

SANTA BARBARA

THE AMERICAN RIVIERA®

CONFERENCE + VISITORS BUREAU + FILM COMMISSION

STAR SLEEPS: LOUNGE IN LUXURY AND DRINK IN THE AMERICAN RIVIERA® LIFESTYLE WITH A CLASSIC GETAWAY FIT FOR A DREAM

SANTA BARBARA, Calif. — Like a Siren, Santa Barbara lures an impressive “A” list of sybarites, celebrities and seasonal CEOs with its enchanting European lifestyle and 100+ mile stretch of palm-studded Pacific coastline. The epicenter of all things “Riviera,” Santa Barbara’s classic charm, world-class digs and focused culinary style are a heady mix to match. Hollywood found its home here in the early 1900s, followed by a constant stream of luxury rail cars turning out Rockefellers, Vanderbilts and Duponts, as well as an artistic swell of painters, poets and authors who fell under Santa Barbara’s spell. Delve into the region’s film history, lounge like a local or go “off-grid” with a suite at one of the newly-renovated luxury hotel properties — and find your inspiration in this seaside sanctuary.

RED CARPET RELIGION

From the sneak preview of *Gone with the Wind* (1939) to the premiere of *Sideways* (2004), Santa Barbara offers an accessible fix for travelers who relish old and new Hollywood. The **Annual Santa Barbara International Film Festival** (Jan/Feb, www.sbfilmfestival.org) is never short on star wattage. Unlike the legendary Cannes Film Festival, the SBIFF’s screenings, tributes and gala events are open to the public, making a brush with Sean Penn or Charlize Theron at area restaurants or a red carpet walk a reality.

STAR SLEEPS

For a true taste of the celebrity lifestyle, slip out to the **San Ysidro Ranch** — which completes a \$120+ million renovation January/February 2007. Once co-owned by actor Ronald Colman, the Ranch is now driven by Ty Warner who has personally retooled the 540-acre gem’s 40 cottages with one-of-a-kind antiques, hand-cut stone decks, radiant heat flooring, outdoor sunken hot tubs and rain showers. Play like Jackie “O” and bed down in the Kennedy Suite (\$2990), a dream retreat where she and JFK honeymooned in 1953. The lavish remodel of the two master bedroom/bathroom suite features hand-cut stone fireplaces and a lush, hidden deck with full ocean views. The Ranch also reopens its award-winning Stonehouse Restaurant December/2006 with a massive new kitchen and wine cellar.

A stunning Shangri-La tucked into a rural residential area, the ranch has inspired equal parts romance and written word. The guest register reads like a Who’s Who of Hollywood including Gloria Swanson, Natalie Wood, Groucho Marks, Bing Crosby, William Powell and Jean Harlow. John Huston completed the script for *The African Queen* during his three-month stay in the Terrace Cottage. Bank out on the back deck and secure that script deal. In 1940, Sir Laurence Olivier married Vivien Leigh at the stroke of midnight in a rose garden ceremony with Ms. Hepburn as a witness. Gwyneth Paltrow and Coldplay’s Chris Martin hid out in a cottage for their private wedding ceremony in December 2003. Lovebirds Julia Roberts and Danny Moder also honeymooned at the Ranch and J-LO and Marc Anthony paid a visit just weeks after their June 2004 wedding. Advice columnist Ann Landers penned a few rules here, as well. www.sanysidoranch.com

Long a haunt for the rich and cultured, Montecito has been a safe haven for film stars since Charlie Chaplin waddled into town to open the **Montecito Inn** in 1928. Anchoring the celebrity-stocked enclave, the Inn catered to such luminaries as Carole Lombard, Marion Davies and Norma Shearer who lounged locally during the day at Butterfly Beach. Chaplin's private lodgings (#232), a handsome two-bedroom suite featuring a full kitchen and terrace overlooking the Santa Ynez Mountains, are on line for a full renovation set for completion by April/2007. Both guestrooms will be expanded along with the addition of three fireplaces and a luxury alfresco lounge area (\$925). Since 1936 when the Inn inspired Richard Rodgers' love song "There's a Small Hotel," this little haven has seen a steady stream of stars filter through its discrete doorway including Tom Cruise, Jennifer Garner, Will Ferrell, Sandra Bullock and Danny Devito. www.montecitoinn.com

Nearby, the **Four Seasons Resort "The Biltmore" Santa Barbara's** newly minted AAA Five Diamond Award caps a six year, \$250 million renovation with 207 fresh guestrooms and 26 cottage suites, ocean-view Bella Vista restaurant, Ty Lounge and star-studded 10,000 sq. ft. luxury spa. Built as a private mansion in the 1927 by renowned architect Reginald Johnson, the Mediterranean-Spanish Colonial style hacienda boasts 20-acres of prime Pacific turf paired with old world style masonry, new plasma screen televisions, rain showers, soaking tubs and radiant floor heating. Unencumbered views of the ocean are enhanced by new alfresco fire pits, custom water fountains and a stunning lobby ceiling painted with an eclectic collection of Mediterranean designs using eggshell paint and 23 karat gold leaf.

