

TRAVELER



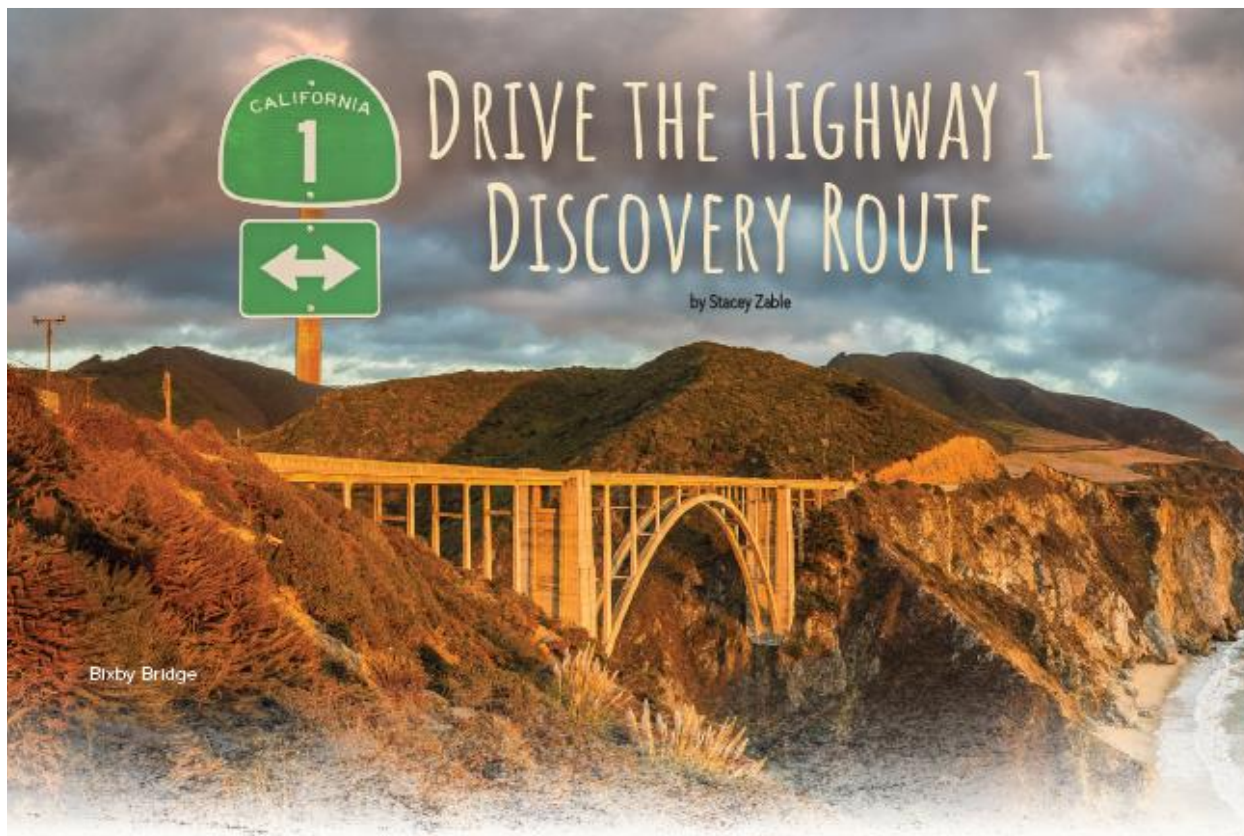
IDEAS, TIPS AND ADVENTURES FROM AAA

FALL 2021



*Escape
the ordinary*

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DRIVE THE HIGHWAY 1 DISCOVERY ROUTE

by Stacey Zable

Bixby Bridge

GOING RETRO

Cayucos, a 15-mile drive south from Cambria, is a retro beach town that immediately transports visitors to a simpler time. The drive between Cayucos and Cambria offers views on both sides, with open space between the two towns. Green rolling hills dotted with cattle and sometimes goats grazing on the hillside can be seen to the east, while looking west rewards with beautiful ocean vistas.

