

# Santa Cruz



## Discover surf, brews, hidden gems

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PHOTOS BY BRIAN FEULNER

The 135-acre UC Santa Cruz Arboretum & Botanic Garden showcases coastal plants that thrive off of moisture in the marine layer and California heat.

## From skydiving to coastal gardens, discover adventure

By Peggy Spear

When someone thinks of outdoor adventures in Santa Cruz, the main thing that comes to mind is enjoying the day at one of the 14 state beaches along the gleaming shores of Monterey Bay. But how about seeing them from 18,000 feet in the air as you skydive from an airplane?

From skydiving with Watsonville-based GoJump, to digging sandcastles along Rio Del Mar beach to hiking in Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park, there are many ways to find adventure in Santa Cruz.

Just ask Christina Glynn, who not only works for Visit Santa Cruz County but also takes advantage of unique outdoor experiences whenever she can, especially now that the pandemic threat is easing and more activities are opening to the public.

"There are 'soft' adventures, such as taking a sunset Chardonnay cruise or enjoying the Boardwalk, to paddleboarding, kayaking and, of course, surfing," she said.

However, she also tells travelers who may need a day off from the beach to seek out fun in other ways, such as renting a beach cruiser bike and taking a three-and-a-half-mile spin on West Cliff Drive or discovering the myriad state parks and mountain attractions nearby.

"The Roaring Camp Railroad starts in the redwoods above the city of Santa Cruz and can take you all the way down to the Boardwalk," she said.

The train travels through Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park along the San Lorenzo River Gorge and through an 1875 tunnel.

Glynn also recommends the Redwood Grove Loop Trail, an easy multi-generational hike for all ages, as it is wide enough for strollers and wheelchairs.

If visitors want to explore a unique gem, they should head to the UC Santa Cruz Arboretum & Botanic Garden, a 135-acre living museum full of rare and unique plant species. And this spring and summer is a perfect time to visit, Executive Director Martin Quigley said.

"I haven't seen the gardens this spectacular before," Quigley



Above: The UC Santa Cruz Arboretum & Botanic Garden features a sculpture by Su Gatch, a graphic artist and ceramicist, called Herm Aphrodite, a banana slug decorated with yellow, orange and purple glass tiles. Below: The gardens feature many vibrant flowers.

said. "They've been putting on a show since January."

That's despite the drought, but it makes sense. The garden is one of only a handful of places in the world that have the unique climate of just enough moisture from the marine layer and California heat to keep the plants happy, he said.

"It's the perfect Mediterranean climate," Quigley said.

Other areas with a similar climate are along the coasts of Italy, the western cape of South Africa, New Zealand, Australia and Chile.

The plants featured in the garden are drought and fire resistant, important aspects when planning your own garden in California, he said.

"We've been asked to help populate areas after major fires," Quigley said.

The garden is also attracting a plethora of birds as well, especially raptors.

Despite funding cuts by the



university since 2008, the botanic garden and arboretum is "holding its own," Quigley said, thanks mainly to private donations and a thriving gift shop. And while the pandemic closed it for a couple of months, it is now open and ready to dazzle visitors again.

A few other remarkable outdoor areas in and around Santa Cruz were closed or limited due to the pandemic but most, if not all, are now open. In fact, the many state parks and beaches are boredom busters for all ages. Santa Cruz County is home to California's oldest state park, Big Basin Redwoods State Park, and some others that are not as well known but just as fun, like the Twisted Forest at the Forest of Nisene Marks State Park in Aptos. (Don't miss the world-famous cement boat and the albino redwood tree.)

Wilder Ranch State Park offers grasslands, oaks, Knobcone pines, coastal redwoods, Douglas firs, rugged coastline, tidepools, hidden beaches, barns and even a Victorian farmhouse — not to mention over 34 miles of hiking, biking and equestrian trails winding through coastal terraces and valleys. There are also specialized hikes in the area, including a waterfalls hike, a history hike and a redwoods hike.

