

# SUCCESSFUL<sup>®</sup> MEETINGS

START HERE

SuccessfulMeetings.com

02.14

NORTHSTAR  
TRAVEL MEDIA

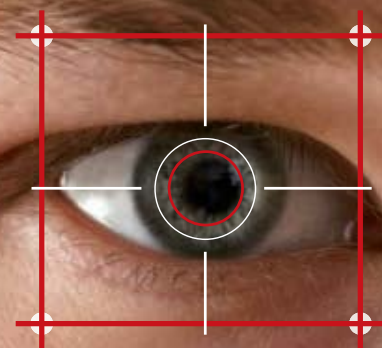
## THIS IS YOUR ROOM KEY

26

20 WAYS THAT THE  
HOTEL EXPERIENCE  
WILL TRANSFORM IN  
THE FUTURE



ATLANTIC CITY | MONTEREY | ARUBA | MAUI  
FLORIDA'S EAST COAST | ISLAMORADA



Some hotels are already  
replacing room keys with  
iris-scan technology



Monterey County's stunning natural landscapes make a great backdrop for meetings and group activities

## MONTEREY, CA

**Bounded by a beautiful Pacific coastline and rugged mountains, this California gem is more than ready for meetings**

— BY DEANNA TING —

Approximately 100 miles south of San Francisco, Monterey County is a central California meeting destination that continues to offer planners a wealth of hotels, restaurants, activities, and attractions. From its northernmost point at the historic fishing village of Moss Landing to the coastal forests of Big Sur, Monterey County encompasses some of the state's most stunning coastal and natural retreats, from lush vineyards (Salinas Valley) and evergreen forests (Big Sur) to beautiful beaches (Pebble Beach) and historic sites (Cannery Row, the Monterey Bay Aquarium, and Fisherman's Wharf). The county's modern meeting venues and facilities, coupled with natural beauty and accessibility, give it broad appeal for meetings.

"What really makes Monterey County unique is the diversity of the area," says Linda Ruby, vice president of sales and group services for the Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau. "The fact that we do have a venue or hotel for every type of group and budget is really special. We're a small to mid-size community and when people come here, we put our arms around our

visitors, and that creates a truly special experience."

Ruby adds that one of the county's biggest selling points is its sustainability and, of course, natural surroundings. "We're very sustainable and green, and a lot of planners are looking for destinations that are considerate about their carbon footprints," she says. "Also, the natural beauty is just breathtaking. You stand there, and can't help but be consumed with the beauty of it all."

The ease of getting to Monterey is also a big draw for meeting groups, Ruby adds. "We're very accessible; there are direct flights from six cities in the western U.S.," she notes. "And if groups need help with transportation or finding a speaker or just about anything, we're willing to look at anything to help them experience Monterey."

That same resourcefulness, Ruby notes, is also seen among the county's various hotels and resorts. "All of our hotels are consistently reinventing themselves," she says. Here's a closer look at some of the newest developments taking place in the area:

In March 2013, the Quail Lodge Resort & Golf

### WHERE TO



#### La Playa Carmel

Originally built as a luxurious mansion in 1905 by an artist as a gift to his wife, a member of the famous Ghiradelli family, this 75-room property is just steps away from Carmel Beach. Groups of up to 75 can even buy out the entire property for a meeting.



#### Montrio Bistro

Located in a converted 1910 firehouse in the heart of downtown Monterey, just steps from the Monterey Convention Center, this favorite among locals caters to groups of all sizes with a variety of special event spaces and locally sourced, organic California cuisine that melds flavors from Italy and France.



#### Wine Tasting at Holman Ranch

The 400-acre Holman Ranch offers a variety of corporate packages and activities that take advantage of its vineyard, olive grove, and unique spaces. Groups can take special tours of the ranch's estate vineyards, later enjoying wine and course pairings.

STAY

EAT

PLAY

Photography: Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau; La Playa Carmel; Montrio Bistro; Holman Ranch



## ESSENTIAL Tool Box

### CONVENTION CENTERS & FACILITIES

Monterey Conference Center (41,000 sf alone; 61,000 sf in combination with three adjacent hotels); Monterey Marriott (55,000 sf); Portola Hotel & Spa at Monterey Bay (50,000 sf)

### ROOM TAX

12 percent

## READERS Recommend



### PINNACLE AWARDS GO TO:

- Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau

Club in Carmel Valley reopened after a three-year closure during which a \$28-million renovation was completed. As part of the renovation, all guest rooms, meeting rooms, and public spaces were refreshed to embody a historic California and Spanish colonial design aesthetic. The newly renovated meet-

ing facilities offer a total of 6,500 square feet of space split among six conference rooms, as well as banquet facilities for up to 200. All guest rooms have a private deck or patio with views of the nearby lakes, the 18-hole Quail Golf Club, or gardens. An on-site Land Rover Experience Driving School lets attendees tackle off-road obstacles behind the wheel of a Land Rover vehicle.

Last year, the 400-acre Holman Ranch in Carmel Valley debuted a variety of new themed meeting and retreat packages tailored to groups. Teambuilding activities like the two-hour Holman's All Terrain Adventure Race, involve obstacles, trivia quizzes, and performance drills that can be completely customized for each group.

The Carmel Valley Ranch recently debuted a Hen House and Salt House in its organic garden, adding to its collection of farmstead-ing activities such as its signature honeybee experience, where attendees can interact with

the beekeepers who care for the ranch's more than 60,000 Italian honeybees. In March, the property will debut special programs that allow guests to take part in workshops that teach them how to start and maintain their own backyard chicken coop.

Monterey County, in particular, has seen growing interest for its winemaking. In 2013, *Wine Enthusiast* named it one of the "10 Best Wine Travel Destinations" highlighting its Pinot Noir and Chardonnay varietals. Some of the county's most notable winemakers include Testarossa Winery, Pessagno Winery, Pisoni, and Talbott Vineyards. Later this summer, Carmel Valley Ranch will join them, when it begins its very first crush of wines from its vineyard. *SM Questions or comments? Email [dting@ntmllc.com](mailto:dting@ntmllc.com)*

### MORE ONLINE

Learn more about our upcoming Destination California fam trip in Monterey at [bit.ly/SMDestCA](http://bit.ly/SMDestCA)



**LOCATION STOLE  
THE SHOW.**

**MONTEREY**  
Inspired moments in meetings."

For more information or to submit an RFP, please contact us at 800-555-6290 or [Sales@SeeMonterey.com](mailto:Sales@SeeMonterey.com).

**MeetInMonterey.com**

BIG SUR | CARMEL-BY-THE-SEA | CARMEL VALLEY | DEL REY OAKS | MARINA | MONTEREY | MOSS LANDING  
PACIFIC GROVE | PEBBLE BEACH | SALINAS | SALINAS VALLEY | SAND CITY | SEASIDE