This celebrity haunt has seen it all, from world leaders to big screen actors (including legends like Greta Garbo and Joan Crawford), and today hosts the majority of rock and screen stars performing at the Santa Barbara Bowl and historic Lobero and Arlington theatres. Present day Hollywood "royalty" (including actress Jennifer Aniston) come to escape the frenetic pace of Los Angeles. The resort of choice for pop star Britney Spears, she stayed at the Four Seasons so often, she eventually bought a home in Santa Barbara. If the ready-to-go stainless martini set is any indication, Cottage #5 is certain to shake and stir yearnings for the golden era of cocktails and canapés. Go retro Rock, martini in hand, in this cottage where Hudson married Phyllis Gates in a private ceremony in 1955 (\$2040). Make like a true tycoon and burn a fast track to one of the luxury bungalows. www.fourseasons.com/santabarbara

For the maximum escape from both fame and fortune, spring 2008 marks the rebirth of the historic **El Encanto Hotel**, perched above Mission Santa Barbara in the famed "Riviera" neighborhood. A landmark since 1918, the hotel reflects the true essence of the American Riviera® lifestyle, and the extensive multi-million dollar enhancement and restoration program will deliver 91 guestrooms and suites under the flag as the first Orient-Express Hotel on the West Coast.

A favorite playground to stars including Christina Aguilera, Pamela Anderson, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Gwen Stefani and Billy Bob Thornton, the resort's signature lily pond, lazy swings and brazen views of the Pacific make for a perfect hideaway on seven tropical acres. Bunk in Bab's and James Brolin's favorite room, #322 — the Wishing Well Suite — named for the well marking the entrance. Old Hollywood also had a heyday here with the guest register recalling the likes of Clark Gable, Carole Lombard and Hedy Lamarr.

The "enchanted's" classic Spanish Colonial Revival cottages and California Craftsman buildings will retain their original charm while utilizing many of the original period elements. New to the mix will be a tiered dining terrace and lounge, zero-edge swimming pool, tennis court, scent-infused herb garden and reading and strolling gardens. Five new

classic cottages and a boutique spa/fitness center located beneath the pool will round out this gem of the Pacific. www.elencantohotel.com

A few notable new hotels opened in the region since 2000, and it didn't take long for them to build their own star followings. **Bacara Resort & Spa**, a deluxe hideaway north of Santa Barbara, opened with the wedding reception for "Beverly Hills 90210's" Jennie Garth and Debra Messing ("Will & Grace") honeymooning in the Presidential Suite. You might recognize the Bacara as the setting of Oprah's famed Legends Ball in May 2005. More recently, Jude Law and Sienna Miller and Nick Lachey and Vanessa Minnillo were spotted lounging poolside. Tap into the "Tea For Two" bathtubs for the ultimate romantic tryst. www.bacararesort.com

Comedy loves urban chic over at the **Inn at the Spanish Garden**. The 23 guestrooms and suites set in true Spanish-Mediterranean-style on a secluded residential street are a regular stop for Keisha Knight, Rob Schneider, Eric McCormick, Garrison Keillor, Dave Barry and Julia Louis Dreyfus. This inn is a great mix of cool and cozy, blending interior fireplaces and Frette linens and robes, deep soaking tubs and French press coffee makers. Television personalities Bobby Flay and Huell Howser are also fans, as is cartoonist Gary Trudeau. www.spanishgardeninn.com

The newest addition to the hotel scene, **Hotel Andalucia's** guest list has already seen its share of stars. Annette Bening, David Duchovny, Maggie Grace, Martin Landau and Scott Weiland have dipped into digs at this boutique hotel in the heart of downtown. Guests at Sandra Bullock and Jesse James' wedding also called it home. Tiffani Amber Thiessen and husband Brady Smith's wedding rehearsal dinner was held at the rooftop venue El Cielo, with guests who included former cast mates from 90210, Tori Spelling, Jason Priestly and Jennie Garth. The newlyweds also celebrated the first night of their honeymoon in the hotel's Andalucia Suite. www.andaluciasb.com

SET THE SCENE

The stars do more than vacation and exchange nuptials in Santa Barbara — they work on films here, too. Most recently, the stars of *Pirates of the Caribbean III* were on location in Northern Santa Barbara County filming at the Guadalupe Dunes. Tracking film locations is a great way to delve into a destination and Santa Barbara County certainly rolls with credits. From *Sunset Boulevard* (Mission Santa Barbara) to *Sideways* (Santa Ynez Valley), Cecil B. DeMille's *The Ten Commandments* (Guadalupe Dunes) and *Friday the 13th* (Zaca Lake), visitors can easily connect the dots to favorite films. Day trips, guided tours and walking jaunts deliver a slice of the American Riviera® lifestyle through a cinematic lens. Go ahead, set the stage and make your own scene!

TRAVEL INFORMATION & FREE FILM TOUR GUIDE

For a free copy of the *Lonely Planet Santa Barbara County Film Tour* guide, visit santabarbarafilmtour.com or contact the **Santa Barbara Conference & Visitors Bureau and Film Commission** at 800.676.1266, 805.966.9222 or tourism@santabarbaraCA.com. Visitor information and hotel booking is also available via santabarbaraCA.com.

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11/2006