There are also many campsites, including New Brighton State Beach and Manresa Uplands State Beach, a tents-only site.

And of course, who can forget our furry companions? Henry Cowell, West Glenwood Open Space Preserve, Manresa State Beach and New Brighton State Beach are just some of the outdoor spots that allow leashed

### Details

**GoJump:** [www.gojump-america.com](http://www.gojump-america.com)

**West Cliff Drive:** [www.santacruz.org/listings/west-cliff-drive](http://www.santacruz.org/listings/west-cliff-drive)

**Roaring Camp Railroad:** [www.roaringcamp.com](http://www.roaringcamp.com)

**Redwood Grove Loop Trail:** [www.redwoodhikes.com/Cowell/Cowell.html](http://www.redwoodhikes.com/Cowell/Cowell.html)

**UC Santa Cruz Arboretum & Botanic Garden:** [www.arboretum.ucsc.edu](http://www.arboretum.ucsc.edu)

**Adventure Out:** [www.adventureout.com](http://www.adventureout.com)

For lists of Santa Cruz outdoor parks, hikes and campsites, visit [www.santacruz.org/things-to-do/parks](http://www.santacruz.org/things-to-do/parks) or [www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov).

dogs.

Finally, for the next generation of nature lovers, some visitors may want to enroll their kids in Adventure Out, an outdoor school specializing in surf lessons, camps, rock climbing classes, backpacking trips, mountain biking, wilderness survival instruction, adventure tours, and perhaps most importantly, outdoor stewardship.

That will make sure this outdoor paradise continues to thrill visitors and locals alike for years to come.

### SANTA CRUZ

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Cover photo: The Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk has reopened. Photo by Brian Feulner

# Arts scene ingrained in Santa Cruz's culture

By Peggy Spear

Maureen Harrison is one of those rare people who can find a silver lining in the COVID-19 pandemic.

"While it was terrible in so many ways, we've actually grown our audiences through virtual presentations," said Harrison, the assistant director of arts communication at UC Santa Cruz.

That was not an easy feat, as the university's art department offers such a variety of productions and installments, from opera and Shakespeare to visual arts to an increasingly popular speaker series. This year focused on social justice and racism, and the spectrum of shows presented virtually struck a chord with audiences.

That's nothing new for Santa Cruz. The city doesn't just feature many art opportunities, it lives it, said Christina Glynn, communication director at Visit Santa Cruz County.

"We have public art installations all over town, murals and a thriving music scene almost everywhere you look," she said.

The arts scene is ingrained in the city's unique character.

"Music, art and performances, combined with rich cultural history and beautiful natural surroundings, are all ingredients that, when combined, give Santa Cruz County its creative flair," Glynn said.

While Santa Cruz has always attracted artists because of its beauty, it is only enhanced by the strong arts program offered at its local university. In fact, it is world renowned for its breadth and expertise, and Harrison can speak at length about the many events happening on campus and in collaboration with the city.

The most fun is April's production of the Bard's "The Comedy of Errors," which is being performed virtually but with a much wider audience than ever before.

Then there is the renowned speaker series, whose upcoming events include "Producing Prime-time Comedy, an Afternoon with

## Details

**Santa Cruz Museum of Art & History:** [www.santacruzmah.org](http://www.santacruzmah.org)

**Santa Cruz Arts Center:** [www.santacruzartcenter.com](http://www.santacruzartcenter.com)

**Tannery Arts Center:** [www.tanneryartscenter.org](http://www.tanneryartscenter.org)

**Santa Cruz Mountain Arts Center:** [www.mountainartcenter.org](http://www.mountainartcenter.org)

**Seymour Marine Discovery Center:** <https://seymourcenter.ucsc.edu>

**UC Santa Cruz Arboretum & Botanic Garden:** [www.arboretum.ucsc.edu](http://www.arboretum.ucsc.edu)

**Capitola Museum:** [www.cityofcapitola.org/capitola-museum](http://www.cityofcapitola.org/capitola-museum)

**Santa Cruz Museum Month:** [www.santacruzmuseummonth.org](http://www.santacruzmuseummonth.org)

Vin Di Bona" on May 25; "The Elixir of Love"—How we Made a Remote Opera" on June 1; and "Fabricating Solace" starting on June 3, which introduces the 2021 prestigious Irwin Scholars.

