



## EXPLORING SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY

*"Thousands of tired, nerve shaken, over-civilized people are beginning to find out that going to the mountains is going home; that wilderness is a necessity; and that mountain parks and reservations are useful, not only as fountains of timber and irrigating rivers, but as fountains of life." – John Muir*

The Castoro Cellars' staff spends much of their free time enjoying the spectacular environment of the Central Coast region. From hiking to rock climbing to water-skiing to kite boarding, the staff at Castoro has put together the following list of their favorite activities and locations along the California Central Coast. Whether visiting one of the more popular destinations or a lesser-known hideaway, visitors are likely to encounter someone from the Castoro Cellars family.

### **Arroyo Laguna** – Surfing, Kite Boarding, Sea Elephant Viewing

The Central Coast is internationally famous for some of the best windsurfing in the world. For extreme-sport fanatics, kite boarding is recommended and Arroyo Laguna is a perfect location. For those interested in viewing wild animals, sea elephants arrive on the beach twice a year to mate and give birth. Visitors are welcome to observe these animals from a safe distance.

### **Carrizo Plains** – Hiking, Camping, Wildflowers

Pocketed between the coastal ranges of eastern San Luis Obispo County is the Carrizo Plain. Here, in this remote part of California, prolific wildflowers color the hills each spring. 3,000-acre Soda Lake, the centerpiece of the plain, is one of the largest undisturbed alkali wetlands in the state and provides an important habitat for migratory birds.

### **Cerro Alto Trail** – Hiking, Mountain Biking, Equestrian

Located between the towns of Atascadero and Morro Bay, this trail climbs to 2,600 feet, offering one of the Central Coast's finest views of the coast and interior wilderness. Hikers, mountain bikers and equestrians share the trail, but mountain bikers take note: this is a challenging ride for advanced cyclists. However, the views of Whale Rock Reservoir, Piedras Blancas Lighthouse, Atascadero and the Temblor Range reward those who brave the steep climb.

### **Montaña de Oro** – Surfing, Hiking, Mountain Biking, Equestrian, Wildflowers

This park features over 8,000 acres of rugged cliffs, secluded sandy beaches, coastal plains, streams, canyons, and hills, including the 1,347-foot Valencia Peak. Naturalists and backpackers enjoy the solitude and freedom found along the park's trails. There are also designated mountain biking and equestrian trails.

**Morro Bay** – Surfing, Great Seafood, Surf fishing

Morro Bay is located on the Pacific Coast of California about halfway between San Francisco and Los Angeles. The town of Morro Bay has a population of about 10,000 and is a working fishing village. The town is a pleasant tourist destination with very mild weather year round. Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo named its famous landmark, Morro Rock, when he first charted this coast during his 16th Century voyage of discovery.

**Nacimiento Lakes** – Water-skiing, Fishing

Centrally located between San Francisco and Los Angeles, Lake Nacimiento is one of Central California's most beautiful lakes. The lake is 16 miles long with 165 miles of coves and inlets of towering pine and shady oaks scattered among the grassy slopes of San Luis Obispo County. The lake is famous for its excellent fishing, water-skiing, and other boating activities.

**Salmon Creek** – Hiking, Camping, Equestrian

Offering spectacular views of the Big Sur Coastline and Piedras Blancas Lighthouse, this trail offers rugged terrain for experienced hikers and equestrians only. The trail starts at a slow, steep 600-foot climb for the first mile. The final campsite, Lions Den Camp, is at the ridge top after a 3,000-foot climb.

**Santa Margarita Lake** – Hiking, Camping, Fishing

A nature lover's retreat, Santa Margarita Lake Regional Park offers thousands of acres of unspoiled open space. The park is home to countless species of plants and wildlife, making it the perfect location for nature study, boating and fishing. The area is accessible to hikers, mountain bikers and equestrians; motor vehicles are not permitted in the Natural Area.