

## **175+ Free & Fun Things to Do in San Luis Obispo County:**

### **County-wide**

- Enjoy the many free large SLO County parks & Beaches

#### Seasonal:

- Drive along the roads and look for wildflowers – Feb - May
- Visit 200+ artists studios during “Open Studios” on 3 weekends in October

### **Avila Beach:**

- Bike or stroll along the 2-mile “Bob Jones Trail”
- Check out the petting zoo animals at the “Avila Valley Barn”
- Drive along See Canyon Road to see Morro Rock from the vista point at top
- Go tide-pooling at the beach near Harford Pier
- Play / Swim/ BBQ at the Beaches in front of town
- Ride the Avila Beach Trolley on weekends
- See the seals, pelicans and starfish from Harford Pier
- See views of the ocean, Avila & Pismo Beach from the top of Cave Landing Road
- Stroll along the downtown Pier
- Stroll along the beach between town & Harford Pier – Bring your dog if you like!
- Stoll thru the “Labyrinth” & “Meditation Garden” at Sycamore Mineral Springs
- Take guided hike to Avila Beach Lighthouse (call for dates & reservation)

#### Seasonal:

- Go to Farmers Market Friday afternoons (April–Sept) and enjoy the free music

### **Arroyo Grande:**

- Stroll along the Creek Trail next to the downtown
- Go to Farmers Market downtown Saturday mornings
- Walk over the “Swinging Bridge” downtown
- Go to Farmers Market on Wednesday
- Invent a new ice cream at Doc Burnstein’s Ice Cream Lab on Wednesday evening
- Look at the chickens that wander loose near City Hall Downtown
- Visit the old one-room school house and other museums downtown
- Visit the historic Halcyon temple
- Window shop the great downtown antique stores & boutiques
- Bike Huasna Road to the old Huasna Schoolhouse

#### Seasonal:

- Bring Picnic to “Village Summer Concert” selected Summer Sunday afternoons
- Go to the “Strawberry Festival” on the Saturday & Sunday of Memorial weekend
- See the classic cars at the “Arroyo Valley Car Sho” in late July
- Go to the Harvest Festival downtown in September

## **175+ Free & Fun Things to Do in San Luis Obispo County:**

### **Atascadero**

- Stroll or bike around Atascadero Lake
- Go to Farmers Market in the Sunken Gardens on Wednesday afternoons
- Visit the art galleries downtown
- Visit the Green Acres Lavender Farm and sniff acres of heavenly lavender
- Window shop the great downtown antique stores & boutiques
- Bring a picnic or BBQ at the Atascadero Lake Park
- Bike along El Camino Real between Atascadero & Santa Margarita

#### Seasonal:

- Bring picnic and wine to the “Concert in the Park” Saturday evenings in Summer
- Bring picnic and enjoy band at “Tuesday Evenings Concerts” in summer
- Go to the “Sunken Gardens Flea Market” in April & September
- Look at the classic cars cruising downtown & on display in mid-August
- Play in the snow at the “Winter Wonderland Street Faire” in December

### **Baywood Park:**

- Stroll on the small Pier near downtown
- Go to Farmers Market downtown Monday Afternoons
- Stroll along the boardwalk and see the pygmy trees of the “Elfin Forest”
- Watch birds in the estuary from the Audubon Society hut near downtown
- Stroll along the beach surrounding the town at low tide

#### Seasonal:

- Go to “Oktoberfest”: car show, crafts, food & more downtown in late October
- Take guided tour thru the Elfin Forest on 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of month

### **Cambria:**

- Go to Farmers Market in the “West Village” Vet’s Hall Friday Afternoons
- Ride the Trolley through the town on weekends
- Stroll along the boardwalk overlooking the ocean along Moonstone Beach Drive.
- Stroll thru East-West Ranch, admire the ocean views and look for wildlife
- Admire views from Santa Rosa Creek Road as you drive into Cambria
- Window shop the great downtown antique stores & boutiques
- Look for driftwood and admire the waves from Moonstone Beach
- Bike along the lower part of Santa Rosa Creek Road

#### Seasonal:

- Enjoy the Chili Cook-Off & Car Show in April
- See latest creations at annual “Sculptors by the Sea” exhibit in May
- Enjoy the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Fireworks from Shamel Park

## **175+ Free & Fun Things to Do in San Luis Obispo County:**

### **Cayucos:**

- Sunbathe, swim or boogie-board at on the Cayucos State Beach
- Stroll along the pier, look for seals and admire view of Morro Rock
- Visit the Cayucos Art Association Gallery open Sunday afternoons
- Window shop the great downtown antique stores

