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Top 10 Reasons to Visit San Simeon this Fall and Winter

As Hotel Rates Fall Back, Savor San Simeon's Spectacular Scenery, Amazing Wildlife, America's Most Famous Castle, Renowned Wineries and Charming Events

San Simeon, Calif. (Nov. 8, 2017) -- When you catch your first glimpse of San Simeon -- with its emerald green hills embracing the deep blue Pacific Ocean -- you get why William Randolph Hearst built his castle high above the sea on the "Enchanted Hill." As the crowds of summer on California's Central Coast subside, fall colors surge and mild winter weather prevails, San Simeon's fairytale charm kicks into high gear, attracting savvy travelers to its shores. Here are just a few reasons why some believe it's the most special time of year to visit:

1. Hotel Rates and Crowds Fall Back

San Simeon's Highway 1 properties -- from quaint seaside inns to full-service resorts -- offer the same warm hospitality, offering rates significantly lower than high season, with fewer crowds. From rustic campgrounds and full-service hotels with ocean views to quaint roadside inns, visitors can click here to [find and book the right property](#) for you.

2. Hearst Castle Glows with Holiday Cheer and Evening Tours

Hearst Castle attracts visitors from around the world looking to experience the newspaper magnate's enviable lifestyle and wonder at his impressive collection of 14th to 17th century fine and decorative European art. Although colorful at any time of year, each fall and winter the staff decks the halls with glittering holiday lights and décor, from late November through December. The season also brings the return of the evening tours, where staff dress in period costume.

3. Charming Small-Town Events

Here, you can avoid hectic big-city harvest events and explore old-fashioned fun with plenty of elbow room, such as the [Scarecrow Festival](#). Businesses and residents compete to create the best scarecrows. You can unofficially vote by taking selfies with your favorites and take part in ticketed events! San Simeon's proximity to other charming seaside towns means there are plenty of other events to enjoy, such as the Central Coast State Parks Association's [Adventures with Nature series](#), offering docent-led hikes, classes and workshops open to all ages and generally free! Other standouts include everything from classic car shows, theater and holiday events, to art and wine festivals. Learn more [here](#).

4. Romantic Eateries and Restaurant Deals

If the way to your loved one's stomach is through food, the local and regional restaurants will not disappoint. With many offering seaside views, and the freshest local seafood, beef and wines, these

eateries are sure to set the mood for romance. And if you're visiting in January, you can save significantly on delicious meals with [San Luis Obispo County Restaurant Month](#).

5. Historic Lighthouse and Rare Elephant Seal Viewing at Piedras Blancas

Catch a glimpse of the rare northern elephant seal at Piedras Blancas Rookery six miles north of San Simeon. Although you can see a few of these fascinating creatures – whose males grow up to 5,000 pounds – throughout the year, the majority spend most of their lives at sea, coming ashore only to mate and care for their young. Beginning in the fall, the park's elephant seal population swells to 17,000 to breed, providing a jaw-dropping spectacle. Visitors to the area can also visit the historic [Piedras Blancas Light Station](#), which currently boasts a modern marine aero beacon sitting atop the lighthouse.

6. Breathtaking Trails and Parks

San Simeon's [outdoor recreation](#) opportunities abound, from boating, birdwatching and fishing to wine tasting and kayaking. [Hiking](#) is a favorite pastime, especially the beautiful San Simeon Creek Trail, a famous 3.3-mile trek through [Hearst San Simeon State Park](#) and its nearby campgrounds. Here, you can enjoy views of rich Monterey pines, riparian valleys, scenic bluffs and pastoral grassy areas, as well as glimpses of wildlife, Hearst Castle, the Santa Lucia Mountains and tide pools.

7. Harvest and Winter Wine Country Activities

San Simeon and surrounding area boasts several award-winning [wineries](#) and proximity to renowned wine regions and wine trails. Although harvest season -- which you can toast at [Harvest Wine Weekend](#) (Oct. 20-22) in Paso Robles -- is nearly over, wine lovers won't be in the cold this winter. Many wineries offer ongoing winter barrel tastings, wine events and festivals such as [Harvest on the Coast](#) (Nov. 3-5) and [Vintage Paso: Zinfandel Weekend](#) (March 16-18).

8. Beautiful Beaches and Parks

Wild and rugged, the unspoiled [beaches of San Simeon](#) are among the most beautiful in the state. The town also boasts several unique [California State Parks](#), from Hearst Castle to scenic campgrounds. With mild, sunny fall and winter weather, these beaches and parks can inspire romantic walks and opportunities to unplug with loved ones.

9. Family Friendly Coastal Discovery Center

Boost your family's "ocean literacy" at the free Coastal Discovery Center, while enjoying [fun activities](#), such as spying marine life -- from birds and seals to whales -- from the San Simeon Pier. You can also check out engaging exhibits and educational programs which highlight the cultural and natural history of San Simeon, California State Parks and Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary.

10. Ride the Waves Less Traveled

San Simeon offers the chance for outdoor enthusiasts to get out on the water and enjoy the scenery without a lot of traffic and crowds, from [kayaking to San Simeon Cove](#) to [fishing](#) and [boating](#).

Plan Your Trip with New Visitor Website

For inspiration and to plan your trip, visit the San Simeon Chamber of Commerce's recently refreshed [website](#).

About San Simeon Chamber of Commerce

Located at the Cavalier Plaza Shopping Center, the San Simeon Chamber of Commerce is staffed by friendly volunteers who help travelers from all over the world discover this charming, majestic town. The Chamber assists visitors daily from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and can be reached at (805) 927-3500 or www.sansimeonchamber.org.