

Sunset

SUMMER TRIPS

54

— GREAT —
GETAWAYS

SIERRA NEVADA
SAN DIEGO
WHIDBEY ISLAND
CARMEL VALLEY
PORTLAND
VAIL
TUCSON
& BEYOND

LAKES BASIN, CA
High Sierra Escape
P. 18

Display until July 10, 2015
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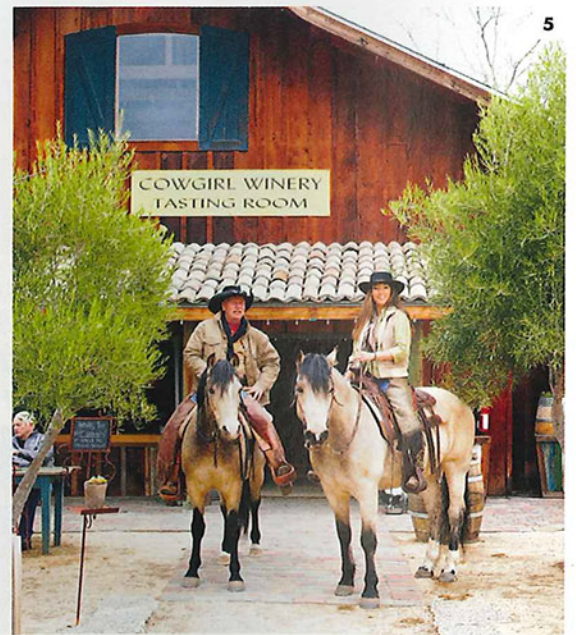
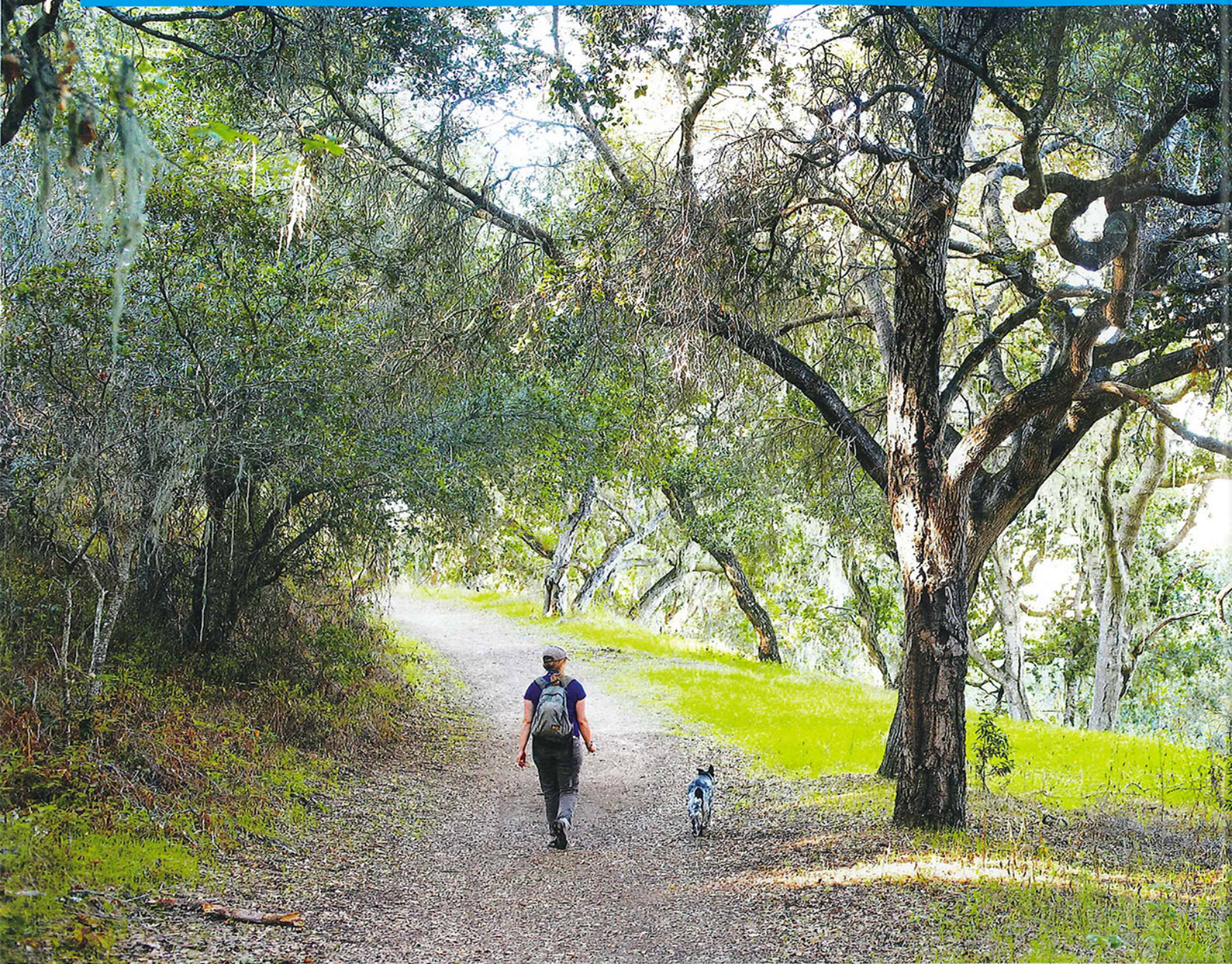
\$11.99