For a complete list of these and all of UC Santa Cruz Art Department's activities, many of which will become hybrid events (both in-person and online), visit <https://arts.ucsc.edu>.

The city of Santa Cruz features almost as many art venues as sandcastles. Here is a quick round-up of some of what the city has to offer:

### SANTA CRUZ MUSEUM OF ART & HISTORY

This must-see museum is fun for all ages. Besides being home to an immersive, permanent exhibit on Santa Cruz history and rotating shows spread over three floors of galleries, this dynamic museum hosts weekly community events every Friday in its lobby. Drop-in activities include hands-on crafts such as screen-printing, embroidery and



STEVE DIBARTOLOMEO / WESTSIDE STUDIO IMAGES

Actors perform in UC Santa Cruz's "American Night" in 2019. During COVID-19, the department transitioned to virtual shows.

fabricating artworks from recycled materials.

### SANTA CRUZ ARTS CENTER

Built by local artists on Pacific Avenue in downtown Santa Cruz in 1971, the Santa Cruz Art Center has long been a home to the arts and arts-minded businesses. Featuring theaters, dance spaces and galleries, there are also many local businesses there that support the arts and arts education.

### TANNERY ARTS CENTER

The Tannery Arts Center, which opened in 2009, is home to 100 live/work lofts, 28 artist studios, Colligan Theater, Tannery World Dance & Cultural Center, Radius Gallery and the North County offices of Arts Council Santa Cruz County. Visitors are welcome to walk through the campus anytime or the gallery during open hours. Stop by on First Friday to experience open studios or check out its calendar for upcoming events.

### SANTA CRUZ MOUNTAIN ARTS CENTER

Up in the quaint town of Ben Lomond, just along the San Lorenzo River, the Santa Cruz Mountains Art Center offers art experiences through hands-on

shows on marine habitats and conservation.

### UC SANTA CRUZ ARBORETUM & BOTANIC GARDEN

If kids aren't into the amazing displays of flowers at the garden, they might be intrigued by wild-life sightings — rabbits, quail and butterflies. At this 135-acre outdoor, living museum, families can also explore the Hummingbird Trail to seek out the rare, elusive white hummingbird, and sniff pleasing scents of lavender, jasmine and oregano in the fun Aroma Garden. Don't miss the annual "Hummingbird Day" held every spring that offers crafts and plantings for the kids.

### CAPITOLA MUSEUM

If visitors haven't discovered the charming city of Capitola, just south of Santa Cruz, it's time. Capitola Village houses this quaint museum in a 1920s beach cottage. Older kids will appreciate detailed models and hands-on items, while smaller children can try out their artistic skills at a well-stocked coloring table.

These are just a small sample of all the art happening in and around Santa Cruz. Be sure to check ahead for updated hours and COVID-19 protocols. As an added benefit, Harrison said May is the first "Santa Cruz Museum Month," where all museums will be free or have reduced admission.

Meanwhile, set off on a self-guided tour of the city, Glynn suggests. At Abbott Square Market in downtown Santa Cruz, public art and performance combine to create a vibrant space, with interactive displays for kids and a hip, young vibe. Also, during the summer, Santa Cruz County offers countywide performing arts for visitors to enjoy, such as Santa Cruz Shakespeare, or Cabrillo College's Festival of Contemporary Music. Visit [www.santacruz.org/things-to-do/arts-culture](http://www.santacruz.org/things-to-do/arts-culture).

