



what's new

IN CALIFORNIA



WINTER 2009/2010

There is always something new and exciting in California. As your resource for statewide news, the California Travel and Tourism Commission (CTTC) is pleased to present this newsletter describing new developments taking place in the various regions of the Golden State. Please note that dates listed are subject to change. Confirm with appropriate media contacts.

Consumers can get free California travel planning information by visiting CTTC's Web site at visitcalifornia.com or by writing to the address below. Residents of the United States and Canada can also receive travel planning information by calling 1-800-862-2543. International travelers need to dial +1-916-444-4429.

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CA STATEWIDE

Pick Top California Fives

The California Travel and Tourism Commission recently launched user-generated content online through a program called California Fives (www.CaliforniaFives.com). Visitors will find the best of the Golden State, from roller coasters to tiramisu and much more. Created by locals, celebrities and anyone else with five great travel stops to share, California Fives tap into everybody's personal favorites. A great place to start would be champion free climber Beth Rodden's top Yosemite hikes, surfer Jim Moriarty's top beach towns, and chef Charles Phan's top markets. Anyone is welcome to submit California content!

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Go on a Grand Green Tour with California Road Trips 2009

California Road Trips 2009 gets visitors exploring the Golden State, especially by car. The annual guide, produced by the California Travel and Tourism Commission (CTTC) and Sunset Custom Media Solutions, continues to provide detailed driving maps that take readers to some of the best insider spots in California. But consumers will find a difference this year—an emphasis on getting out of the car to enjoy those unique locales. Another new feature to the guide is the "3 Free & Easy" box located in each of the 12 regional California driving itineraries. California Road Trips 2009 is

available by calling 1-877-TOP-DRIVES.
Or, download it for free via the CTTC Web
site at www.visitcalifornia.com/visitorsguide.

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Truckee and Tulare Open Doors to Visitors with New California Welcome Centers

Visitors to and through California can mark their maps with two new California Welcome Center (CWC) stops in Truckee and Tulare. Situated in a beautiful mountain setting, CWC Truckee, located in the High Sierra region, is set in the train depot in the heart of downtown Truckee. The CWC Tulare, located in the Central Valley region, makes its home the Heritage Complex at the International Agri-Center. Both are open seven days a week and

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Wine Road Launches “Ticket to the Wine Road”

Wine Road Northern Sonoma County, an association composed of 152 vintners and 50 lodges, has launched a new program to encourage budget-friendly exploration of Sonoma County. “Ticket to the Wine Road” is available for purchase on www.wineroad.com. Customers can purchase either a one-day ticket for \$25 or a three-day ticket for \$50, which entitles the pass holder to significant discounts and savings at participating Wine Road members’ wineries and lodgings. A few of the perks that come with the purchase of this pass include complimentary wine tastings, discounts on wine purchases, private barrel tastings with winemakers, and cave and vineyard tours at participating wineries. Guests at participating lodgings can enjoy discounts of up to 15% off room rates.

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Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens Adds Sculpture Gallery

The Arts Council of Mendocino County has partnered with the Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens to create a Sculpture Gallery on their grounds. Drawing upon the wealth of regional artistic talent, the Sculpture Gallery primarily features the work of California artists. Visitors are able to view and enjoy the artwork in an intimate, natural setting, connected by meandering paths and quiet walkways. Artwork is available for purchase.

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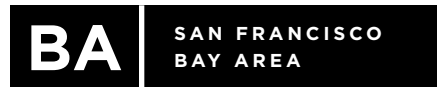
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B. Bryan Preserve Welcomes New Baby Zebras

The B. Bryan Preserve in Point Arena now has three Hartmann’s mountain zebras, native to Northern Namibia. There are less than 4,000 of these zebras in the world. Located in the small, bohemian town of Point Arena, B. Bryan Preserve is just 128 miles north of San Francisco on scenic Highway 1. There, African hoof stock thrive in huge fields less than 2 miles from the Pacific Ocean, which offers a unique setting for a vacation. A two-bedroom, fully furnished carriage house is available for rent. Also, B. Bryan Preserve is building two new cottages on the grounds that will soon be open.

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Marin Convention & Visitors Bureau Launches New Web Site

The Marin Convention & Visitors Bureau announces the launch of its new Web site, www.visitmarin.org. The new Web site has innovative features to help both the leisure and business traveler enjoy Marin County, along with the following categories: Things to Do, Event Calendar, Places to Stay, Meetings & Events, Resources for Visitors & Residents, and Members Partners & Resources. The Web site also has information on each community located in Marin County, including Corte Madera, Fairfax, Larkspur, Mill Valley, Novato, San Anselmo, San Rafael, Tiburon, and Point Reyes Seashore/West Marin, as well as links for weather, ferry schedules and a surf report for beaches. There are also sections on the site dedicated to helping planners with corporate meetings and information for weddings and social events.

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New Holiday Inn Express Now Open in Santa Cruz

The brand new Holiday Inn Express & Suites Santa Cruz is conveniently located near picturesque beaches and the Pacific Coast Highway. Featuring 100 rooms, including 17 suites, the hotel was created with green building standards in mind. All rooms feature wireless and direct connect high-speed Internet, as well as 32-inch flat-screen, high-definition televisions that can be used as a monitor for laptops, iPods, cameras or game consoles. Suites include a separate seating area with pullout sofa, microwave oven, refrigerator and wet bar.

