONTEREY BAY REGION: Monterey County, Santa Cruz County, Carmel, Gilroy, Hollister

About Central Coast Tourism Council

The Central Coast Tourism Council (CCTC) is a non-profit organization comprised of Convention and Visitors Bureaus ("CVBs" & "VCBs") throughout the California Central Coast. Comprised of tourism and hospitality professionals, the mission of CCTC is to jointly promote the entire California Central Coast as a destination. The four main regions that comprise the destination include Monterey Bay, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura. The CCTC also serves as the Central Coast's voice in Sacramento, and as a partner with Visit California's global marketing and advertising campaigns.