

Explore the Central Coast

Optional Adventures for Saturday

Saturday is intentionally unscheduled, giving you the freedom to explore California's Central Coast at your own pace. Whether you're drawn to scenic drives, coastal views, local food, or iconic landmarks, the area surrounding Paso Robles offers no shortage of memorable experiences.

Below are a few curated ideas to help you make the most of the day.

Scenic Drives & Iconic Routes

- Highway 1 (Big Sur Coastline)**

Recently reopened, Highway 1 offers some of the most breathtaking coastal scenery in California. Consider a drive north toward Big Sur for sweeping ocean views and dramatic cliffs.

- Nacimiento-Fergusson Road**

A memorable inland-to-coast route connecting the mountains to Highway 1, passing through Fort Hunter Liggett and scenic backcountry landscapes.

- Paso Robles Backroads**

Lightly traveled, gently twisty roads wind through vineyards and rolling hills. Popular routes include:

- Pozo Road & Parkhill Road
- Highway 229 to Creston
- Highway 58 toward Shell Creek Road (especially beautiful if wildflowers are in bloom)

Notable Sights & Attractions

- Hearst Castle**

One of California's most iconic landmarks, offering guided tours and spectacular views of the coastline.

- Hearst Ranch Winery**

Located at the base of the hill near the coast, featuring an oceanfront outdoor tasting area.

- **Elephant Seal Viewing Area**

A unique wildlife stop just north of Hearst Castle.

- **Sensorio**

A world-renowned immersive light installation set among the Paso Robles hills.

- **Estrella Warbird Museum**

Located near the Paso Robles airport, featuring vintage aircraft and rotating vehicle displays.

- **Morro Rock & Morro Bay**

A coastal stop known for fresh seafood, ocean views, and a relaxed harbor atmosphere.

- **Downtown San Luis Obispo**

Historic mission, charming shops, cafés, and a lively small-town feel. (Note: Thursday evening hosts a large farmers market.)

Dining Highlights

- **Thomas Hill Organics** (Paso Robles)
- **McPhee's Grill** (Templeton)
- **The Range** (Santa Margarita) – cowboy-inspired cuisine
- **Blue** (San Luis Obispo)
- **Nepenthe** (Big Sur area) – destination dining with sweeping coastal views
- **Sebastian's General Store** (near Hearst Castle) – casual daytime sandwiches and local fare

Outdoor & Hiking Options

- **Bluff Trail at Montaña de Oro State Park**

Coastal trail with dramatic oceanfront views.

- **Cerro San Luis**

A moderate climb overlooking downtown San Luis Obispo.

- **Bishop Peak or Felsman Loop**

Popular local hikes with rewarding summit views.

- **Pismo Preserve**

Expansive ocean views and open landscapes, located south of Paso Robles.

A Few Helpful Tips

- Travel times can vary along the coast so plan accordingly and allow time to enjoy the scenery.
- Some routes are remote; fuel up before heading out.
- If wildflowers are blooming east of Paso Robles, Shell Creek Road is especially scenic.