

Cruz News

Santa Cruz County's Latest Wave of Information for Travel Media

Summer 2022

SANTA ★ CRUZ

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Cruz News features Santa Cruz County travel-related news, information, and story ideas specific to the travel, tourism, and hospitality sector and is distributed quarterly to qualified travel, lifestyle, and consumer media outlets and representatives. Visit Santa Cruz County works with media on a year-around basis to offer story ideas, photography, b-roll footage, and itinerary suggestions to assist journalists with their assignments.

PRESS VISIT:
Visit Santa Cruz County hosts qualified journalists on assignment for individual media visits year-around. At this time, we do not host group familiarization tours. Our press policies are posted on www.visitsantacruz.org/press/

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REGAN VINEYARDS OPENS IN CORRALITOS FOR TASTINGS, TOURS

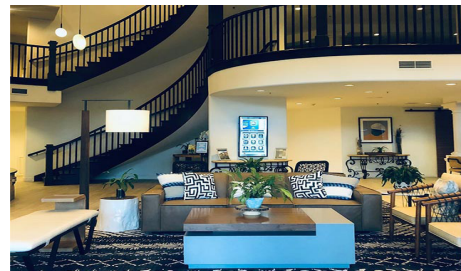
Regan Estate Vineyards and Winery is located on a hilly knoll in Corralitos – and in one of the coolest climates in California. The mountainous topography of the region is suited for the planting of small vineyards, each with a unique micro-climate. With nearly 40 acres planted to twelve different varietals and clones, Regan Estate Vineyards is one of the largest and most diverse vineyards in the Santa Cruz Mountains. The soil at Regan varies, but is generally a loamy-clay. Some sections at Regan have heavy clay; other sections are quite sandy, while other areas are rockier. The 53-acre site boasts a very long growing season that begins in March with bud break and generally finishes in late October when the last grapes are harvested. Tastings are hosted in a gazebo in the middle of the vineyard, offering guests the opportunity to sample wines amidst the vines and learn about viticulture while soaking in majestic views. Regan Vineyards specializes in Chardonnay, Pinot Noir Estate Reserve Merlot, a unique Estate Nebbiolo as well as an estate-grown sparkling wine.



SANTA CRUZ CELEBRATES 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF ICONIC SURFING STATUE

A beloved local landmark on scenic West Cliff Drive in Santa Cruz is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year. The Surfer Statue – dedicated to all surfers past, pres-

ent, and future, has stood sentry over the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary and famed surf break Steamer Lane since 1992. Engineered to withstand an 8.0 earthquake and 100 mph winds, the 18-foot-tall bronze statue was originally inspired by the members of the 1936 Santa Cruz Surfing Club.



HILTON SANTA CRUZ/SCOTTS VALLEY COMPLETES RENOVATIONS

Nestled among the foothills of the Santa Cruz Mountains, the newly renovated Hilton Santa Cruz/Scotts Valley includes 178 guest rooms featuring balconies, patios, suites and the Hilton's exclusive "Pure Hypoallergenic" rooms utilizing purified air, a hypoallergenic environment, and allergy-friendly bedding. This seven-step patented process creates a guest room experience that promotes well-being and health for leisure guests. Additionally, the newly renovated Stonehouse Bar & Grill features creative California cuisine, brews, and unique cocktails.



DREAM INN SANTA CRUZ DEBUTS IRON CHEF EXPERIENCE

Executive Chef Gus Trejo, who heads up the Jack O'Neill Restaurant inside the Dream Inn Santa Cruz, the city's only full-service beachfront hotel, is offering everyone from guests to corporate groups

the opportunity to "reign supreme" as an "Iron Chef" through the eatery's newest program. This friendly competition pits teams against one another, armed with only staple ingredients like flour, eggs, spices, and butter, with the added surprise of a secret ingredient. A ballroom overlooking Cowell Beach with floor-to-ceiling windows is the setting and judged by the Dream Inn culinary team. Custom aprons, cook toques, and trophies can also be custom ordered to enhance the experience. The concept is based on the original Iron Chef series that premiered on a 1993 Japanese television show, in which guest chefs competed in a timed, thematic cooking battle against resident Iron Chefs.



PORTIONS OF BIG BASIN REDWOODS STATE PARK REOPEN FOLLOWING DEVASTATING FIRE

Big Basin Redwoods State Park – California's oldest – is now accepting day-use-only reservations for public access to a small area of the fire-damaged park. Big Basin has been closed to the public since the CZU Lightning Complex Fire in August 2020, when flames engulfed more than 97 percent of the park, destroying approximately 18,000 acres. The park is still without electricity, water, flush toilets, phone service or buildings. Although services will be limited, visitors will be able to explore the Redwood Loop and access about 18 miles of fire roads near the historic park core. While trees such as Douglas firs were nearly eliminated from the park, a majority of the redwoods have survived the fire damage. Access to popular back-country trails such as the Skyline to the Sea and access to Berry Creek Falls are on the more distant horizon. The lands known today as Big Basin Redwoods State

Park were originally the homelands of the Quiroste and Cotonni tribes, ancestral relatives of today's Amah Mutsun Tribal Band and the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe. Prior to the CZU Fire, the park's trails served hikers and equestrians – linking Big Basin to Castle Rock State Park and the eastern reaches of the Santa Cruz range – and featured hundreds of campsites.



VENUS SPIRITS COCKTAILS & KITCHEN BEACHSIDE OPENS AT RIO DEL MAR STATE BEACH

Sean Venus, head distiller and owner of Venus Kitchen + Cocktails on Santa Cruz's westside, has opened a second location eight miles south of Santa Cruz in the Rio Del Mar neighborhood of Aptos. Located a stone's throw from the ocean at Rio Del Mar State Beach, Chef John Harry – formerly of the Post Ranch Inn in Big Sur – is heading up the kitchen at this new eatery. Leveraging the abundance of local agriculture and seafood, John is planning to add some southern flavor to the dishes he creates, utilizing his Georgia roots. Venus Spirits Cocktails + Kitchen Beachside will naturally feature a full bar with hand-crafted cocktails made with the distillery's award-winning gins, whiskeys, agave spirits and aquavit. Menu items like oysters Bienville, a classic New Orleans dish of baked oysters with shrimp, mushrooms, bacon, white wine and scallions and cornmeal dusted and fried with cheese grits and braised greens will be offered, as well as popular staples like roasted local Brussels sprouts.



PRESERVATION EFFORTS CONTINUE AT CASTRO ADOBE STATE HISTORIC PARK

Following damage caused by the 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake, a series of repairs and restoration projects at Castro Adobe Historic State Park continues. Work has included earthquake repair and seismic stabilization, second floor strengthening and installation of an ADA lift, restoration of the exterior elements, and ongoing interpretive planning for exhibit design and installation. Recently, water intrusions in portions of the roof area were affecting the historic building, and repair was needed for the protection of the adobe construction as well as use of the site. The \$175,000 roof project is now completed. Located in bucolic Larkin Valley, near Watsonville, the two-story Castro Adobe, built between 1848-49, is one of the finest examples of a rancho hacienda in the Monterey Bay area.



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