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The Westin St. Francis Completes \$40 Million Transformation

The Westin St. Francis celebrates the completion of a two-year, \$40 million transformation. From a complete redesign of the grand Main Lobby to the addition of a stylish cocktail lounge and the debut of 614 newly refreshed guestrooms, The Westin St. Francis continues to maintain its preeminence as a legendary hotel. The only hotel located on San Francisco’s famous Union Square, The Westin St. Francis is just steps from first-class shopping, world-renowned dining, award-winning theater and a bustling arts district.

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HALL Wines Earns LEED Certification

HALL Wines announced that it has received the prestigious Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) Gold Certification for its St. Helena winery, becoming the first winery in California to be distinguished as a Gold-certified facility by the U.S. Green Building Council’s LEED Green Building Rating System™. HALL has implemented many sustainable design elements and practices including solar energy,

local and recycled building materials, water conservation, and radiant floors. HALL extends their environmental responsibilities to their general operations by using recycled materials whenever possible. Additionally, the Hall family owns nearly 500-planted acres in Napa and Sonoma counties, which are organically farmed and scheduled to be certified organic within the next year.

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Tri-Valley Offers New Downtown Holiday Skating Rink

The Tri-Valley's New Downtown Holiday Skating Rink is open November 19 through January 10, 2010. Visitors can join in the fun of Pleasanton's first-ever seasonal holiday ice rink, which will be situated in the parking lot of the Pleasanton Public Library at 400 Old Bernal Avenue. The rink operates seven days a week for recreational skating. Skate rentals are also available onsite, and skating lessons are offered through the Parks and Community Services Department.

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"Green" Blue Inn Opens in Downtown Santa Cruz

The Pacific Blue Inn is Santa Cruz's newest bed and breakfast with an eco-conscious heart and a local flair. The Inn is located on Pacific Avenue in the heart of Downtown Santa Cruz and exceeds California's stringent "green" standards, utilizing recycled, reused and reclaimed construction materials and décor. The Inn also features renewable bamboo flooring and energy-efficient lighting and appliances. Reducing carbon footprints is easily achieved with a central location within walking distance of the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk, beaches, the Santa Cruz Municipal Wharf, shops, galleries, restaurants and more.

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"Animal Secrets" at Bay Area Discovery Museum

Where does a chipmunk sleep? What does an eagle feed its young? In "Animal Secrets," now open through May 9, 2010, visitors to the Bay Area Discovery Museum learn the answers to these questions and more as they explore the hidden habitats and secret lives of forest animals. The exhibit is designed to encourage family learning and to help young children develop science skills through play and exploration. Visitors discover nature from an animal's point of view as they explore a stream, meadow, woodland, cave and naturalists' tent. Then, guests can play the role of a naturalist and discover more about the animals that live in the woods by examining tracks, skulls, fur, bones and other real specimens. Using imaginative role-play and hands-on activities, travelers can explore Animal Secrets in five naturalistic environments.

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Downtown Berkeley Revival in Full Swing

New developments are hastening downtown Berkeley's evolution from a commercial hub to a stylish arts and entertainment destination. The newest additions to Berkeley's buzzing downtown scene are the Freight & Salvage Coffee House, Berkeley's renowned venue for folk and world music concerts, now in an expanded new downtown location, and the grand reopening of the Hotel Shattuck Plaza. The Freight's new home has a 440-seat listening room, double the capacity of its existing venue. There is also an additional performance space seating 60-70 people, a café, and six classrooms. The environmentally friendly building has Berkeley's first "living roof" of California native plants to provide open space and habitat for birds and other wildlife. The landmark Hotel Shattuck Plaza has returned to downtown Berkeley after an extensive, multimillion-dollar renovation. Berkeley's oldest hotel has become the San Francisco Bay Area's newest boutique hotel offering a variety of multi-purpose meeting

rooms, a grand ballroom, new restaurant FIVE, and 199 guest rooms. Many green initiatives have been included in the property including a heat exchange HVAC system, earth-friendly amenities, on-demand water heating, and a hotel recycling program. With future attractions including the new Toyo Ito-designed Berkeley Art Museum/Pacific Film Archive in the pipeline, downtown Berkeley is fast-forwarding into a major regional center for the arts.

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President "Barack Obama" Arrives at Fisherman's Wharf Wax Museum

The 44th president, Barack Obama (in wax!), has arrived in the Bay Area aboard "Wax Force 1" and has made his official entrance into San Francisco and the acclaimed Wax Museum at Fisherman's Wharf aboard Franklin Delano Roosevelt's Presidential Yacht, Potomac.

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Tech Museum Opens New Permanent Exhibit

"Technology Benefiting Humanity," the West Coast's only permanent exhibition linking social responsibility with technology, strikes a provocative posture within its 3,000-square-foot setting, intending to encourage a deeper understanding of the technologies that are improving the human condition—and inspiring visitors to make their own positive social contribution. Supported by a \$1.1 million grant from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, the exhibition is constructed around a completely new museum format that uses a multi-purpose display module that aligns content, interactive involvement, and educational messaging. The exhibition marks the first time the museum's international signature program, The Tech