### For the little ones

Santa Cruz is a great place to teach young children that art can be exciting. Here are some great kid and so-called grown-up museums:

### SEYMOUR MARINE DISCOVERY CENTER

Visitors — if they want to — can touch real, living sharks at this research center and aquarium located on the coastal bluffs. The docile, 3-foot-long swell sharks are just some of the fascinating Monterey Bay marine creatures on display. Visitors can also investigate a touch tank filled with tidepool regulars, including sea urchins, star fish and slippery kelp. The adjacent exhibit hall features rotating kid-friendly displays and art

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People ride the sky glider at the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk, which has gradually been reopening.

# Elaborately Santa Cruz B

By Jeanne Cooper

When the oldest ride in the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk takes its first spin of the season May 21, there'll be little sign of all the storms it has weathered since its 1911 debut, including its long closure due to COVID-19.

Installed just four years after the boardwalk opened, the Loeffl Carousel and its hand-carved horses largely kept turning during the Spanish flu pandemic, the Great Depression and World War II, and closed for just a few weeks, along with the rest of the amusement park, after the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, according to Boardwalk historian Ted Whiting III.

Now, after months of silence, the iconic merry-go-round is ready to add its organ music to the sounds of the Beach Boardwalk's arcade, concessions and nearly two dozen other rides and attractions that have opened gradually since April 1.

The rides and attractions are currently open on weekends, while the admission-free boardwalk's food stands, outdoor games, retail, Neptune's Kingdom miniature golf course and Casino Arcade are open daily. Reservations are strongly recommended, since at press time, the amusement park's capacity is still restricted by state law to 25 percent of normal operations, according to Boardwalk spokesman Kris Reyes. The company shared its capacity numbers to the state last fall, but does not disclose them to the public, Reyes said.

"We limit the number of advance ride reservations to keep numbers compliant with state guidelines," Reyes said. "We monitor entrances, and when headcount gets close to capacity, we close the gates for a

## Details

Visit [www.beachboardwalk.com](http://www.beachboardwalk.com) for updated hours and to schedule a reservation.

time. On a typical weekend day, we do that a couple of times throughout the day, so we encourage people, including season passholders, to make reservations in advance."

Guests are currently limited to California residents, Reyes added, and everyone age 2 or older must wear a mask at all times, "except when actively eating or drinking," and observe social distancing.

"We also close the rides for 10 to 15 minutes throughout the day to sanitize and clean them," he noted. "We always did that before and after rides were open, but now we do it intermittently throughout the day and not all rides at the same time."

Despite these changes, "it really feels like a typical day at the boardwalk that people enjoyed pre-pandemic," Reyes said. That includes the whoops and yelps of happy or fearful riders on the Giant Dipper roller coaster, the park's other signature ride since 1924.

"There was a lot of media attention on whether screaming on amusement park rides had been banned and that has never been true," Reyes said. "The leadership team and I have been working rides on weekends, and I can assure you that people are screaming under their masks and you can hear them."

Reyes said executives at the Santa Cruz Seaside Co., which owns and operates the boardwalk, have been pitching in recently since the company is still "actively hiring" new seasonal employees after only three weeks' notice that it could open

BRIAN FEULNER



SANTA CRUZ BEACH BOARDWALK



SANTA CRUZ BEACH BOARDWALK



BRIAN FEULNER

Far left: Visitors ride on the hand-carved horses of the Looff Carousel in 2018 at the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk. The carousel debuted in 1911 and it will take its first spin of this season on May 21. Above: The Looff Carousel opened in 1911 and has spun for generations, including during this photo in 1968. Left: The Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk has been gradually reopening as guests enjoy the rides and food from various vendors.

