



CREATE NEW HOLIDAY TRADITIONS AND MEMORIES IN MONTEREY COUNTY *Tree Lightings, Lighted Boat Parade... and Santa Arrives by Helicopter!*

For many people, the holidays are a time for family traditions and celebrations, but have you ever wanted to getaway for Christmas? This season, we invite you to create new traditions and memories with your loved ones in one of the most beautiful places on the coast of California - Monterey County. Join our charming and festive communities as they kick off the season with traditional tree lightings and unique holiday parades, and there are plenty of opportunities to meet the big man himself – Santa Claus!

With so many festivities happening throughout our destination, here are some ideas that will be sure to get you and your family in the holiday spirit:

TREE LIGHTING CEREMONIES

For some cities, the traditional lighting of a Christmas tree marks the official start of the holiday season. Monterey is the first to kick it off on Friday, November 24th, with the 23rd Annual Holiday Tree Lighting on Cannery Row. Your entire family is invited to join Santa, his reindeer and carolers at Steinbeck Plaza for this free event.

The quaint city of Pacific Grove welcomes the holidays with an old-fashioned Christmas Tree Lighting on Monday, November 27th. Jolly old St. Nick will also be making his first visit at the Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History that evening.

On Friday, December 1st, Carmel-by-the-Sea will host its annual City Holiday Tree Lighting Celebration followed by the Carmel Plaza Holiday Open House. Children will be excited as Santa is delivered by the Fire Department and helps countdown to the tree lighting. Also, happening that Friday evening is Monterey's Community Christmas Tree Lighting Celebration on Colton Hall Lawn featuring carols, candles, cookies and cheer.

HISTORICAL HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS

Monterey County is rich in culture and history, and visitors can take a step back in time and visit bed and breakfast inns dressed in Victorian-era splendor at Christmas at the Inns and Asilomar Conference Grounds in Pacific Grove. The innkeepers will open their doors November 28th and 29th, offering live entertainment and refreshments. Guests can also tour Asilomar Conference Grounds to learn about the work of celebrated architect Julia Morgan.

The Carmel Heritage Society is dedicated to protecting, preserving and promoting the history of Carmel-by-the-Sea; and every holiday season, the non-profit group hosts the Inns of Distinction Tour. On Sunday, December 3rd, participants will have the opportunity to tour the inns including Doris Day's Cypress Inn which has been a landmark since 1929 and Hofsas House, which is celebrating its 70th anniversary this year.

Stroll through Historic Downtown Monterey for Christmas in the Adobes on December 8th and 9th. The annual event includes exploring 19th century adobes and Fisherman's Wharf, and visitors can enjoy fandango dance lessons, bagpipes, shortbread cookies, games and more with proceeds benefiting the Monterey State Historic Park Association.

PARADES AND TWINKLING LIGHTS

Strike up the band and get into the Christmas spirit! The Holiday Parade of Lights in Salinas is happening on Sunday, November 26th. Marching bands, floats, classic cars and more travel up South Main Street and through Oldtown Salinas to the National Steinbeck Center for this family-friendly event.

On Thursday, November 30th, Santa and Mrs. Claus travel all the way from the North Pole to celebrate the 16th Annual Holiday Parade of Lights on Lighthouse Avenue in Pacific Grove. The parade will feature local marching bands, holiday floats and equestrian groups.

And we mustn't forget the Brighten the Harbor Lighted Boat Parade, sponsored by the Monterey Peninsula Yacht Club. Illuminated boats will cruise along scenic Monterey Bay on Sunday, December 3rd, competing for the "Best Decorated Boat" award.

WAIT! THERE'S MORE...

Instead of a sleigh and reindeer, Kris Kringle and the Mrs. will make their grand entrance in Carmel Valley by helicopter! The 59th Annual Carmel Valley Santa's Fly-In is happening on Saturday, December 9th, at Carmel Valley Airfield. Families can then enjoy a community parade featuring the Carmel Valley Kiwanis Club famous train and Santa's workshop.

Put on your Santa hat and sneakers and get ready to run or walk along Pacific Grove's stunning coastline during the Jingle Bell Run, also happening on Saturday, December 9th. This 5K race benefits the Arthritis Foundation and begins at Lover's Point Park. Have fun with Santa and tie jingle bells to your shoes!

INSIDER TIP FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Book your room and attraction tickets now and save! Sound easy? It is! We've uncovered hotels and attractions in Monterey County that are offering discounts to visitors booking in advance. And be sure to book directly with the hotel and/or attraction's website to ensure the best rate! Please visit seemonterey.com/bookdirect for more information.

From our family to yours, we wish you a happy and healthy holiday season!

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ABOUT MONTEREY COUNTY CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

The Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau (MCCVB) is a 501c6 organization that drives tourism for Monterey County and in recent years has led the destination to record levels of growth. Tourism is the largest industry on the Monterey Peninsula and the second largest in the County. The MCCVB is a partnership of the hospitality community and local governments that aims to drive business growth through compelling marketing and sales initiatives that maximize the benefits of tourism to our guests, members and the community. Travel spending in Monterey County was more than \$2.8 billion in 2016, representing a 3.6 percent increase from 2015. Visitors also generated \$115 million in local tax receipts, a 5.8 percent increase and supported more than 25,000 jobs.