

BAY AREA SPOTLIGHT  
BEST BURGERS, CITY WINERIES

# Sunset

LIVING IN THE WEST

## 20 Best Coastal Weekends

From Little River to La Jolla, the unforgettable escapes to take this fall

Shhhh...  
Find this tiny gem of an island in Washington's San Juans P. 36



FISH TACO  
NIRVANA  
GRILLED BAJA-STYLE,  
MEDITERRANEAN...  
EVEN JAPANESE!

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TOP 10 "UNPLUGGED" ISLAND VACATIONS

SEPTEMBER 2010

\$4.99US \$6.50CAN



Sunset.com

Stay

## Back to the ranch

10 things to do (besides golf and tennis) at Carmel Valley Ranch

BY LISA TROTTER | PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERIN KUNKEL



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THE BIGGEST LOCAL hotel opening of the year is the splashy September 1 reboot of Carmel Valley Ranch. You probably think of it as that golf-y, tennis-y, clubby spread trailing across the hillside on your right as you cruise up Carmel Valley Road. But with a fresh \$35 million poured into the place, it's now got a swinging style and a playful side that just won't quit.

INFO From \$350; [carmelvalleyranch.com](http://carmelvalleyranch.com)



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1 Hike a half-mile into the tawny hills to do yoga under ancient oaks.

2 Help harvest a few of the 6,000 lavender plants to be distilled into essential oils.

3 Steep in the hot pool with peekaboo views through the oak branches down to the just-planted vineyard.

4 Peer at the stars through telescopes set up on the 19th green.

5 Zip on a thick suit to help the beekeeper pull slats of honeycomb dripping with honeybees from the hive.

6 Play a round of bocce with friends.

7 Gather around a fire to hear sea stories from a local who's a former Navy admiral, or tribal tales from a member of the Ohlone Costanoan people.

8 Pick veggies and herbs in the organic garden, then cook them up for dinner in the made-for-guests Adventure Kitchen, where chef Tim Woods will offer handy prep and cooking tips as you chop, sauté, and roast away.



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9 Drop off the kids to stage a play or go on a bug hunt while you have a civilized meal of Angus strip with chimichurri sauce or Sonoma duck in the lounge.

10 Not checking in? Stop by anyway for a massage, swim, and a poolside cocktail or two. ■