

# CRUZ NEWS

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

Spring 2024

SANTA  
CRUZ  
COUNTY

CALIFORNIA



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### PRESS VISITS:

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## SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

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## Symmetry, 2024 Santa Cruz County Traveler's Guide Now Available

Continuing to tell the story of the collective regions throughout the region, Santa Cruz County's official traveler's guide is now available. *Symmetry*, a 75-page upscale magazine illustrates the unique culture of the area that sets it apart from other coastal California destinations.

The front of the book section features a community-focused lifestyle perspective of Santa Cruz County. Thoughtfully curated content in the form of comprehensive, journalistically-driven narratives and reflective photography conveying the soulful nature of Santa Cruz County are woven throughout the guide.

The main feature story uncovers the cultural and scientific impact of fog, effecting our climate, agriculture, redwood forests, and the significance of the marine layer on the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band and their ancestors.

Other stories debuting in *Symmetry* include a retrospective of the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk's Giant Dipper Roller Coaster, which celebrates 100 years in 2024, a story about the Santa Cruz Warriors and the team's impact on the local community, beer can labels and their creative flair, a profile on local farmers and an overview of the regional food scene.

The back of the book section serves to inform visitors about where to stay, eat,

and what to do while in-market. Complemented by display advertising from hotels, restaurants, attractions and other local businesses, this section of the magazine features dining and lodging listings highlighting the amenities offered by various restaurants, hotels, bed and breakfast inns, motels, vacation rentals, and campgrounds. Activity listings, signature events, and a redesigned county map in a playful aesthetic are also trademarks of the magazine.

With a print run of 100,000 copies, distribution includes California Welcome Centers throughout the state, key regional and international airports in both northern and southern California, and international airports in Portland, Phoenix and Seattle. Distribution has been expanded in 2024 to include South Lake Tahoe and continued distribution in Sacramento and Monterey Counties.



## Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk Announces New Rides

With summertime just around the corner, two new rides have been installed at the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk, providing more options for the over two million visitors that experience the seaside amusement park each year. Happening concurrent to the Giant Dipper Roller Coaster's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on May 17, 2024, the Dream Wheel and Surge are ready to welcome riders.

Dream Wheel, a 65-foot modern take on a classic Ferris wheel features 15 colorful gondolas which seat four adults or six children. This mellow, family-friendly ride provides stunning views of

the Monterey Bay, Downtown Santa Cruz, and the boardwalk itself.

Surge is a classic thrill ride with a unique spin: seating up to 24 riders, this new attraction employs over-the-shoulder restraints to lock riders in as they are spun swiftly in a circle and tilted while being raised off the ground, providing 360 degrees of excitement.

Both rides are scheduled to debut by Memorial Day Weekend.



## Two Sweet Spots Open in Downtown Santa Cruz

Alongside nearly a dozen new downtown restaurants featuring carefully curated farm-to-table menu items, two new spots dedicated to soothing one's sweet tooth have opened their doors in Santa Cruz. Both locally-owned shops are designed to feature a singular product, crafted with care – bringing the total number of sugar-forward businesses in Downtown Santa Cruz to a half-dozen. Now, pastry and chocolate lovers can celebrate concurrently, with the opening of Rock and Roll Donut Bar and Ashby Confections, the shops' locations essentially across the street from one another.

Since 2004, Jennifer Ashby has crafted handmade sweets for her Scotts Valley-based Ashby Confections. This year, she is elevating her exposure with a move to pedestrian-friendly Pacific Avenue in the heart of Downtown Santa Cruz. Her success has earned her numerous awards and a loyal following of chocolate lovers. The Marsh Bars are her specialty: marshmallows dipped in chocolate and rolled in graham cracker on a pretzel stick.

