

# Route 1 - San Luis Obispo North Coast Byway

The San Luis Obispo North Coast Byway provides an extraordinary experience. The unique geographic sections of the corridor offer a mosaic of experiences. From Hearst Castle, to Morro Estuary and the Pacific, to the outdoor recreation of hiking, biking, and kayaking, the corridor offers something for everyone.



Length: 57 miles / 91.2 km

Time One hour to drive or two  
to hours to see the entire

Allow: byway.

## Local Information

**San Luis Obispo County Visitors  
Bureau**

805-541-8000

## Visitor Services



### Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities

The byway corridor offers incredible opportunities for hiking and bicycling. Route 1 is a popular route for dedicated cyclists who ride long distances on the Central Coast. Many even ride the entire stretch between San Luis Obispo and Monterey. There are currently pedestrian and cyclist trails along portions of the byway. These trails allow the walker to stroll leisurely along and the visitor to enjoy the great scenery and sunset views the byway offers. Bike lanes exist from the City of San Luis Obispo to Hearst Castle. It should be noted that, in many areas of the byway, bike lanes and shoulders are absent. This primarily becomes a problem in the northern area of the corridor, as the byway enters the very narrow and circuitous journey along the cliffs of the Santa Lucia Range. While the sight distance improves as the byway travels south between Arroyo de la Cruz and Hearst Castle, the section still lacks the shoulders present south of Hearst Castle.



### Camping

There are places to camp along this byway.



### Food

There are places to buy food along this byway.



**Gasoline**

Gasoline is available.



**Lodging**

There is overnight lodging along this byway.



**Phone**

Public phones are available along this byway.



**Restrooms**

There are toilet facilities along this byway.

**Special Considerations**

Temporary seasonal closures are typically expected each year north of San Luis Obispo County. These closures occur most often along the rugged Big Sur Coast during heavy rainfall months.

# Map and Directions



## Legend:

Point of Interest	Campground	Featured Byway	Water	State Border
Park	Picnic/Rest Area	America's Byways	Wildlife Refuge	Urban Area
Mountain	Interstate	Other Byway	Wilderness Area	Tribal Nation
City	U.S. Highway	Other Road	Other Federal Lands	Military Base
Capital	State Highway	Trail	Other State Lands	

## Driving Directions

- Start in San Luis Obispo, CA on Santa Rosa St.
- Drive northwest on Santa Rosa St.

- Continue north as the road changes to State Hwy. 1/Cabrillo Hwy.
- End at the San Luis Obispo county line, north of Ragged Point Vista.

### Getting to the Byway



#### Nearby airports

**Oakland International Airport, CA** (183 miles / 294.51 km, 3 hours 42 minutes)


**Start:**  Airport Drive at Oakland International Airport  
N 37.713° W 122.213° [?]

**Directions:**

- Head southeast on Airport Drive.
- Continue onto 98th Avenue.
- Merge onto I-880 S via the ramp to San Jose.
- Take exit 4B to merge onto US-101 S toward Los Angeles.
- Take the ramp to Monterey/ Peninsula.
- Merge onto CA-156 W.
- Continue onto CA-1 S for approximately 91 miles until you reach the northern end of the byway.

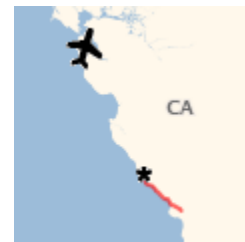
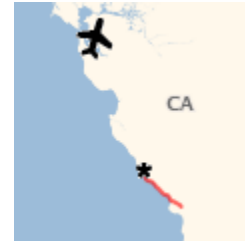
**Junction with byway:** \* Northern end of the byway  
N 35.793° W 121.341° [?]

**San Francisco International Airport, CA** (184 miles / 296.12 km, 3 hours 44 minutes)

**Start:**  S McDonnell Rd & S Link Rd, San Francisco, CA 94128  
N 37.617° W 122.388° [?]

**Directions:**

- Merge onto US-101 south.
- Merge onto CA-156.
- Merge onto CA-1 south.
- Route 1-Big Sur Coast Highway begins on CA-1 in the city of Carmel-By-The-Sea.

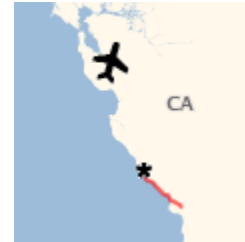


- Continue along Route 1 until you reach the Monterey County Line near Ragged Point, where the byway begins.

**Junction with byway:** \* Monterey County Line  
N 35.793° W 121.341° [?]

**San Jose International Airport, CA** (154 miles / 247.84 km, 3 hours 20 minutes)

**Start:** ✈ Terminal Drive at the San Jose International Airport  
N 37.367° W 121.926° [?]



**Directions:**

- Head southeast on Terminal Drive toward Airport Pkwy.
- Continue onto Airport Blvd.
- Continue onto Angelo Way.
- Turn left at Airport Blvd.
- Turn right to merge onto CA-87 S toward I-280/Downtown.
- Take exit 1A for State 85 S toward Gilroy.
- Merge onto CA-85 S.
- Merge onto US-101 S.
- Take the ramp to Monterey/ Peninsula.
- Merge onto CA-156 W.
- Merge onto CA-1 S/Cabrillo Hwy.
- Follow CA-1 S/Cabrillo Hwy until you reach the byway.

**Junction with byway:** \* Northern end of the byway  
N 35.793° W 121.341° [?]

## Road Trip: Coastal wonders along San Luis Obispo North Coast Byway

**Departure:** Mission de San Luis Obispo, California

**Destination:** Ragged Point Vista, California

**Time to allow:** 1 day

In addition to unparalleled coastal scenic views and ocean vistas, you'll find a multitude of historical and cultural sites along the Byway on this journey.