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BEAUTIFUL
ROAD-TRIP
ROUTES

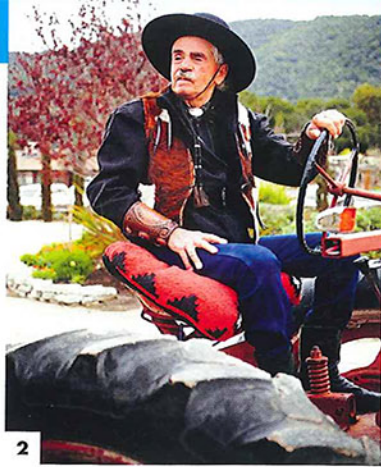
BEST CABINS,
CAMPING
& RESORTS

TOP
DOG-FRIENDLY
DESTINATIONS





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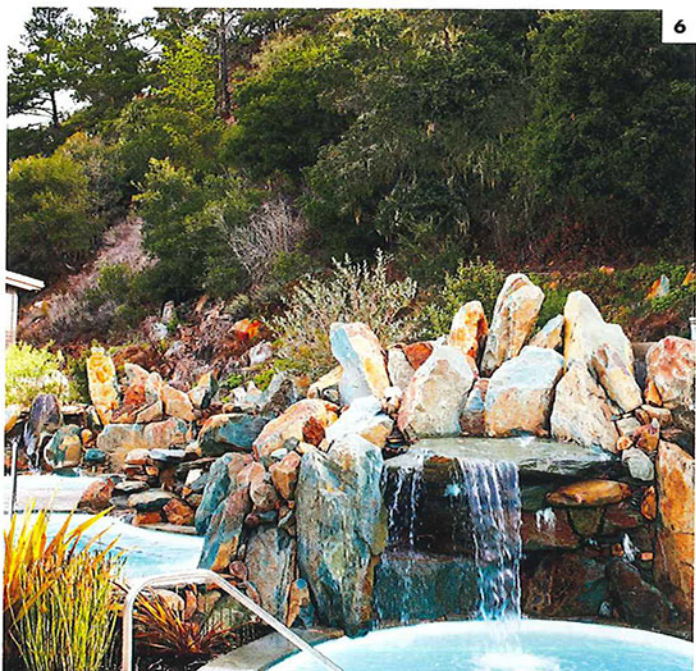


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1. Garland Ranch Regional Park. 2. Local legend Cowboy Pete Azevedo and his tractor-pulled Wine Wagon. 3. Olive oil tasting at Holman Ranch. 4. Hilltop views from Carmel Valley Ranch. 5. A yeehaw pairing: ponies and wood-fired pies at Cowgirl Winery. 6. Plunge pools at Refuge.