Across the street, Rock and Roll Donut Bar has opened its second high-profile location, following its original shop on Cannery Row in Monterey. This all-vegan, sweet boutique will also prepare gluten-free donuts on request. An abundance of creative choices include a jelly-stuffed PB&J with peanut butter icing and a Piña Colada favored donut packed with rum-pineapple filling and covered in coconut shavings, pineapple, a cherry and an umbrella. The Elvis features banana whipped cream, chocolate icing and crushed peanuts. Savory items like donut sliders with choice of burger, sausage, egg or all three with grilled onions, cheese, microgreens, and pesto or tomato jam sauce; the Grilled Cheese with or without grilled onions and pesto; and the Sloppy Joe cut open like a pita bread and stuffed with meat, cheese, onions and a choice of sauce. A glass-enclosed front patio takes advantage of virtually year-around sunny weather and is an engaging place to people-watch.

These two new downtown shops join four others which exclusively feature ice cream, cookies, and candy: The Penny Ice Creamery, Mission Creamery, Pacific Cookie Company, and It's Sugar.



## Demonstration State Forest Reopens Following a Year of Restoration

After closing more than a year ago due to damage from seasonal winter storms, Soquel Demonstration State Forest has reopened, welcoming recreational visitors to over 2,500 acres and 32 miles of trails. The forest closed due to downed trees, mudslides and blocked roads and hiking trails. Since then,

maintenance crews have been clearing debris and employing trail stewardship efforts to restore the park for visitors.

Popular with equestrians and hikers, "Demonstration Forest" as it is commonly known is the prime location in the Bay Area for intermediate and advanced mountain bikers due to trails with long climbs and challenging technical descents – including a 15-mile single-track downhill ride. Most of the trails here cover at least 10 miles and climb over 2,000 feet; the climb out of any single-track trail is three to four miles uphill. This mid-county location, nestled inland from Aptos features coastal redwoods, Douglas-fir, mixed hardwood, chaparral, and riparian ecosystems along the East Branch of Soquel Creek and Amaya Creek. Several natural springs and small marshes are featured, and its location adjacent to the Forest of Nisene Marks State Park offers expanded opportunities for recreation. The forest is geologically active, with the San Andreas and Zayante Faults passing through the property and the epicenter of the 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake located approximately two miles south of Demonstration Forest.



## Santa Cruz-Based Winery First in the U.S. to Use Paper Bottles

Always innovating, Bonny Doon Vineyards is set to become the first winery in the country to use fully-recyclable paper wine bottles. The winery's rosé wine – which is being marketed as *Carbon-nay* – will be sold at Whole Foods stores throughout

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California this spring, expanding to other stores throughout the U.S. later in the year. This new packaging - shaped like a wine bottle - is five times lighter than a traditional wine bottle, reducing the carbon footprint of bottling and shipping.

Fully recyclable, the packaging weighs just under three ounces, providing expanded real estate to print information and artwork around the bottle. Designed from 94 percent recycled paperboard with a food-grade pouch inserted to contain the wine, paper bottles are becoming ubiquitous in Europe. Through innovative practices like popularizing screwcaps and the first winery to embrace true transparency with its ingredient labeling initiative, Bonny Doon grew to become the 28<sup>th</sup> largest winery in the U.S. and is credited with popularizing Rhône grapes in California.



## Humble Sea Brewery's Seasonal Pop-Up Graces the Santa Cruz Wharf

Leveraging the over 300 days of sunshine a year and an epic 360-degree ocean view, the region's second-largest brewery is reopening its outdoor beer garden on the Santa Cruz Wharf.

Sporting creative, sea-themed names like *Gillmore Girls*, *Jean Fog Van Dayum* and *Elon Mollusk*, Humble Sea brewery took over a former spot where a restaurant once stood. The wide-open space - the result of a demolition - is the

perfect wood-plank patio for Adirondack chairs, breezy umbrellas and a prime spot on a century-old wharf that stretches a half-mile into the ocean. Known for its "foggy IPA's," Humble Sea boasts five times as many unique beers as brewing companies Russian River and nearly as many as 44-year-old Sierra Nevada. The seasonal pop-up will feature cold beer and food trucks Fridays to Sundays from Noon to 6PM to start, increasing days and hours as summer approaches.