# Hand-carved carousel still spinning at Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk after 110 years



BRIAN FEULNER

The admission-free Casino Arcade at the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk is now open daily as well Neptune's Kingdom miniature golf course.

again, Reyes explained. "Hiring has been a big challenge — normally we would have hired 2,000 people by now, but we were starting from scratch in March," he said. Thanks to a dedicated maintenance crew, though, the Looff Carousel will look and sound as

distinctive as always when it reopens later this month for \$5 a ride. Created by Danish carver Charles I.D. Looff at a cost of \$18,000, it's now part of a National Historic Landmark (along with the Giant Dipper, built by Looff's son Arthur) and features many original components.

Among them is the 342-pipe Ruth und Sohn organ built in 1894 and "well upgraded," according to Whiting, with a beautiful new façade and complete refurbishment in 2009. Today it plays along with two other band organs, including one from San Francisco's Play-

land, acquired for the park's centennial. The carousel's ring machine, which allows riders on outside steeds to grab metal rings from a dispenser and toss them into the mouth of a mechanized clown, is "very uncommon" nowadays, Whiting noted. Mech-

anized in the 1950s, the ring machine remains one of the merry-go-round's most popular features. "In the '70s, we took it out because it was a maintenance headache, and ridership dropped precipitously, so we put it back again," said Whiting, who started working for the Santa Cruz Seaside Co. in 1979 and whose family still owns concessions on the boardwalk. Most of the elaborately carved and bejeweled horses are original; some were added later, but all were carved by Looff. Accompanied by two ornate chariots, the 71 "jumpers" and two "standers" sport a variety of expressions and finery, including real horsehair tails, all of which require significant upkeep, Whiting said. "There was one painter who spent upwards a third of his time, maybe more in some years, touching up the horses. You can see little dings where the ring hits against the horses, and sand plays havoc with the woods. People grab the horsehair tails, so they start getting scraggly and have to be replaced," he noted. "And if it isn't the public, it's the weather — you've got to keep maintaining those rides and the buildings." But the investment of "time and energy" in the carousel and the rest of the Beach Boardwalk is key to its longevity, he added. "When you go to the boardwalk today, it's this sparkly, pristine, color-coordinated array of sights and sounds and colors. That's what the public wants, to come to this place that's well cared for," Whiting said. "It says the people who run this place pay attention, and I can feel safe here and enjoy coming here with my family, and coming back again and again."



PHOTOS BY BRIAN FEULNER

A surfer rides a wave at Private's Beach in Santa Cruz. The Santa Cruz Surfing Museum celebrates the evolution of the sport and displays about 25 surfboards.

## Hawaiian connection celebrated at Santa Cruz Surfing Museum

By Jeanne Cooper

With 23 consistent surf breaks, Santa Cruz has long been an iconic destination for board riders. But unless you've visited the Santa Cruz Surfing Museum, tucked in the compact lighthouse above Steamer Lane, you may not be aware its

waves of history go all the way back to 1885 — the first record of surfing in California, and by extension, North America.

That's when three young Hawaiian princes, on summer break from their military school in San Mateo, epitomized the surfer ethos of

"where there's a wave, there's a will." Spotting the surf at the mouth of the San Lorenzo River, about a mile and a half east of the museum, they had a local lumber mill fashion the heavy, long surfboards of the era out of redwood, and rode the waves, "enjoying it hugely," according to a

local newspaper's account.

One of the museum's founders and Santa Cruz surfing historian Kim Stoner has spent years researching and writing about this landmark feat by David La'amea Kaha-lepouli Kawanakoa, then 17, Edward Abnel Keliiahonui, 15, and Jonah Kuhio Kalaniana'ole, 14. It's the focus of the first display in the free museum, which opened in 1986 in the Mark Abbott Memorial Lighthouse, and the subject of a bronze plaque outside,

donated in 2010 by Kawanakoa's descendants and extended family.

Adopted by King Kalakaua and Queen Kapi'olani, their aunt on their father's side, the three princes "were all taught to surf by the king in Waikiki," Stoner said, before being sent to St. Matthew's Hall for their education.