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CARMEL VALLEY

This ranch town has just as much charm as its namesake neighbor—and even better weather.

Drink on the wagon

From number crunching to grape crushing: What was once a Carmel Valley accountant's office is now a mini plaza serving some of the region's best vino. Look for the brightly acidic Chardonnay at **Joyce Vineyards** and jammy Merlot at **Parsonage**. The estate-grown Pinot Noir at **Holman Ranch** is as rich as its cold-pressed olive oil. **Cowgirl Winery** is your place if you want to pet ponies and eat wood-fired pizza. All of these tasting rooms are within strolling distance of one another, but it's hard to resist a ride in Cowboy Pete Azevedo's tractor-pulled Wine Wagon, which he usually parks outside the plaza. It's technically free, but the 75-year-old grandpa appreciates tips. *Joyce, Parsonage, Holman: Tasting fees vary; 19 E. Carmel Valley Rd.; joycevineyards.com; parsonagewine.com; holmanranch.com. Cowgirl: \$13 tasting; 25 Pilot Rd.; cowgirlwinery.com.*

A hike and a soak

Carmel Valley's retirees like to walk their yellow Labs along the Lupine Loop in **Garland Ranch Regional Park**, but two-legged trekkers should climb to the meadow at the top of the Waterfall Trail. If you need more incentive than sweeping valley views, consider **Refuge**: Its European-style day spa is Disneyland for adults, with hot and cold pools, cedar saunas, and Adirondack-encircled firepits. *Garland: 700 W. Carmel Valley Rd.; mprpd.org. Refuge: \$44 day pass; 27300 Rancho San Carlos Rd.; refuge.com.*

Metropolitan meals

Lokal is as close to city-chic as Carmel Valley gets. Chef Brendan Jones lures in the town's growing under-60 set with a 28-foot bar made of salvaged redwood, microbrews on tap, and juicy skirt-steak sandwiches and duck-fat fries for lunch. Breakfast here

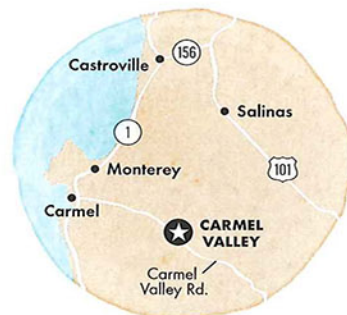
is raveworthy too—especially the poached eggs with seasonal veggies. \$\$; 13762 Center St.; (831) 659-5886.

A whole new ball game

For those who tire of tasting, Carmel Valley has found a playful complement: bocce. Courts are popping up everywhere, including outside **Talbot Vineyards'** in-town tasting room. Along with the velvety Diamond T Pinot Noir, you'll find two well-manicured courts. More fun awaits (for guests and members) at **Quail Lodge & Golf Club**, home to a serious mini-golf course, which you can follow with cocktails on the pondside deck. *Talbot: \$10 tasting; 25 Pilot Rd.; talbotvineyards.com. Quail Lodge: From \$195; quailodge.com.*

Summer camp for all

Some hotels are explicitly for adults; others cater to kids (but bore their parents). **Carmel Valley Ranch** manages to make all ages happy. Instead of creaky cabins and mess-hall fare, it has luxe suites with soaring ceilings and a sommelier-led supper series. The 500-acre spread bustles with tree swings, tennis lessons, Pilates, outdoor yoga, beekeeping classes, and a Hen House with fresh eggs from a dozen chickens. There's also the requisite swimming/spa/golf trio. *From \$450; carmelvalleyranch.com. —Rachel Levin*



GETTING HERE

Carmel Valley is 16 miles southeast of Monterey. Take State 1 to Carmel Valley Rd.