



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 14-17, 2026 – 4 Day Tour

## Tour Highlights

- ◆ Settle in for a relaxing, five-hour rail journey with an included boxed lunch aboard Amtrak's premier *Coast Starlight* train, offering unparalleled views of California's spectacular coastline and fertile valleys from its observation car featuring floor-to-ceiling windows
- ◆ Savor a three-night stay at a bayfront, AAA Four Diamond hotel in the heart of Old Monterey, decked out for the holiday season
- ◆ Join a knowledgeable local guide for an in-depth driving tour of the Monterey Peninsula featuring Cannery Row, Pacific Grove and sights along picturesque 17-Mile Drive
- ◆ Tour the National Steinbeck Center and savor an included high tea lunch at the Steinbeck House – the beautifully restored Victorian home that was John Steinbeck's boyhood home
- ◆ Get up-close with marine life with an optional visit to the Monterey Bay Aquarium
- ◆ 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



Steinbeck House



Coast Starlight Train

## 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 \$600



Solvang



Portola Hotel & Spa



## Make a Booking



www.goodtimestravel.com

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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 by making a credit card payment at [www.goodtimestravel.com](http://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 \$100-\$600 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](http://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

*Escape to the Monterey Peninsula on this festive, four-day getaway highlighted by a ride aboard the Coast Starlight train, rich literary history, and breathtaking coastal scenery. Settle in for a three-night stay at an upscale bayfront hotel in Old Monterey, delightfully dressed for the holidays and just steps from historic Fisherman's Wharf. We'll wander through the storybook charm of Carmel-by-the-Sea and Solvang, step into the world of John Steinbeck with a high tea lunch at his Victorian boyhood home, and take in the dramatic views along 17-Mile Drive. Perfectly paced, this coastal holiday retreat offers the perfect blend of seasonal magic, coastal beauty and the simple pleasures – like sipping a cup of hot cocoa with an ocean view.*

### Day 1 – Coastal Train Ride (Monday, December 14)

From our departure points this morning we'll travel aboard a deluxe motorcoach to downtown Los Angeles' Union Station. *All aboard* Amtrak's renowned **Coast Starlight train** for a spectacular, **five-hour rail journey** along California's dramatic coastline and through its fertile valleys. We'll travel along Point Conception and through Vandenberg Space Force Base, offering views of launch complexes and pristine, undeveloped coastline only visible by train. Enjoy an included boxed lunch onboard, with additional snacks and drinks available for purchase in the snack bar. Relax in your reclining seat or check out the view from the **Observation Car** (all group seats and observation car seats are located on the upper level of the train with stairs required), featuring floor-to-ceiling panoramic windows providing unparalleled views. Upon arrival in San Luis Obispo, we'll reboard our motorcoach and continue north to the Monterey Peninsula. Settle in for a relaxing three-night stay at the **Portola Hotel & Spa**, a AAA Four Diamond hotel fully decked out for the holidays. Located in the heart of Old Monterey, this bayfront hotel is situated adjacent to **Monterey's Fisherman's Wharf**. 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 (Tuesday, December 15)

Following an included breakfast at the hotel, we'll join a local guide for an immersive exploration of the Monterey Peninsula. 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 wind our way through the storied streets of historic **Old Monterey** and **Cannery Row** before heading into the coastal beauty of **Pacific Grove**. We'll travel along world-famous **17-Mile Drive**, an enchanting route that weaves through mystical forests and along dramatic cliffs, offering glimpses of snow-white beaches. Along the way, we'll encounter spectacular sights like the iconic **Lone Cypress**, **Bird Rock**, celebrity homes and the legendary fairways of **Pebble Beach Golf Links**. This afternoon we'll arrive in the "fairytale" village of **Carmel-by-the-Sea**. Enjoy time at leisure to wander its hidden courtyards, browse its high-end galleries and enjoy lunch on your own in one of its great eateries. 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," Cannery Row (Wednesday, December 16)

This morning we'll travel into the fertile **Salinas Valley**, famously known as "Steinbeck Country." This vibrant, agricultural region served as the childhood backdrop and primary inspiration for Nobel laureate John Steinbeck's classic novels including *East of Eden*. Upon arriving in his hometown of **Salinas**, we'll explore the **National Steinbeck Center**, where interactive, multi-sensory exhibits and rare artifacts bring his literary world to life. We'll then gather for an included **high tea lunch at The Steinbeck House**, Steinbeck's birthplace and boyhood home. Built in 1897, this beautifully restored Queen Anne Victorian will be dressed in festive holiday decor. Later, we'll return to Monterey for an afternoon at your own pace along historic Cannery Row or a return to the hotel. Or, take advantage of an optional visit to the world-renowned **Monterey Bay Aquarium** for an additional \$50 per person (inclusive of taxes, fees; payable at the time of booking). Situated right on the water's edge, this former sardine cannery sets the global standard for marine conservation with its awe-inspiring, large-scale habitats. Enjoy approximately three hours at leisure to explore interactive exhibits and get up close with sea otters, penguins, sharks, jellyfish, and a vast array of coastal wildlife. (Breakfast, Lunch)

### Day 4 – Solvang, Journey Home (Thursday, December 17)

This morning we'll travel south by motorcoach to the historic **Madonna Inn** to admire its famous, delightfully whimsical holiday decorations. We'll continue along the backroads of the **Santa Ynez Valley** to the charming Danish village of **Solvang**, celebrated as one of the most "Christmassy Small Towns in America." Enjoy time at leisure with lunch on your own in this walkable village that features old-world architecture, windmills and gaslights. We'll continue south returning to our drop-off points this evening with fond memories of our Monterey and Carmel holiday getaway. (Breakfast)

*While a rare occurrence, should Amtrak cancel the Coast Starlight train, an Amtrak Surfliner train will be substituted, or a sit-down lunch at a Santa Barbara restaurant will be added in lieu of the boxed lunch.*