### Day 1

- **Start: Mission de San Luis Obispo**

One of California's oldest communities, San Luis Obispo has its beginnings in the founding of the Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa in 1772. Today Mission de San Luis Obispo serves as the cultural and literal center of the City.

Mission San Luis Obispo was founded on September 1, 1772 by Father Junipero Serra, Presidente of the California Missions Chain. It was the 5th mission in the 21 mission chain in Alta California. It was named for Saint Louis, Bishop of Toulouse. It is the only mission with an L-shaped church. The mission site was selected as it is midway between San Diego and Monterey. Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa has always been the center of the community. The entire city of San Luis Obispo and even the county was built up around the mission. The mission has been the center and focal point of the city since the very beginning.

- **Stop 2: San Luis Obispo**

**From previous stop:** same location

**Directions:** Located at beginning of Byway.

San Luis Obispo offers two points of interest for byway travelers. The San Luis Obispo Mission and the City's adjoining downtown, and the Historic Railroad District. One of the activities that is most enjoyed by visitors to the Byway is spending a leisurely couple of hours in the downtown and mission plaza, enjoying the creekside walk and bustle of town. The downtown's character makes it one of the more entertaining points of interest in the corridor.

- **Stop 3: Montaña de Oro State Park**

**From previous stop:** same location

**Directions:** From San Luis Obispo take Route 1 to Los Osos, from there head south on Pecho Valley Road.

Montana de Oro State Park is a wave swept, seven-mile long shoreline. It is made up of sandy beaches which split to the north, and rugged cliffs and headlands to the south. Mountain bike, backpack, or hike around the area to get a closer look.

- **Stop 4: Morro Bay**

**From previous stop:** same location

**Directions:** Take Pecho Valley Road back to Los Osos. From there, take South Bay Boulevard to Morro Bay.

Morro Bay allows visitors to enjoy the City's Embarcadero along the water's edge of Morro Bay Harbor. The area's shops, restaurants, and views allow visitors to experience the City's past and present with its thriving fishing culture.

In Morro Bay you'll find the Natural History Museum, the Morro Bay National Estuary, Morro Rock State Forest, Morro Strand State Beach, and the Elfin Forest.

- **Stop 5: Harmony**

**From previous stop:** same location

**Directions:** From Morro Bay get on Route 1 and follow the Byway to Harmony.

Harmony, a tiny community located in the rolling hills of Harmony Valley, is a cultural landmark that resembles much of the area in the late 1800s and the dairy culture that was prevalent at the time. The town is now home to artisans including glassblowers, potters, quilters and other art crafts who sell the products of their talents. The town also offers eateries and wine and cheese tasting. The town draws travelers off of the highway for short stopovers to enjoy what it has to offer.

Representative of "Old California", this small town originally operated as a creamery from 1869 until mid-1955. Although many milk processing plants operated in the area, none operated as long or as successfully as did the Harmony Valley Creamery Association. This cooperative was an integral part of the area for almost 90 years. The Swiss dairy farmers were the backbone and steady influence of the community because they dominated the dairy industry.

- **Stop 6: San Simeon State Park**

**From previous stop:** same location

**Directions:** Continue along byway to just past Cambria.

Consisting of wildlife, riparian and cultural preserves, San Simeon State Park is one of the oldest parks in the state system. Camp out, hike, or enter the kids in the Junior Ranger station.

- **Stop 7: William R. Hearst Memorial State Beach**

**From previous stop:** same location

**Directions:** Continue along the Byway to the State Beach.

The beach is located near the historic town of San Simeon along Highway One and gives visitors the opportunity to hike, swim, fish and beachcomb. A popular beach spot, this protected cove also offers visitors pier fishing and deep-sea fishing from chartered boats. Ocean kayaking is also popular. Picnic tables, barbecue grills and restrooms are available. This day use area offers 24 picnic sites, 150 parking spaces, restrooms, water faucets, barbecue grill stands and easy beach access. Recreational activities include picnicking, swimming, fishing, boating, kayaking and sunbathing. There is a kayak and boogie board concession in operation with equipment for rent.

A festival commemorating the nineteenth-century history of the local area, "A Day in Old San Simeon", is held at the State Beach each year in May.

- **Stop 8: Hearst Castle**



**From previous stop:** same location

**Directions:** Continue along the Byway to San Simeon.

In the Santa Lucia Coastal Range overlooking the Pacific Ocean, Hearst Castle is a magnificent estate of 165 rooms and 127 acres of gardens, terraces, pools and walkways. The castle was once the home of newspaper publisher William Randolph Hearst.

- **Stop 9: Piedras Blancas Lighthouse**

**From previous stop:** same location

**Directions:** Continue along the Byway.

The Piedras Blancas Lighthouse was built in 1874 and first operated in 1875. It remains today as a captivating image of its time.

- **End: Ragged Point Vista**



**From previous stop:** same location

**Directions:** Follow the Byway to the end.

A popular destination for large tour bus groups to stop and stretch their legs, have lunch, and take in the experience of the California Big Sur Coast.

Towering high above the Pacific on a promontory with 400 foot sheer cliffs, Ragged Point offers one of the finest ocean vistas in the world, often called the "Million Dollar View". One of the few places on this coast with a trail down the face of a cliff, it also boasts the largest waterfall on the Big Sur coast.

### Totals for Day 1

**Total Distance Traveled:** 0 miles / 0.0 km

**Total Travel Time:** 0 minutes

**Total Stopping Time:** 0 minutes