"David was the oldest and showed up in 1884 in the summer by himself," Stoner recounted. "He stayed with Antoinette Marin Swan, who had been the queen's chamberlain. ... I'm sure when he came back the following year with his brothers, he said, 'Hey, there's surf there, we gotta make some surfboards.'" Fortunately for the

royals, the Swan family lived on the San Lorenzo River about four blocks from Grover Lumber Co., one of the largest redwood mills in Santa Cruz County.

"They got their wood there, according to a local historian and long-time reporter Ernest Otto, and they probably transported them by wagon to the Swan family property and shaped them or hand-planed them by draw knife," Stoner said.

In 2015, the Bishop Museum in Honolulu allowed two of the princes' original surfboards to be exhibited at the Santa Cruz Museum of Art & History. The long, narrow shape of the boards reflected a style

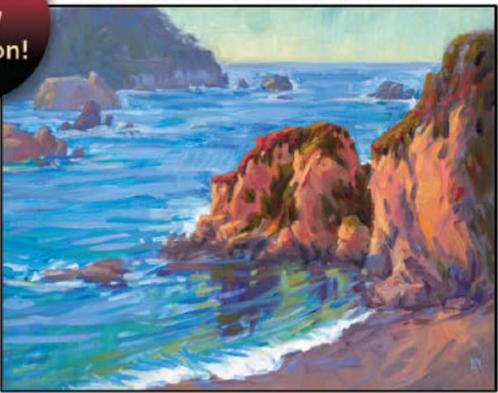
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The city-owned Santa Cruz Surfing Museum is tucked in a compact lighthouse above Steamer Lane and is celebrating its 35th anniversary this year.



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known as olo, reserved for the highest ranking of Hawaiians.

"They were 17 feet long and 6 inches thick, and they had a crude edge," recalled Stoner, adding that each board weighed 180 to 190 pounds. "Most likely the princes dropped them in the river, since they were living next to it, and paddled them down the river about a quarter-mile."

On July 19, 1885, the day after "the largest breakers of the season had hit the beach at Santa Cruz and tossed people around," according to Stoner, the princes caught their first waves in California. Thanks to other events taking place on the beach that day, Stoner said, Otto was there to report what he called "surfboard swimming, as they practiced it in their native land."

While there aren't other documented references to the princes' wave riding, Stoner said, a Santa Cruz newspaper column from 1896 noted: "The boys who go swimming in the surf at Seabright Beach use surfboards to ride the waves like the Hawaiians."

The Hawaiian connection continued with visits in 1913, 1920 and 1938 by celebrated surfer and Olympian Duke Kahanamoku to the Plunge natatorium at the Beach Boardwalk, according to Stoner. A replica of a poster promoting one of the visits hangs in the museum.

"Later on, you had a whole contingent of Santa Cruz surfers who went over to Hawaii and made it big," Stoner said.

Brothers Fred, Gene and Peter Van Dyke became big wave pioneers in the '50s and '60s, while Richard Schmidt, who grew up near Steamer

**Details**

**Santa Cruz Surfing Museum:** 701 West Cliff Drive, 831-420-6289, <https://bit.ly/3y1G3OB>

Lane, made a name for himself on the North Shore of Oahu's epic surf in the 1990s before opening his current surf school in Santa Cruz.

Other displays in the Santa Cruz Surfing Museum tell more about the local evolution of the sport, such as the formation in 1936 of the Santa Cruz Surfing Club and the contributions of wetsuit pioneer and Surf Shop founder Jack O'Neill, who died in 2017. Some 25 surfboards also have a home in the museum — as do the ashes of 18-year-old Mark Abbott. Two years after his death in 1965 in a body surfing accident, his parents built the lighthouse as a memorial and donated it to the city.

Before the pandemic, the museum was often "packed to the gills" with visitors, according to Mary Verutti, an attendant there for 15 years. After staying closed for much of the past year, the city-managed museum is now open Thursdays through Mondays from noon to 5 p.m., with five to six patrons allowed in at a time.

