

LEISURE / TRAVEL / BUDGET TRAVEL

A meditative weekend escape to Pacific Grove

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Pacific Grove Coastline

Beverly Mann

Pacific Grove's coastal trail creates the perfect setting for a meditative walk, while inhaling fresh ocean air along windswept cypresses and craggy rock formations. Just a 2 1/2 -hour drive from San Francisco, this jewel of a city sits cushioned between Monterey and Pebble Beach with a small population of approximately 15,000. **Pacific Grove** beckons thousands of butterflies to the fragrant eucalyptus trees at the **Monarch Butterfly Sanctuary**, from November to February, as well as tourists worldwide.

In 1875, the area evolved from a Methodist summer retreat, with tents set up, to a cozy colony of small cottages which then grew into elaborate Victorians. Today, the enc

Victorian homes and Old World hospitality add to the comfort and charm of historic properties (which includes eight Bed & Breakfasts)-- quite impressive than three square miles.

A Comfy Stay

One of the oldest-running historic B&Bs, **Martine Inn**, is a perfect spot to be stretches and breathing. From the bedroom window, one can indulge in ey oceanscape, while entranced by sounds of crashing waves and seagulls. T has other nooks and crannies for a soulful escape with its landscaped cour  0:00 / 0:00 a wide variety of roses and a quiet library, artfully stocked with English classics and current popular titles.

Owner Don Martine, a 79-year-old racecar driver with an impressive collection of 12 MGTC classic cars, winning at least 25 races from here to New York, takes pride in his pristine establishment which also touts another precious collection of silver pieces dating from the 1800s to 1910.

“We tried to create in each room an atmosphere as if the visitor was invited to a wealthy person’s home during the 1820s to 1920s. Individual rooms represent different periods and styles— featuring Art Deco to Eastlake, and an Edith Head room with her own personal furnishings,” states Martine.

The nearby **Seven Gables Inn** also offers an ocean view, with cozy to over-sized accommodations, some adorned with handcarved, antique, four-poster beds. The feeling is like stepping back into time away from everyday stress and modern technologies.

Dining Experiences

The architecture and history abound in this colorful city, which also touts first-rate restaurants, such as **Passionfish**, voted best restaurant in Monterey County, and the famed **Fandango** specializing in steaks, seafood, paella, and pasta. The recently opened **Beach House** at Lover’s Point appears to be the best dinner deals in town for the 5:00 dinner special, with portion sizes enough for two. The seafood salad literally overflows with shrimp, scallops, and crab.

A Yoga Workout

Work off a good meal by a stroll along the ocean path or stretch and relax at the recently built **Seaside Yoga Sanctuary** in the heart of downtown Pacific Grove at 300 Grand & Laurel Streets. Owner Laura McKinnon opened her first studio in 2007, and now has three thriving

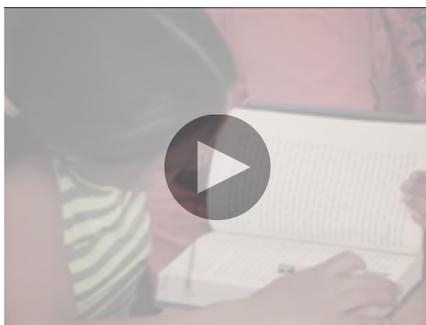
studios offering a vast variety of some 90 classes a week. Her vision and purpose is to confirm that “yoga is for everyone” and is accessible for all levels, from new students to the seasoned practitioner.

For the ultimate peace and tranquility, take a final hike along the dramatic Pacific coastline of the 107-acre **Asilomar State Beach and Conference Grounds**. There are overnight stays and deals within the historic Julia Morgan buildings.

For more information on Pacific Grove, visit the amicable **Pacific Grove Chamber of Commerce** at **584 Central Avenue**, for brochures and walking tour maps to meander along the colorful shops and eateries near downtown and beyond.

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