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ZOOM

in on america

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Along Highway 1



The Big Sur, the rugged and untamed California coastal area north of San Simeon on Highway 1, was inaccessible until 1932 when the Bixby Street Bridge offered access to beaches, mountains and redwood canyons. (AP Photo/Jennifer Merin)

State Route 1, more often called Highway 1, which stretches between San Louis Obispo and Monterey, California is considered one of the world's most scenic roads. It took its builders 14 years to construct and it has provided since 1934 breathtaking views of the Pacific waves crashing against cliffs, pristine beaches and wildlife not encountered in many other places elsewhere. Millions of tourists have visited places with names like Monterey, Pacific Grove, Carmel, Point Lobos State Reserve, Garrapata State Park, Point Sur State Park, Andrew Molera State Park, Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park, Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park, Jade Cove, Hearst Castle, and Morro Bay. Highway 1 is truly a must-see for California visitors.

In this issue: Highway 1

Zoom in on America

A Castle on the Pacific



(top): Hearst Castle, the legendary home of publishing tycoon William Randolph Hearst,
(bottom left): the Roman pool;
(bottom right): the Neptune pool
(Photos AP)

Strange as it may sound, the seemingly uninhabited hills in the Santa Lucia Range near San Simeon, yellowish and sparsely covered by patches of green, are home to one of the most luxurious edifices ever built for a private individual in the whole United States. Stranger still, the edifice houses a priceless collection of art. Egyptian sculptures that are more than 3,500 years old, lions - the work of Italian sculptors - ancient Roman sarcophagi that date back to the 3rd century AD, and marble statues of Venus, Neptune, Three Graces, Galatea and many others, adorn the pools and gardens of this castle.

The castle was one man's dream and one architect's life commission that lasted 30 years. The man was William Randolph Hearst (1863-1951), a media tycoon of the first quarter of the 20th century. The architect was Julia Morgan (1872-1957), the first woman to receive a certificate in architecture from the Ecole in Paris. She was the one who gave Hearst's fanciful ideas material shape. Her numerous neat drawings with Hearst's hand-made comments are a unique, first-hand account of the building of a castle on a ranch which its owner named "La Cuesta Encantada" - The Enchanted Hill.

The interior of the castle is no less elaborate than the outside. One hundred and sixty-five rooms housed in four separate buildings are decorated with tapestries woven in Brussels in the middle of the 16th century and adorned by

Greek pottery from 3rd to 8th century. The bookcases are stacked with antique books, while on the bedrooms' and sitting rooms' walls paintings by such artists as Luc-Olivier Merson, Jean-Léon Gérôme, Simon Vouet or Franz Winterhalter are hung. The dining room with an elongated table on which Renaissance plates were laid for the guests has Spanish choir stalls along the sides, while silk banners once used for festivals in Siena hang from the ceiling. An indoor Roman pool whose walls are studded with thousands of small, one-square inch blue and gold tiles complement the impression of visiting some fairy tale palace.

Once a visitor gets carried away by the fairy tale look of the place, it isn't hard to imagine the kind of parties that were thrown here by Hearst. Guests included actors (Hollywood is quite close) and politicians. Douglas Fairbanks, Mary Pickford, Greta Garbo, Charlie Chaplin, Gary Cooper, Clark Gable, Winston Churchill and Calvin Coolidge were among Hearst's invitees.

During his lifetime, William Randolph Hearst was a powerful, if controversial, media tycoon. He owned so many titles that through his papers he made his convictions known to every fourth American. He professed sensationalist, the so-called "yellow journalism" whose main aim was to interest and appeal to the masses. Today, his heritage is felt most distinctly through the collection of art he accumulated and the castle at San Simeon.

Wildlife & Art Sanctuaries



(left): Waves crash against the cliffs, off of Highway 1, south of Big Sur (Photo AP Images); (top right): A statue on top of a cliff outside an art gallery on Highway 1 overlooks the Pacific (foto: Bozena Pilat); (bottom right): A Monarch butterfly clings to a flower at the Monarch Grove Sanctuary in Pacific Grove (Photo AP Images)

Huge sea lions lounge idly on sandy beaches basking in the sunshine. Males occasionally have to take up a fight against an usurper who arrives from the sea and claims the same stretch of beach. Seals come ashore, sometimes indeed amidst perilously high seas and ferocious waves, to give birth to their offspring, sea otters - most accomplished swimmers and divers - forage, but only as much as is necessary and spend the rest of the day playing merrily with each other in the water. Birds swoop down, dining on abundant shoals of fish in such huge numbers that the air darkens from their wings. High above, hovers the American condor, the largest flying bird and yet the most fragile and vulnerable, who until recently was on the verge of extinction. They all find refuge along the coastline between the Carmel River and San Carpoforo Creek, and inland to the eastern foothills of the Santa Lucia Mountains, the area called Big Sur, a wildlife paradise.