"The plaque outside draws a lot of people in here, because people didn't know about that Hawaiian connection for many years," Verutti said. "And the first thing you see is that this is the world's first surfing museum — we beat Hawaii by about six months."

"We're just a tiny little Northern California outpost, but we have a lot of stuff that's kind of unique," Stoner said.



**Top:** The Santa Cruz Surfing Museum has exhibits showing the history of surfing in California and its connection to Hawaii. **Above:** In 1885, three Hawaiian princes, Jonah Kuhio Kalaniana'ole, David La'amea Kahalepouli Kawanakoa, Edward Abnel Keliiahonui, caught their first waves in Santa Cruz. **Left:** Surfers ride waves at Private's Beach in Santa Cruz.

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# Breweries offer patios, gardens for outdoor sipping

By Carey Sweet

After what we could politely call a challenging year, we would all probably appreciate a cold beer right about now.

In Santa Cruz, the experience can be even more toast-worthy, thanks to the area's many artisan breweries fashioning craft quaffs, in pilsners, ales, lagers, stouts, porters, malts and more. Add to that plenty of tap house patios and gardens for outdoor sipping, delectable dining options to pair with your beers and dog-friendly setups, a visit to a Santa Cruz brewhouse is a well-celebrated adventure.

## GREATER PURPOSE BREWING COMPANY

According to the Bible's Gospel of John, Jesus turned water into wine for a wedding at Cana in Galilee. But for pastor Christopher VanHall, water turns into beer. That's because VanHall, leader of the Greater Purpose Community Church of Santa Cruz, also owns the Greater Purpose Brewing Company on East Cliff Drive off 14th Avenue.

"Before the pandemic, we met for Sunday worship with an open bar, and people could have a drink during church," VanHall said, noting that these days, parishioners are welcome to sip suds at home while watching his YouTube preaching. "Our politically far left church is strictly on-line-only until the pandemic is



Humble Sea Brewing Co. has a nautical themed taproom, food truck offerings and a dog-friendly patio.

PHOTOS BY BRIAN FEULNER

over, and we also upload sermons in a podcast format."

All guests are invited to visit the brewery, of course, for non-religious drinking any time. Set in the former East Cliff Brewing Company space, the new operation supports the ideologies of the church, noted VanHall, "as a safe, inclusive, affirming space for all gender, race, faith and sexual identities."

All types of taste buds are welcome, too. Greater Purpose

crafts a wide range of unusual hazy, sour, India Pale Lager and fruited styles of beer, along with stouts, porters, lagers, nut browns, red ales, barley wine, wheat beers and pilsners. Many are served out of traditional English casks.

"A beer for everyone, and 'pour with a purpose' are our mottos," VanHall said.

The clever names alone bring good cheer. There's the light, fruity, Sunday Morning mosaic

session IPL, the malty Inner Peace Ale West Coast IPA and the Nut Up or Shut Up bold brown ale, among others.

The blue paint and wood trimmed taproom is still limited capacity, but guests can spread out at picnic tables on the socially distanced, dog and cat friendly patio, while snacking on tacos and other casual fare from a diverse group of food trucks that rotate through the brewery parking lot.

## Details

**Greater Purpose Brewing Company:** 21517 E. Cliff Drive, Santa Cruz, 831-713-5540, [www.greaterpurposebrewing.com](http://www.greaterpurposebrewing.com).

**Humble Sea Brewing Co.:** 820 Swift St., Santa Cruz, 831-621-2890, [www.humblesea.com](http://www.humblesea.com).

**Santa Cruz Mountain Brewing:** 402 Ingalls St., #27, Santa Cruz, 831-425-4900, [www.scmbrew.com](http://www.scmbrew.com).

And guests can feel extra good about spending their money. As a point of pride, both the brewery and church give back to the community.