Once in Cayucos, walk the small two-block downtown area and follow the delicious smells of fresh-baked goodies to the sisters-owned Brown Butter Cookie Company. The original brown butter sea salt, their version of the shortbread cookie, is the most popular. Walk off the calories with a stroll along the pier or along the walkable beach. The small Ruddell's Smokehouse near the pier is the place for grab-and-go fresh smoked fish tacos.



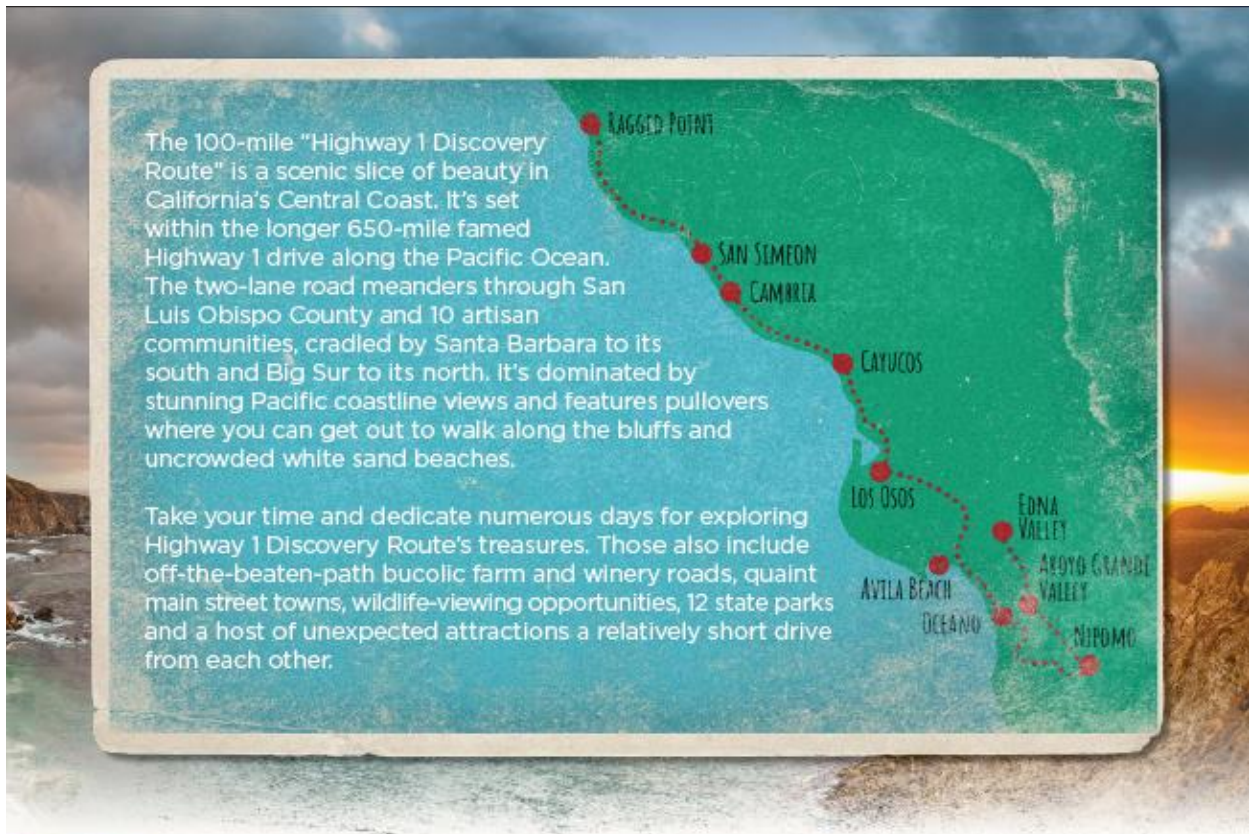
ARTISTIC DRAW

Offering its own quaint downtown with no chain stores, Cambria's East and West Village along Main Street is home to restaurants, tasting rooms and an assortment of artist galleries and shops. A self-guided walking tour highlights 28 historic landmarks and architecture that date back to the late 1800s. A must-try is Linn's



olalieberry pie, available, along with other pies, preserves and much more, at Linn's Restaurant on Main Street and Linn's Easy As Pie Shop & Café and Linn's Gourmet Goods on Bridge Street.

