



The History Buff's Dream Vacation

One of the greatest things about San Luis Obispo County is how much history it has. Although California is not that old, this county has some of the oldest historical sites in the state. Here is a three day trip that would be a blast and a great learning experience!

Day One:

Before your trip, visit the Hearst Castle [website](#) and book one of the many extraordinary tours at Hearst Castle from a tour of the lush gardens to the architecture of each room. Then, in the morning on day one drive into San Simeon along the beautiful Highway 1 into the north end of San Luis Obispo County. Hearst Castle is one of the most magnificent estates in America, and is also the only castle in California. After an informative and beautiful tour, drive into the quaint town of Cambria.

Distance from San Simeon to Cambria: 12 miles (app. 20 min)

[Cambria](#) is located on the northern coast of the county and is home to many delightful antique shops and restaurants. It is a unique beach city where the Monterey Pine trees meet the sea. Once you arrive in Cambria, walk along Moonstone Beach and through the historical downtown area that is full of one of a kind shops and art galleries. There are many good restaurants to get lunch at like [Cambria Pines Lodge Restaurant](#), [Black Cat Bistro](#), [Robin's Restaurant](#), and [Madeline's Restaurant & Catering](#). Any one of these restaurants is a delicious choice to satisfy your lunch hunger.

Distance from Cambria to Cayucos: 16 miles (app. 25 min)

Next, drive to the beach town of [Cayucos](#). This town is full of antique shops and history from the settling of California. As you stroll along the main street of downtown Cayucos allow yourself to transport back into the 1800s when this was one of the only beach towns on the west coast. You will be drawn to the pristine beaches and the pier that was built in 1871 by James Cass which really launched Cayucos into becoming the town it is today. Mr. Cass also built the historic [Cass House](#) in 1867 that was fully restored in 2007 and now functions as Inn and restaurant. Just walking around the grounds and looking in the lobby is an experience to see something that old (and yes that is old for California) in such pristine condition. There are also many outstanding restaurants in Cayucos that would be the perfect place to end your day including [Hoppe's Garden Bistro & Wine Shop](#), the [Cass House](#) Restaurant, and more!

Day Two:

Distance from Cayucos to Morro Bay: 6 miles (app. 8 min)



In the morning of day two drive the short distance to Morro Bay. This town is full of history dating back to the 1500s with the Spanish settlers. Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo names Morro rock "El Morro" meaning crown shaped mountain in 1542. From then on, Morro Bay was a town reliant on the sea for commerce and transportation. It was not until the late 1800s that roads were made easily accessible and a town blueprint was drawn out and implemented. While you are there, discover the brilliance of the history of this small town and enjoy what it has become through all of the history.

Distance from Morro Bay to San Miguel: 38 miles (app. 45 min)

Next, head out to San Miguel, just north of Paso Robles, to visit [Mission San Miguel](#) as you step back into the late 1700s. The interior of the mission is as it was when it was built; the original paint and pictures are still present, untouched by modern products. You can take a self guided tour or reserve a guided tour ahead of time at museum@missionsanmiguel.org. After you take in the beauty and history of the mission head back southbound on the 101 into Paso Robles.

Distance from San Miguel to Paso Robles: 11 miles (app. 15 min)

[Paso Robles](#) is the heart of wine country on the central coast. It is home to the [California Mid State Fair](#), many wineries, a quaint downtown with a beautiful park in the center of it all, and the historic [Paso Robles Inn](#). Before you select a lunch spot, check out the Paso Robles Inn, there is a history that dates back to the founding of Paso Robles in the late 1800s in the hotel that makes it one of the oldest hotels in California. There is an entire book written about the history of the Inn and how it became what it is today. Paso Robles also has many amazing, one-of-a-kind restaurants that would make the perfect stop for lunch. [Thomas Hill Organics](#) is locally owned by a family who uses all of the produce that they grow on their farm in their restaurant. [Artisan](#) is also a great restaurant that has hearty, flavorful foods sure to fill any hungry stomach. For some down home barbecue try [F. McLintocks Saloon](#). For amazing Italian food try [Il Cortile Ristorante](#). The list goes on with the amazing restaurants in Paso Robles, but the point is, any one that you try will be good. After your delicious lunch, you can wander the streets of downtown Paso Robles and enjoy the small town feel.

Distance from Paso Robles to Atascadero: 13 miles (app. 20 min)

Once you are full and satisfied take a drive to the quaint historic town of [Atascadero](#). Atascadero is a small family oriented town that is growing more every day as they strive to preserve their heritage. One way they do that is with the [Atascadero Historical Society Museum](#) located at 6600 Lewis Avenue. This museum brings you back to an earlier time where life was simple and it was the little things that made you happy. After you step back in time, get back on the road and head to San Luis Obispo.

Distance from Atascadero to San Luis Obispo: 18 miles (app. 20 min)



The first stop in San Luis Obispo ought to be at the [Mission San Luis Obispo de Telosa](#). This mission is the fifth California mission founded by Father Junipero Serra on Sept. 1, 1772. The mission is so integrated into the Downtown San Luis Obispo area that it can often be overlooked. However, this is not a mission that you want to skip out on; there is so much history to be learned about this facility and it is still a functioning parish with over 2,000 active members.

Once you have soaked in the history of the Mission, head over to the [San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden](#) located at 3450 Dairy Creek Road. Their mission is to display the diverse plant life of the Mediterranean climate zones of the world and to provide opportunities for education, recreation, conservation and research. They often have educational events going on throughout the week and weekends that are fun for the whole family! It is a perfect way to end your day just relaxing and enjoying the beauty of the landscape at the garden.

Dinner in San Luis Obispo is open to a multitude of delicious and affordable options. If you are looking for some good, down home, comfort food, try [The Apple Farm Restaurant](#). For more of a healthy, organic, local type of food try something like [Big Sky Cafe](#) or [Novo Restaurant](#). For delicious, authentic, Italian food try any of the following: [Buona Tavola](#), [Café Roma](#), [Palazzo Giuseppe](#), or [Upper Crust Trattoria](#). There are many more delicious restaurants in San Luis Obispo to be discovered but these are some great options to start out with.

Day Three:

The first stop of the day should be at the historic [Jack House](#). The Jack house is a colorful part of California's history that transports visitors back to the Victorian era. This historic house is located at 536 Marsh Street and has been there since the Jack family moved into it almost 90 years ago! The house has been preserved exactly the way it was and you can tour the two beautiful stories during your trip. The Jack House is also known as a beautiful place for a wedding, reception, or any other type of event!

Next, visit [Dallidet Adobe](#) located at 1185 Pacific Street and take a tour of this historical building. The adobe was built in 1859 by Pierre Hypolite Dallidet. In 1870 Pierre was the first commercial vintner on the central coast, growing grapes from his adobe home garden. There is so much more to learn about the family that lived in this adobe and about the history of San Luis Obispo that a tour is well worth the time.

After those informative and magnificent tours, you will have worked up quite an appetite. Before you leave the beautiful Central Coast, the only thing left to do is to enjoy a delectable lunch! Here are some excellent lunch options; [Splash Café – Artisan Bakery](#), [Mama's Meatball](#), [Luna Red](#), and [F. McIntocks Saloon](#). After you have had your amazing lunch and you begin daydreaming of all the wonderful adventures you had while in San Luis Obispo County, get into your car/train/plane and head for home. While on your way home, start planning your next trip to [San Luis Obispo County](#), where we miss you already!