Pacific Grove, on the other hand, is a town on the shores of Monterey Bay. Even though the place is ideal for surfing, kayaking and scuba diving, it wasn't sporting activities that earned the town its popularity, but ... insects. Nicknamed "Butterfly Town, USA," Pacific Grove becomes home to hordes of monarch butterflies during winter. From October, butterflies migrate to the Monarch Butterfly Sanctuary from as far as Canada. They make themselves at home in eucalyptus and Monterey pine trees

until February. Town regulations impose a penalty on those who disturb the winged visitors.

This wildlife paradise would not be complete without the scenic views: the dramatic landscape of the Santa Lucia Mountains rising abruptly from the Pacific and the climate which due to the interplay of winds, temperatures and pressure systems formed over the Pacific Ocean creates amazing visual effects such as dense fog which envelops the sea during the day and blankets the coast at night. Forests in the Big Sur area, however, sometimes fall prey to wild fires which ravage thousands of acres, causing closures of Route 1.

Big Sur and the whole coastal area that has become accessible for visitors since Highway 1 was built have proved equally attractive for artists. The awesome landscapes, as well as, wild animals that abound here have been an inspiration. The area has been a charming setting for novels, poems, paintings and drawings, as well as songs and musical pieces. Writers like Robinson Jeffers, Henry Miller, Edward Weston, Richard Brautigan, Hunter S. Thompson, Emile Norman, and Jack Kerouac have all written of the place. Big Sur was featured in films, novels, visual arts and even music (The Beach Boys (album *Holland*), Red Hot Chili Peppers (single "Road Trippin".) Not only Big Sur but the whole Highway 1 area is popular with artists. Driving along we find art galleries and shops.

Activity Page

Exercise 1 The photos below show a charming place on Route 1, Carmel-by-the-Sea. Work in pairs or groups of three. Choose the photo you like the best and describe it to the other students. Say why you have chosen this photo. Finish by talking about your favorite holiday place.

Exercise 2 The text below is an account of a woman who spent a week-long holiday in Carmel with her dog, Rex. Put the verbs which have been removed back in the text in appropriate tenses.

Rex, my mongrel pet, hopped on the back seat of the car and barked with excitement. He ... (know) we ... (go) to the beach for a long walk on the Pacific shore. Carmel ... (be) one of these dog-friendly places where you can take your pet along on a holiday and ... (let) him or her enjoy the sun, the beach and your relaxed company.



Before we ... (come) to a stop, however, I felt pretty tired of having to cross a dozen or more crossroads at each of which you have to slow down, bring your car to a stop, watch who drove to the crossroads first and keep your turn.



Rex ... (get) more and more excited sniffing at the sea scent which was now coming to our nostrils. However, when I finally ... (find) a little space in a parking lot from which we could already see the ocean, Rex had to exercise his patience a little more. I ... (forget) that in Carmel it is not legal to wear high-heeled shoes and, remembering it now, I was now digging through the mess in the trunk to find appropriate footwear. I am a law-abiding citizen, you know. Anyway, it would have been totally unwise to walk down the beach in the shoes I was wearing. So, my stilettos added to the mess, my comfy flip-flops in hand, I ... (unleash) Rex. In an instant, he disappeared from my view and only a little cloud of dust and sand ... (show) me his direction: water.



Carmel (Photos Bozena Pilat)

He had a joyous swim and returned from his fast loops in the ocean only to show me what a good runner he ... (be). He ran a circle, his black, wet hair glittering in the sun. He would stop and then carefully place at my feet a piece of wood that I ... (throw) him into the water and bark playfully. The message was clear. I threw

the wood as far as I could and he ... (resume) his run and swim chasing it. We repeated it again and again until he finally ... (get) tired of swimming and I ... (inhale) enough fantastic breeze in my lungs and was ready for a walk.

Later, we ... (walk) up 13th Ave until I spotted a nice little cafe with home-baked cookies and apple-pie. Rex would curl and sleep like a log on the wooden floor while I sipped the best tea I found on this trip and ... (cherish) the scents of trees, ocean and the Sun.

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