#### Seasonal:

- Go to the Farmers Markets on summer Friday mornings at the Vets Hall
- Swim in the ocean – or watch hundreds swim - at the “Polar Bear Dip” on Jan. 1.
- Go to a “Peddler’s Fair” on Memorial Day, 4<sup>th</sup> of July & Labor Day weekends
- Go to the downtown “Antique Street Faire” in mid-October
- Window shop the “Gem & Mineral Show” in June & October
- Enjoy the 4th of July Parade & Fireworks & Sand-sculpture contest
- See hundreds of classic at the downtown Car Show in November

### **Grover Beach:**

- Stroll thru the Monarch Grove Park and go the Beach
- Watch the ATV’ers crazy driving on the beach (or rent one, and do it yourself !)
- Window shop the beautiful gifts & plants at “Ron’s Nursery”

#### Seasonal:

- Bring a picnic to a “Sizzlin’ Summer Concert” on alternating Sunday afternoons
- Enjoy the Garden Tour in May
- Enjoy the “Stone Soup Music Festival” in mid-August
- See the Monarch butterflies as they winter at “Monarch Grove” Park Nov. - Feb.

### **Los Osos:**

- Go tide-pooling at Spooner’s Cove in Montana de Oro State Park
- Hike thru the Los Osos Oaks State Park Preserve
- Hike or bike the trails of the Montana de Oro State Park
- Stroll thru the beautiful “Sweet Springs Nature Preserve”
- Walk along the beach dunes stretching for miles from Montana de Oro State Park
- Hike through the Oaks Reserve off Los Osos Valley Road
- Walk the Dunes from Montana de Oro State Park entrance almost to Morro Rock
- Bike beautiful Turri Road along the extinct “Seven Sisters” volcanoes
- Bike along the downtown bike trail

#### Seasonal:

- See old-time life recreation at “Pecho Ranch Day” in July
- Window shop the Arts & Crafts & Collectibles Fair in November

## **175+ Free & Fun Things to Do in San Luis Obispo County:**

### **Morro Bay:**

- Play or stroll on the beach near Morro Rock
- Bird watch – this is one of the top 10 places in the USA ! (over 200 species)
- Drive from Morro Bay to SLO on Hwy 1 – one of the most scenic drives in USA!
- Fly a kite at the windy Morro Strand State Beach
- Go to Farmers Market Saturday afternoon Downtown
- Go to the Farmers Market near downtown on Thursday afternoons
- Go to the huge car show downtown in early May
- Hike up the peak (one of the “Seven Sisters”) next to the Morro Bay Golf Course
- Kayak the very calm estuary. (Kayaks are available for rent.)
- Look for nests in the Heron Rookery Preserve near the Natural History Museum
- Play in the surf at Morro Strand State Beach
- See the otters and boats at the Embarcadero
- See the exhibits in the Estuary Nature Center in the Embarcadero
- Visit the ever-changing exhibits at Morro Bay Art Association Gallery downtown
- Visit art galleries during “Embarcadero Art Walk” -2nd Friday evening of month
- Window shop the stores downtown & on the Embarcadero
- Bike or stroll along boardwalk of Cloisters Park next to Morro Bay State Beach

#### Seasonal:

- Admire the “Tall Ships” that sail to the Embarcadero in February & March
- Fly or watch the kites at the Kite Festival one weekend in April
- Go to the “Art in the Park” – Memorial Day, 4<sup>th</sup> of July & Labor Day Weekends
- Enjoy the “Avocado & Margarita Festival” in August
- Window shop the “Merchant’s Street Faire” in early August
- See the “Lighted Boat Parade” in early December

### **Oceano:**

- Watch the ATV’ers go crazy driving on the beach (or rent, and do it yourself !)

