

Marin, just a little out there



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A FRIEND

The Marin Convention & Visitors Bureau November Newsletter

The goal of the Marin Convention & Visitors Bureau is to keep you informed of local events, green businesses, travel trends and membership. Every issue of our newsletter is also posted on our website, www.visitMarin.org

Have fun in Marin County!
The MCVB staff: Mark, Christine, Deborah, Gina and Anuschka.



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NORTHGATE

MCVB Member of the Month The Mall at Northgate

New Look. New Experience. Fall 2009. Northgate celebrates its new design and introduces dozens of new retailers to shoppers beginning Thursday, November 12,

2009.

This re-imagined shopping destination will offer simple yet dramatic light-filled spaces, an indoor/outdoor design to take advantage of the region's spectacular days, and a new connection with this one-of-a-kind local landscape. The result will feel like creative reuse of a reclaimed warehouse or a rediscovered industrial building - think "Marin loft" - but rethought as a vibrant new shopping environment.

This reinvention of Northgate is accomplished through clever architectural changes that remake the existing mall in exciting new ways. The new architecture will blur the boundaries between indoor shopping spaces and new, welcoming courtyards, open-air dining areas and outdoor gathering spaces.

Additionally, Northgate is seeking to be California's first regional mall to be LEED Certified. Northgate's entire renovation is based around the idea of "green" - from new HVAC units, drought-resistant/local flora landscaping and nano doors to clerestory windows and using building materials made from recycled and re-used products.

Inviting Marin shoppers to "Rediscover Northgate," celebrations will begin with in-store events and musical entertainment on Thursday. More highlights of Northgate's opening celebrations can be found on their [website](#).

The Mall at Northgate has been a member of the MCVB since July of 2007

Green Meetings in Marin by Kris Hillard

"Being green is not a destination, it's a process" says Robert Marshall of Inn Marin, who recently hosted the Green Meetings - Making it Real summit in celebration of the Inn Marin's 10th anniversary and their recent State certification at the Leadership Level for California's Green Hotel Certification program.



Inn Marin partnered with Northern California Meetings + Events, Pure Luxury Transportation and the newly formed [Green Meetings Industry Council Northern California Chapter](#) (GMICNCC), dedicated to transforming, promoting and supporting the local region as the premier green event destination through education, networking and sustainable practice.

The event began with a keynote speech by Hunter Lovins of Natural Capital Solutions. Ms. Lovins laid out the problems facing us with global warming and then proceeded to make the business case for sustainability. Ms. Lovins was followed by two panels of industry experts with specific tips for making meetings and events more sustainable.

The all-star presenter line-up included: Paul Salinger Oracle, Julie Lindsay of the Gap, Linda Mansouria of Cisco, Robert Marshall Inn Marin, Peter Schmitt Silver Oak, Sue Klick Medtronic, Brendan Lange Cappa and Graham, Kathy Newby Classic Party Rentals, Stephen Silva Melons Catering, and our moderators were Eve Schmitt of VMWare, and Dana Marshall of Meetings Defined.

Getting green and staying green is all about education and collaboration. From the big picture perspective:

- As a planner, include green components in RFPs such as donation programs, in-house recycling or reduction of harmful chemicals.
- Focus on the positive social, environmental and financial impact of being green.
- If planning an ongoing annual event or conference, start small with your goals, but benchmark progress each year to evaluate ROI.
- Work together, discuss options, be transparent and make decisions that provide progress for everyone involved in the process.

Next month will feature more specific tips from these distinguished panelists on green meetings.



Kris Hillard, Director of Sales at the [Inn Marin](#), has been with the Inn for 10 years.

She is an active volunteer for the Novato Chamber of Commerce, Meeting Professionals International and Guide Dogs for the Blind.



What the Marin CVB is Doing



The General Manager and Sales Reception at the Best Western Corte Madera Inn on Tuesday, October 27th was another great success. The Marin CVB and our host, the Corte Madera Inn - Best Western, would like to thank everyone who attended the reception. The Corte Madera Inn did a fantastic job as host and it is always a good time when we are all able to get together. Thank you, Bill Blackburn and staff for the festive reception. The next reception will be held in April of 2010.



Welcome Aboard, Anuschka!

Anuschka Schneider has been our German intern this past year in 2009 doing magic with our new website's SEO (Search Engine Optimization). She has been tracking marketing and sales trends then analyzing the collected data. As of January 2010, she will join our team as a part-time employee with the title of Marketing Research Analyst.

Opportunities to Advertise on www.visitMarin.org Coming Soon!

Beginning January in 2010, there will be opportunities for members and partners to advertise on the Marin Convention & Visitor Bureau's website. More information will follow regarding the specifics.



The MCVB Adopts Marin Community Food Bank Barrel for the Holidays!



From November 15 through December 31 grocery stores and other businesses hold on-going food drives. The Marin Community Food Bank needs people to adopt any one of available food collection barrels, which means checking the barrel daily, emptying it when necessary, and bringing the food to the Food Bank.

The mission of Marin Community Food Bank is to provide quality food, the most basic of all human necessities, to people in Marin County who need nutritional assistance.

