

805 LIVING

Give Thanks Give Back



By Erin Rottman

A LANDMARK REBORN ON EAST BEACH

When it first opened in 1931, Vista Mar Monte Hotel helped transform Santa Barbara's East Beach from an industrial area to a tourist destination and became a social hub of the community with dinner dances, performances by the house orchestra, and tango exhibitions and lessons. Honoring the name and reputation is the newly renovated and rebranded **Mar Monte Hotel** (marmontehotel.com, from \$299), which opened in August as a Hyatt property.

"We want to be that place in the community that is not only for visitors but is also a local landmark," says general manager Ingrid Braun. The 200-room property features Café Lido, a casual poolside spot offering a weekday happy hour with \$2 oysters, and Costa Kitchen & Bar, a pop-up on the oceanfront terrace with a mezze station and dinner menu. Book two nights and receive a third night free with any reservation made before November 22.



An open-air, oceanfront terrace awaits locals and visitors to Mar Monte Hotel, a remake of a historic Santa Barbara social hub.



A new map of the San Luis Obispo County segment of Highway 1 points to activities, historic sites, and trails with ocean views, such as the mile-long, dog-friendly Fiscalini Ranch Preserve Bluff Trail.

IN SIGHTS ON HIGHWAY 1

Katie Sturtevant had lived on the Central Coast for more than 15 years before she realized that a shipwrecked fishing boat lies offshore at Estero Bluffs State Park in Cayucos. Sturtevant hopes that the recently launched **Coastal Discovery Trail** (highway1discoveryroute.com/coastal-discovery-trail), a map she helped build of beaches, trails, activities, and historic sites, will guide both locals and visitors to discover the treasures along the Highway 1 Discovery Route, a stretch of the iconic roadway that traverses unincorporated areas of San Luis Obispo County.

The map includes a legend indicating which locations and activities are appropriate for social distancing, families, and pets. "We're really gearing it to nature and wildlife," Sturtevant says. Highlights include seaweed foraging tours offered by Paso Robles purveyor Marley Family Seaweeds and the Fiscalini Ranch Preserve Bluff Trail, which winds along 20- to 40-foot-tall seaside cliffs in Cambria and is named for the family that owned the land around it for almost 100 years.

NEW-SCHOOL ACCOMMODATIONS

Some parents can't imagine helping their child solve an algebra equation, while others may be worried about kids stuck in the bedroom with online learning for weeks at a time. Offering a change of scenery for families—and the ability for parents



to ski while the kids are in school— Montage Hotels & Resorts has launched **Montage Academy** (montagehotels.com, academy from \$175/day or \$725/week), a monitored study hall for students based on the start and end times of their local home schools.

"School is back in session, but you're not stuck at home," says Jason Herthel, president and COO of Montage Hotels & Resorts. Available at Montage Deer Valley in Park City, Utah, and Montage Laguna Beach, among others, the program includes lunch and snacks, movement breaks offered by Spa Montage, daily electives like art and hiking, and access to virtual tutoring in more than 180 subjects through The Princeton Review's tutor.com. Safety guidelines like social distancing, face coverings, and sanitization are enforced. At Montage Deer Valley, book at least 45 days in advance to receive 15 percent off best available room rates.

FROM TOP: COURTESY OF HIGHWAY 1 DISCOVERY ROUTE; MAR MONTE HOTEL; MONTAGE INTERNATIONAL

ON A MISSION IN SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO

Seventy-two Mission olive trees were planted on the grounds of the new Inn at the Mission San Juan Capistrano (innatthemissionsjc.com, from \$309), which overlooks the ruins of the mission's historic Great Stone Church. "An olive branch signifies peace and friendship," says general manager Pam Ryan.

The three buildings that make up the inn each represent a different architectural style from the area's history: Spanish Revival, Monterey, and adobe. The signature restaurant, Ysidora, is named for Doña Ysidora Pico de Forster, whose husband purchased the mission in the 1840s. Featuring a wood-fire oven, it serves flame-kissed meats and vegetables and updated versions of classic Spanish cuisine, such as smoked persimmon salad with vegan ricotta and salt-cured whole fish. When pandemic restrictions allow, olive oil tastings are held in the olive grove courtyard. Guests will know it's time for tasting when the mission bells ring at 6 p.m.



FARM FOCUS IN SAN LUIS OBISPO

During the quiet of the coronavirus lock down, Pattea Torrence, owner of Bee's Knees Fruit Farm (beeskneesfruitfarm.com, from \$325,) near downtown San Luis Obispo, noticed that leaves from different kinds of trees made distinct sounds in the breeze. To that point, Torrence



COZY CAMPING NEAR SOUTH LAKE TAHOE

On the eastern slope of the Sierra Nevada south of Lake Tahoe, Wylder Hope Valley (wylderhotels.com/hope-valley, from \$200) makes camping comfy in the winter with its new yurts, vintage Spartan trailer, and restored cabins. Except for one that's off the grid, the yurts are fully furnished with modern bathrooms, gas fireplaces, and plenty of windows for natural light, while cabins, complete with kitchens and living room areas, can house up to eight people. Both Kirkwood Mountain Resort and Grover Hot Springs State Park are about a 15-mile drive away, but guests can stay at the 165-acre resort to enjoy meals at Sorensen's Café, get supplies at the General Store, and relax in the wood-fired sauna.



In addition to cabins and a restored trailer, new yurts let guests stay close to nature at Wylder Hope Valley in the Sierra Nevada.

says, "Staying on a farm makes people feel grounded, more in tune with nature."

The property's farmhouse-turned-guesthouse accommodates up to six people on two levels that can be locked off from each other. Guests may bring food and are welcome to make themselves feel at home in the kitchen. Catered meals can be organized for a private dinner served on vintage china in the apple orchard. ♦

A crystal chandelier and a French country table bring the rustic-romantic aesthetic of the restored three-bedroom farmhouse at Bee's Knees Fruit Farm out to a wraparound porch overlooking the parcel on which fruit trees and assorted berries grow.