



Good Times Travel

Monterey & Carmel Christmas by Rail

Featuring a Single-Hotel Stay in Monterey, 17-Mile Drive, Steinbeck Center, Steinbeck Home, *Coast Starlight* Train
December 16-19, 2024 – 4 Day Tour

Tour Highlights

- ◆ Enjoy a three-night single-hotel stay in the heart of Old Monterey at a bayfront, AAA Four Diamond hotel adjacent to Fisherman's Wharf and decked out for the holidays
- ◆ Enjoy a relaxing, five-hour rail journey along California's spectacular coastline aboard Amtrak's *Coast Starlight* train, featuring an observation car offering unparalleled views
- ◆ Join a local guide for an in-depth tour of the Monterey Peninsula highlighting Cannery Row, Pacific Grove and sights along the picturesque 17-Mile Drive
- ◆ Visit the National Steinbeck Center and enjoy an included high tea lunch at the Steinbeck House – the beautifully restored Victorian home that was John Steinbeck's boyhood home
- ◆ Visit the famed Monterey Bay Aquarium where you can get up-close with sea otters, penguins, sharks and jellyfish
- ◆ Enjoy time at leisure exploring the charming boutiques and galleries in Carmel-by-the-Sea and the Danish village of Solvang



Lone Cypress on 17-Mile Drive

Tour Inclusions

- ◆ 3 Nights deluxe hotel accommodations
- ◆ 5 Meals – 2 lunches, 3 breakfasts
- ◆ Services of a professional GTT tour director
- ◆ Comprehensive sightseeing with a local guide
- ◆ Admissions per itinerary
- ◆ Transportation aboard a deluxe motorcoach and Amtrak's *Coast Starlight* Train
- ◆ Luggage handling throughout the tour

Tour Prices

Double Occupancy: \$1,299 per person
Single Occupancy (no roommate): Add \$400



Steinbeck House



Coast Starlight Train



Solvang



Portola Hotel & Spa

Reservations



17132 Magnolia St., Fountain Valley, CA 92708
California Seller of Travel License #: 2018390-40

Accommodations

- ◆ Nights 1-3 **Portola Hotel & Spa**
Monterey, CA

Departure Information

Join this tour from one of our convenient departure points available in these cities:

- ◆Fountain Valley ◆Laguna Hills ◆Long Beach
- Approximate Departure Time: 7-9 a.m.
Approximate Return Time: 6-8 p.m.

Payment Information

- ◆ Full payment due at time of booking
- ◆ Payment may be made by mailing a check to the above address or making a credit card payment at www.goodtimestravel.com

Cancellation/Travel Protection

A travel protection policy (which includes cancellation protection and other benefits) is highly recommended and available through a third-party. A travel protection brochure will be provided with your payment receipt and invoice. Regardless of the reason, cancellations, credits and transfers of paid bookings require us to retain an administrative fee (ranging from \$50-\$500 depending on the date of cancellation) in addition to all non-recoverable fees paid to our tour suppliers on your behalf. Those guests who have purchased travel protection and must cancel for a covered reason, will be reimbursed by the travel protection company the balance of any non-refunded or credited monies (minus the premium itself). Visit www.goodtimestravel.com or see our tour catalog for our full cancellation policy and other terms and conditions.

Adjustments to the Itinerary

While we make every effort to operate our tours as advertised, should we be forced to adjust the itinerary prior to departure or while on tour, these changes will be communicated to you and only done when absolutely necessary.

Tour Pace & Activity Level



Visit our website for further explanation of what each of these designations means to assist you in determining which tour is right for you based on your physical abilities and the pacing you prefer.

Itinerary

On this holiday escape to the Monterey Peninsula, we'll not only discover the cypress groves, historic towns, early California history and exceptional stories that make the Monterey Peninsula so special, but do it at a magical time of year when it's delightfully decorated for the holidays. Join us as we travel along the coast by train, enjoy a single-hotel stay in the heart of Old Monterey, and appreciate this region that celebrates the holiday season with beautiful lights, fairy tale-like decor and the simple pleasures like a cup of hot cocoa with an ocean view.