The following is a sample of items needed: Canned Green Beans, Corn, Rice, Stuffing Mix, Canned Peaches and Mixed Fruit, Dried Fruit, Nuts, Tea Bags, Ground Coffee, Macaroni & Cheese, Spaghetti, and Canned Spaghetti Sauce - just to name a few.

Stop by the MCVB office any week day and make your donation for the holidays. We will take care of the rest. Last year we collected 120lbs of canned items and we are hoping to reach 200 pounds this year with your help!



Event Highlights for November

Holiday Art and Craft Faires in Marin

The holiday season is upon us! Along with the opening of The Mall at Northgate this month, there are a number of holiday craft faires in the county to get a start on all that shopping!

On Friday, November 6th from 11:00am to 8:00pm only is the San Rafael Community Center Craft Fair located at 618 B Street. There are crafts for sale from over 60 vendors. For more information call 415-485-3348.

Saturday, November 14th from 10:00am to 4:00pm is the Terra Linda Ceramic Artists 5th Annual Ceramic Art Sale and Jazz Happening located at the Terra Linda Community Center, 670 Del Ganado Rd. in San Rafael. View the ceramic exhibition then shop for sculpture, pottery, fine art, garden art, mosaics and jewelry. For additional information call 415-485-3344.

Friday and Saturday, November 27 and 28: Parade of Lights and a Winter Wonderland in San Rafael

Downtown San Rafael will once again commence the Holiday Season with the Parade of Lights, Winter Wonderland, and the special Holiday Market.

Take a stroll down our tree lit main street and enjoy the beautifully decorated store front windows. Step inside and discover unique gift items, friendly merchants, and hundreds of ideas for that special gift.

This will be the 30th Annual Parade of Lights in Downtown San Rafael, and the 20th straight year of free snow sledding on A Street between Fourth & Fifth Streets.

The snow will be open to the public from noon to 4pm and closed during the Parade of Lights and Downtown Tree Lighting Ceremony. The

snowpark will then re-open at approximately 6pm and close again at 8pm. On Saturday the snow will be open from 9am until 2pm or until the snow is no longer safe.

The Parade will start down Fourth Street at 5:30pm on Friday, ending at Courthouse Square.

The Holiday Market will be held from 4pm to 8pm on Friday and will be located on Fourth Street between Lootens Place and B Street. There will be Holiday Entertainment and musical performances at different locations on Fourth Street between Lootens and "A".



If you are a member/partner of the MCVB, please continue to send us any event you would like to have listed on our [Event Calendar](#) web page. We will highlight a few county events each month in this section.



Travel Trends

Silver Linings in the Tourism Industry



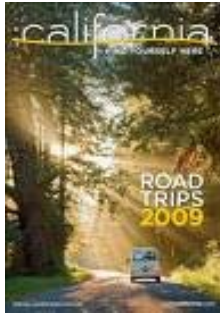
By Caroline Beteta

President and CEO of the California Travel & Tourism Commission

After months of doom and gloom news about major losses in the travel industry, there's no better time to focus our attention on the light at the end of the recession tunnel.

There are encouraging signs that consumer confidence may be foreshadowing a better year than originally anticipated, which could mean positive news for tourism. According to the U.S.

Conference Board, consumer confidence increased considerably in April and May. That confidence is reflected in travelers' intentions for vacations and business trips in the next 12 months. In November 2008, only 10% of travelers foresaw increasing their travel in the next 12 months compared to the previous 12 months; in April 2009, that figure rose to 21%. The converse is true as well - the percentage of those planning to decrease travel in the next year compared to the prior year has fallen significantly between November (34%) and April (24%). (Travelocity's Traveler Confidence Report)



In California, the picture is looking a little rosier as well. Despite a difficult fourth quarter in 2008, data released in April show that travel spending in California increased 0.9% to \$97.6 billion for the year (Dean Runyan Associates). Also, the number of domestic stays was down just 1% in 2008, despite high gas prices in the first half of the year and the economic downfall in September (D. K. Shifflet & Associates). Contributing to this stability is a large and mobile in-state traveling population, which helped boost leisure travel by this segment 6.4% last year (D. K. Shifflet & Associates). The international markets had an even better year in 2008, with overseas

visitation to California up 3-5% for the year and international visitor spending in the state up 9.6 percent, according to the U.S. Department of Commerce and Dean Runyan Associates.

Looking forward, 78% of traveling Californians who were surveyed recently by travel research company SMARI said that they intend to take a trip in-state in the next 12 months. This is on par with intentions from a year ago (79%) and is up considerably from fall (71%). It seems that despite economic difficulties in California, residents are becoming more optimistic. California is also a top destination for visitors from other west coast states, and the numbers indicate that travel intentions from these "primary" markets - Arizona, Nevada, Washington, Oregon, Colorado and Utah - are high, with more than half (52%) of those surveyed declaring intentions to visit the Golden State in the next year. This is up a bit from last year (50%) and again up considerably from fall (45%).



Although we are seeing some encouraging trends, it's important that the travel industry in California and the U.S. not take this for granted, and continue to provide the greatest value possible for consumers by creating "must do" deals and experiences. Destination marketers must also do their best to remind consumers about the benefits of travel, from creating special memories in wonderful places to enhancing health, relationships and productivity.



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