### **Nipomo:**

- Go to Farmers Market across from the Post Office on Sunday afternoons
- View the Dunes and fields from the top of Los Berros Road (near Valley Road)
- Visit the Dana Adobe, oldest house in SLO County, on Sunday

#### Seasonal:

- Enjoy the “Green House Growers” Open House tour in April

## **175+ Free & Fun Things to Do in San Luis Obispo County:**

### **Paso Robles:**

- Go wine-tasting where there is no charge to taste (J. Lohr, Midlife Crisis..)
- Go to Farmers Market in the Downtown City Park on Saturdays mornings
- Go to Farmers Market in the Downtown City Park on Tuesdays afternoons
- Go to Farmers Market near downtown on Friday mornings
- Stroll the grounds of the historic Estrella Church & Cemetery
- Sample olive oils & tapenades at “We Olive” in the downtown
- Take a free tour of Tablas Creek Winery
- Window shop the great downtown antique stores & boutiques
- Bike the many country roads of wine country

#### Seasonal:

- Bring picnic to the summer Friday evenings “Concerts in the Park”
- Sample the olive oils and vinegars at the Olive Festival in mid-August
- Enjoy creations at the “Art at the Spa” in August
- Go to one of the many other events held in the downtown city park
- Go to the free summer evening Shakespeare in the Park
- See the sights of the “Vine Street Victorian” evening in December

### **Pismo Beach:**

- Play at the beach
- Stroll along the pier and look at the surfers
- Go window shopping at the downtown stores
- Walk thru park to the to the historic “Price House” behind town

#### Seasonal:

- Window shop the monthly “Art at the Dinosaur Caves” April - October
- See the hundreds of classic cars at the Car show downtown in mid June
- People watch at the “Clam Festival” downtown in October

## **175+ Free & Fun Things to Do in San Luis Obispo County:**

### **San Luis Obispo (city):**

- Stroll along Creek Walk Downtown
- Go the Farmers Market downtown Thursday Night
- Go the Farmers Market Saturday Morning near Embassy Suites Hotel
- Check out the large used-book store downtown
- Hike “Poly Canyon” behind Cal Poly
- Look at the many public art works on display in town
- Stroll through the historic Victorian “Jack House” gardens downtown
- Stroll thru the Cal Poly campus
- Visit the artworks at San Luis Obispo “Art Center” (donation requested)
- Visit the historic Mission San Luis Obispo in the heart of downtown
- Visit art galleries during “Art After Dark” -1<sup>st</sup> Friday evening of every month
- Window shop the art galleries in the award winning downtown
- Bike along Orcutt Road thru Edna Valley Wine Country
- Check out the world-famous “Waterfall Urinal” in the Madonna Inn
- Drive from SLO to Morro Bay on Hwy 1 – one of the most scenic drives in USA!
- Gawk at (but don’t touch) the 50 year’s accumulation in “Bubble Gum Alley”
- Hike up Bishop Peak (note – arduous hike!)
- Hike up Reservoir Canyon (and discover the biggest waterfall in the county)
- Hike or mountain bike the “Madonna Mountain” above town
- See the antique toy planes, trains and cars in McCarthy Wholesale

#### Seasonal:

- Bring picnic to a “Concert in the Plaza” Friday evenings in Summer
- Go the Cal Poly Open House and see the “Robot Race” exhibits in mid-April
- Visit one of the many Mission Plaza events held many weekends
- Go the Kick-Off Mozart Festival Concert at Mission Plaza in July
- See great creations at the “Art in the Jack House Gardens” in late August

### **San Miguel:**

- Visit the historic Mission San Miguel and grounds
- Visit the Rios Caledonia Adobe Saturdays & Sundays
- Bike thru downtown and frontage road along Hwy 101

#### Seasonal:

- See works by Master Sculptor John Olt in his gardens – weekends in June
- Visit the “Model A’s & Model T’s Car Show” - Rios Caledonia Adobe in June

## **175+ Free & Fun Things to Do in San Luis Obispo County:**

### **San Simeon:**

- Drive up Hwy 1 along Big Sur Coast – one of the most scenic drives in the USA!
- Peer up at Hearst Castle from the coast
- Stroll along the pier
- Stroll thru the Hearst Castle Reception Center, with museum & gift stores
- Visit the historic “San Simeon Market & Post Office” in Old San Simeon
- Watch the Elephant Seals on the beach – but don’t get too close !
- Stroll along the beach

### **Templeton:**

- Go to the Farmers Market on Saturday mornings at the Downtown Park
- Visit the Art Gallery behind Castoro Cellars Tasting Room
- Bike along the back roads of the wine country
- Drive to Cambria on Highway 46 West and admire the beautiful views

#### Seasonal

- Bring picnic & wine to the “Concert in the Park” Wednesday evenings in Summer
- Window shop the “Day in the Shade” Art Fair in May
- Go to the Templeton “Outdoor Quilt Show” downtown in June
- Bring a picnic to the “Lazy Locals” concerts held at Castoro Cellars in Summer
- Go to the Annual Basil Festival (and try the Basil Ice Cream!) in August