Day 1 – Coastal Train Ride

We set out from our departure points this morning aboard a deluxe motorcoach and travel to downtown Los Angeles' Union Station to board Amtrak's **Coast Starlight train** for a memorable, **five-hour rail journey** along California's spectacular coastline and through its fertile valleys to San Luis Obispo. We'll travel along Point Conception and through Vandenberg Space Force Base where you'll see the launch complexes and beautiful undeveloped coastline which is only visible by train. We'll enjoy an included boxed lunch onboard along with a snack bar selling snacks and drinks. Enjoy the relaxing ride in your reclining seat or check out the view from the observation car featuring windows that stretch up to the ceiling offering unparalleled and expansive views. Upon arrival in San Luis Obispo, we'll reboard our motorcoach and continue north to the Monterey Peninsula. We'll enjoy a three-night stay at the **Portola Hotel & Spa**, a AAA Four Diamond bayfront hotel decked out for the holidays and situated adjacent to **Monterey's Fisherman's Wharf** in Old Monterey. Enjoy the balance of the evening at leisure with dinner on your own at the hotel or a nearby restaurant. (Lunch)

Day 2 – 17-Mile Drive, Carmel-by-the-Sea

This morning we'll join a local guide for a comprehensive area tour. Wrapped by the Pacific Ocean on three sides, the Monterey Peninsula is often described as "the greatest meeting of land and sea." For centuries, artists, poets, explorers and novelists have been drawn to the rugged beauty here – from the crashing surf to the towering redwoods to the unspoiled wildlife. On this in-depth driving tour, we'll travel through historic **Old Monterey, Cannery Row, Pacific Grove** and along the famed **17-Mile Drive**. One of the most picturesque drives in the world, 17-Mile Drive is an enchanting journey full of dramatic coastal cliffs, snow-white beaches and mystical forests. Along the way, we'll encounter such spectacular sights as **The Lone Cypress, Bird Rock**, celebrity homes and the world-renowned **Pebble Beach Golf Links**. Enjoy time at leisure for lunch on your own and browsing in the charming seaside town of **Carmel-by-the-Sea**. This town that deftly straddles the balance point of rich history and new wealth, features great restaurants, boutiques and galleries. The setting is even more magical at Christmastime, when the adorable shops, inns and cafés are delightfully decorated for the holidays. We return to the hotel with the balance of the evening at leisure. (Breakfast)

Day 3 – "Steinbeck Country," Monterey Peninsula

This morning we'll travel to the **Salinas Valley**, often referred to as "Steinbeck Country." The agriculturally rich area is where John Steinbeck grew up and drew inspiration for his most famous novels like *East of Eden*. In John Steinbeck's hometown of **Salinas**, we'll enjoy time at leisure to discover Steinbeck's world through interactive, multi-sensory exhibits and rare artifacts at the **National Steinbeck Center**. This afternoon we'll enjoy an included **high tea lunch** at **The Steinbeck House**, Steinbeck's birthplace and boyhood home. This restored Queen Anne Victorian built in 1897 is charmingly decorated for the holidays. We return to Monterey this afternoon with time at leisure to browse Monterey's historic Cannery Row and take advantage of included admission to the world-famous **Monterey Bay Aquarium**. The former sardine cannery located on the ocean's edge of Cannery Row boasts spectacular coastal views and sets the standard for aquariums around the world because of its immersive exhibits and ability to present marine life on a truly grand scale. Get up-close and personal with 35,000 sea creatures representing over 550 marine species including sea otters, penguins, sharks, jellyfish and thousands of other marine animals and plants. We return to the hotel with the balance of the evening at leisure. (Breakfast, Lunch)

Day 4 – Solvang, Journey Home

This morning we'll travel south by motorcoach to San Luis Obispo and visit the eclectic and historic **Madonna Inn**, the California landmark that features a timeless elegance, whimsical décor and is beautifully decorated for the holidays! In the **Santa Ynez Valley** we'll travel the backroads to the quaint Danish town of **Solvang**, known as one of the most "Christmassy Small Towns in America." Enjoy time at leisure with lunch on your own in this very walkable village that is in the midst of their month-long, Julefest celebration extraordinaire! Delight in the old-world architecture, windmills and gaslights, all beautifully decorated for Christmas. Explore more than 100 one-of-a-kind shops including high-end boutiques, European imports, art galleries and bakeries selling fresh-made Danish Aebleskivers, shortbread cookies and kringles! We continue south, returning to our drop-off points this evening with many fond memories of our holiday getaway to the Monterey Peninsula. (Breakfast)