

**CONTACT:**

Jessica Keener, Monterey County CVB
(831) 657-6413; cell: (917) 450-0210
jessica@seemonterey.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**MONTEREY COUNTY: THE IDEAL PLACE TO FIND THE NEW YOU IN THE NEW YEAR**

Rejuvenate Your Mind, Body and Soul and Experience a New You in 2017

MONTEREY, Calif., December 20, 2016 – Monterey County embodies the perfect backdrop and atmosphere to uncover a new, relaxed and inspired you in the New Year. The natural beauty of the Central Coast with its gigantic redwood forests, verdant valleys and sweeping, towering cliffs overlooking dark ocean waters crashing onto the sand literally erases the stress and inspires a new state of being. The pace is easy and relaxing and yet rich with possibilities for personal growth in mind, body and spirit. Experience a new you from spas to yoga to hikes.

The Esalen Institute was founded as a retreat and educational center for the human potential movement. Esalen attracts a world-wide network of teachers and seekers who look beyond dogma to explore deeper spiritual possibilities; forge new understandings of self and society; and pioneer new paths for change. Located in Big Sur, visitors can enjoy a plethora of experiences from moonlit baths in natural hot springs, couples workshops, writing programs, yoga and their unique form of massage that focuses on energy exchange and psychological well-being. Esalan gives guests the tools and freedom to unleash latent capacities and find a re-energized sense of purpose.

The Spa at Bernardus Lodge in Carmel Valley offers a unique spa experience for rejuvenation, inspiration and indulgence based on the turn of each season. Their compilation of services on the solstices and equinoxes integrates these celestial reminders to take time for ourselves; reflecting on the past, renewing for the future and optimizing balance. On the Winter Solstice, the start of the solar year, The Spa at Bernardus Lodge creates a wonderful environment for this important time of tranquility, ritual, reflection and renewal from restorative yoga to fuel an active life, to holistic wellness experiences to find your balance. Guests can choose from an array of relaxation services including massage, bodywork, facials or salon services and then treat themselves to complimentary Winter Solstice activities and services.

The stunning beauty and landscape of Big Sur has long beckoned artists, authors, musicians, deep thinkers and spiritual leaders seeking creative inspiration, personal transformation and inner wellbeing. Ventana Big Sur's Art & Seekers program extends a similar invitation, through thoughtfully designed workshops and activities designed to help guests develop a deeper connection to oneself, partners and the natural world in the most profound—and playful—ways possible. Visionaries, romantics and dreamers can experience workshops such as Drum Circles, Quartz Bowls & Cymatic Resonance Sessions, Create Your Couple Mandala, Nature Charcoal Drawing, Neuroacoustic Music Therapy and Photography-Hike Workshops as well as Glassblowing and Watercolor Painting for groups.

Spa Aiyana's inspiration unfolds with each passing season at Carmel Valley Ranch. Their winter offering is a Gingerbread "Man-I," a powerful moisturizing manicure for dry, winter hands. A chai spice and vanilla sugar polish gently energizes the skin while the gingerbread and orange butter deeply nourishes. The pampering continues with organic myrtle and orange spice full-body polish that detoxes and softens skin, followed by a warm calendula and ginger body butter massage. Carmel Valley Ranch also offers daily Hatha yoga classes. Let the stresses of the season slip away as your senses slide into a merry mood!

If you would like to expand your mind in the New Year, don't miss the some of the notable literary sites in the area including the [National Steinbeck Center](#), [Robinson Jeffers' Tor House](#) and the [Henry Miller Library](#). If you prefer the calm of the great outdoors, you will be deeply rewarded by the exquisite beauty of Monterey. Take a stroll or bike ride along the 18 miles from [Castroville](#) (a.k.a. "Artichoke Center of the World") in the north to [Pacific Grove](#) in the south along the waterfront Monterey Bay Coastal Recreation Trail. Picnic on the white sands of [Carmel beach](#), hike through [Point Lobos](#) State Reserve or explore [Pebble Beach's](#) gentle tide pools.

Before you head out for these adventures you will want to grab some food and drinks. [Earthbound Farms Stand](#) offers fresh organic produce and flowers, delicious food from their certified organic kitchen, plus lovely gardens and special events in the summer. You'll find a delightful menu that changes weekly at [Lucia Restaurant](#) based on the seasonal offers from local farmers and suppliers. If you want something quick, you can always try the sandwiches with unique names at local's favorite Ike's Place.

And then there is the wine. Monterey County, recently voted as one of the top five worldwide wine destinations by the *Wine Enthusiast*, has 225 vineyards with 46,000 cultivated acres and more than 60 tasting rooms throughout the county: River Road, Chalone, Monterey, Carmel-by-the-Sea and Carmel Valley. For a great bottle of wine from a local winery who loves to give back to the community, you must try [Dawn's Dream Winery](#). The wines are divine and you'll fulfill any New Year's resolutions to help those in need. [Folktale Winery](#) offers [Vinyasa Flow yoga](#) classes on Saturday mornings in their Rose Vineyard, which includes a complimentary glass of wine afterwards.

Monterey County is the ideal place to reinvent yourself for the New Year, whether you are seeking to deepen your experience in mind, body or soul.

ABOUT MONTEREY COUNTY CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

The Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau (MCCVB) is a 501©6 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 \$2.7 billion in 2015, representing a 4.5 percent increase from 2014, and per person/per day spending rose to \$333. Visitors in 2015 also generated \$109 million in local tax receipts, a 7.4 percent increase and supported 24,390 jobs.

###