Head to Cambria's Moonstone Beach for dinner. The Boardwalk lines the bluffs of the beach and there are stairs down to the sands in certain sections. It's popular to walk the Boardwalk and then eat at Sea



The 100-mile "Highway 1 Discovery Route" is a scenic slice of beauty in California's Central Coast. It's set within the longer 650-mile famed Highway 1 drive along the Pacific Ocean. The two-lane road meanders through San Luis Obispo County and 10 artisan communities, cradled by Santa Barbara to its south and Big Sur to its north. It's dominated by stunning Pacific coastline views and features pullovers where you can get out to walk along the bluffs and uncrowded white sand beaches.

Take your time and dedicate numerous days for exploring Highway 1 Discovery Route's treasures. Those also include off-the-beaten-path bucolic farm and winery roads, quaint main street towns, wildlife-viewing opportunities, 12 state parks and a host of unexpected attractions a relatively short drive from each other.



Chest Oyster Bar. Part of the experience is getting to the restaurant early before it opens for dinner to line up with beach chairs for an impromptu happy hour with your own wine and appetizers while you wait. No reservations or credit cards are accepted at the restaurant.

Landmark includes the magnificent Casa Grande main house and its world-class art collection. There are multiple tour options available, but the one-hour Grand Rooms Tour is recommended for first-time visitors. Stop also at the Hearst Ranch Winery to pair bay views with a glass of wine.

A KINGDOM ON THE HILL

Dedicate a full day to exploring the Hearst Castle, 10 miles north of Cambria in San Simeon. The drive hugging the coastline offers pullouts along the way to enjoy the view or hike to the bluffs. Looking east along the rolling hills, you might spot a herd of zebra near the highway.

William Randolph Hearst's incredible estate of 165 rooms and 123 acres of gardens, terraces, pools and walkways sits on a hill overlooking the Pacific Ocean. It was designed by architect Julia Morgan and built between 1919 and 1947 on Hearst's land that spans more than 250,000 acres. The National Historic





San Simeon

COASTAL WILDLIFE AND HISTORY

The next day, drive six miles north of Cambria and follow the signs to the Piedras Blancas Elephant Seal Rookery, where most of the year you can view thousands of elephant seals in their natural habitat on the beach just off Highway 1 year-round. The 3.8-mile roundtrip Boucher Trail leads from the rookery past the historic Piedras Blancas Light Station built in 1875. The cove-filled trail also provides additional lookout points to see more elephant seals that are not on the main beach. There is an organized tour that can get you closer to the light station.



BEACHSIDE PROMENADE AND WINERIES

The part-coastal/part-back roads 44-mile route from Cambria south to Avila Beach weaves through Baywood and Los Osos then intersects with Highway 101 to Avila Beach. The drive passes rolling pastures dotted with cows and majestic peaks through the towns of Harmony, Cayucos and Morro Bay. Once there, dedicate a day to pure California beach life along Avila Beach's long white sands with calm waters. Choose to take in its beauty simply relaxing or head out on the water via kayak or paddleboard. The pedestrian-only Avila Beach Promenade sits along Front Street.

Your second day in the southern part of the route can be spent discovering some of the more than 30 wineries in the Edna and Arroyo Grande Valleys, about 10 to 15 miles from Avila Beach depending on which winery you are visiting. The stunning hillside wine region located about five miles from the coast grows many varieties, but is best known for its pinot noir and chardonnay. [T](#)

Photos courtesy of California Highway Discovery Route.



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