

# There's much to see along Highway 101

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Many locals may be inclined to put pedal-to-the-metal as they travel on Highway 101 through south Monterey County.

Motorists originating in the Salinas area may be heading south to more distant destinations, such as Los Angeles, or eager to get home from a trip. South county residents may simply be commuting or running errands as they use the Salinas Valley's main thoroughfare.

But there is plenty to see and do along the Highway 101 corridor, and in this issue of South County Life, we focus on roadside attractions — those things tourists may stop to do, or that you might want to show visiting family members or friends.

In the case of a few dominant sights along the highway — such as the state Correctional Training Facility in Soledad — you'll want to look only, not pause to visit, but we hope Victor Calderon's article about these unvisitable features will at least give you a little spiel as you try to entertain guests or bored children in the back seat.

The highway offers plenty of convenient opportunities to sample Monterey County's fine wines, as Janice Austin and Joli Spencier report — but do that sensibly if you plan to continue driving.

If you're road weary, or otherwise incapacitated for travel, King City offers south county's most abundant choice of accommodations, as Sunita Vijayan reports.

As you travel northbound out of King City, one of the landscape's most dominant features is Pinnacles National Monument, looming in the

east above the checkerboard of agricultural fields.

Established as a national monument by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1908, the dramatic formation offers talus caves and chaparral and is home to raptors, more than 400 bee species and 14 bat species.

Some of the rock pinnacles rise 500 to 1,200 feet high and make this one of the best rock-climbing locations in California.

There's plenty of history to soak up at south county's two missions, San Antonio de Padua near King City, and Mission Nuestra Señora de la Soledad.

Each was founded more than 200 years ago as Spanish padres sought to evangelize American Indians.

For a step back to a more recent time, visit the Monterey County Agricultural and Rural Life Museum in San Lorenzo Park in King City, where equipment and buildings from the late 19th and early 20th centuries have been preserved and restored.

In Soledad, residents and officials are trying to determine a future use for the Los Coches Adobe, a state historic landmark. Once a busy stage coach station and post office, the original structure was built in 1843 as a residence. Now it may be transformed into a visitor center for south county.

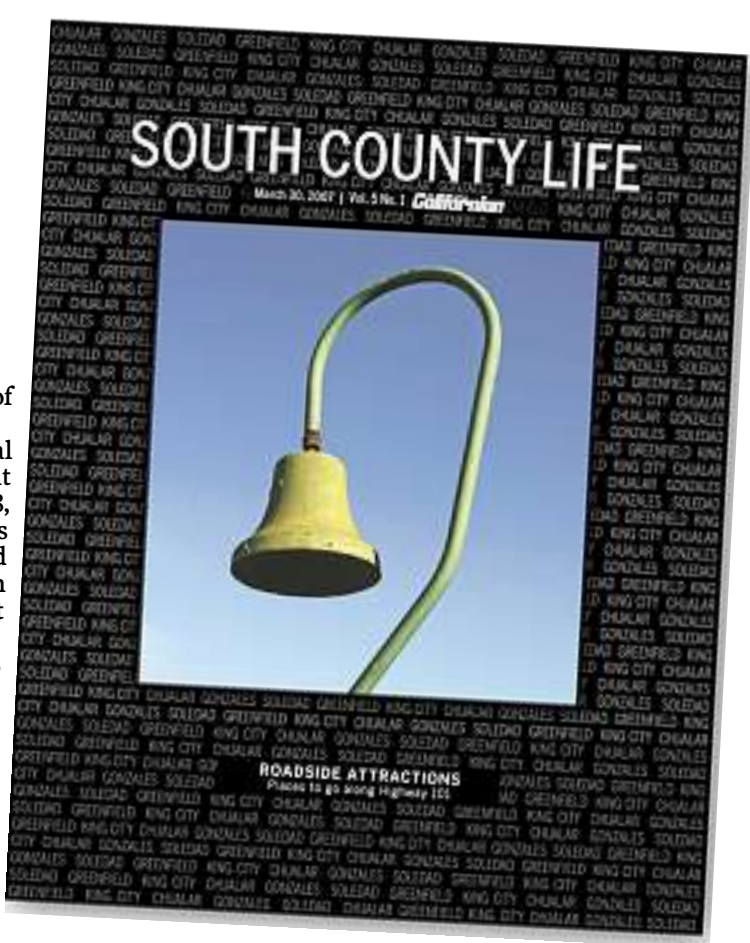
Those who find south county beguiling enough for a longer stay will find an abundance of model homes to tour as they search for their dream house. Those who just want a quick bite of lunch as they pass through will find a number of options, as well.

Whether you want a taco or a kitchen in which to cook your own, this issue of South County Life can help you get your fun along Route 101.

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