"The brewery is not a nonprofit, so it does pay taxes, but we do designate 30 to 60% of its profits for charities such as Save our Shores, Planned Parenthood, the NAACP, the local Diversity Center for LGBTQIA+ folk and the Homeless Garden Project," VanHall said. "The church donates 100% of tithes and offerings to similar ventures."

Unfortunately for beer-with-church lovers, VanHall is pondering a change for post-pandemic services.

"More than half of our church membership is atheist or agnostic, and we focus on the positive ethical teachings of scripture, not the spiritual aspect of the Bible,"



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Left: Humble Sea Brewing cans feature hand-drawn cartoons. Middle: Andrew Kokinakes works in the brewery in Santa Cruz. Right: The HS4 with Equilibrium is a foggy DIPA.

he said. "But going forward, we will likely not meet at the brewery for church services because we do not want those outside the Christian tradition to feel like they were tricked into coming to a religious service. If we did ever elect to use the space for such events, we now would do so during hours when the brewery isn't open to the public."

**HUMBLE SEA BREWING CO.**

Founded in 2015, the west-side brewery and taproom had a banner year through 2020, thanks to being forced to move from draft pours and introduce canned

beers for shipping. Co-founders Taylor West and Frank Scott Krueger and head brewer Nick Pavlina immediately discovered that their customers craved the stuff, placing hundreds of online orders in the first few hours the website went live.

Now, the nautical theme taproom and dog-friendly patio is back to serving its craft brews on-site with plans to open a second Santa Cruz area taproom in Felton. It does get very busy here, but crowds are well managed with distancing.

Part of the brewery's draw is its rotating selection of beers that are often one-of-a-kind recipes

(once the small batches are gone, they're gone). Beyond the signature favorite Socks & Sandals foggy IPA, there have been hundreds of unique creations like a David Boaty West Coast Pale Ale, an Otter Nonsense Decocted Baltic Porter or a Tiny House Big Mood White Chocolate Milkshake DIPA made with cacao nibs, coconut, roasted almonds, oat milk, almond milk and vanilla.

Food truck offerings are inventive, too, tempting with changing selections like asparagus-mushroom empanadas, chicken yakitori, salmon rice balls, pork-scallion gyoza and pizzas with tasty toppings like spiced

Impossible sausage, red onion, goat cheese, hot honey and oregano.

**SANTA CRUZ MOUNTAIN BREWING**

Organic is the operative word for this brewery, taproom and dine-in beer garden. Owners and brewers Emily Thomas and Chad Brill handcraft and hand bottle their ales, for unfiltered, lightly carbonated brews like a light, refreshing Daffodil Blonde ale or a robust Giant DIPA boasting strong, citrusy aromatic hops and a touch of bitterness.

Founded in 2005, the brewery

crafts unusual beers, as well, like Thy Twisted Sister, a dark, voluptuous stout spiced up with organic cacao nibs and smoky, hot organic chilis. Flights are popular for tasting the beer varieties, and guests can pair selections with bites like an overstuffed, toasted Cubano sandwich, tofu banh mi or a farmers' market salad, plus pre-packaged snacks like soft pretzels with spicy ale mustard and stout cheddar spread.

Guests spread out on the expansive patio — it's so pet friendly that there's a cold smoked marrow bone on the menu for Fido — soaking up the late night service until 10 p.m.

## Other breweries to visit on your Santa Cruz trip

**Sante Adairius Rustic Ales Santa Cruz Portal:** For their small Capitola brewery and Santa Cruz tasting room, owners Adair Paterno and Tim Clifford are inspired by the Belgian beer tradition. They craft fun suds like Four Legs Good Blonde Quad fermented in puncheon barrels with extensive oak large vat foudres aging; and Farmhouse

Noir saison beer tempting with chocolate and oat notes. They are planning to reopen at the end of May. (1315 Water St., Santa Cruz, 831-201-4141, [www.rusticales.com](http://www.rusticales.com))

**Shanty Shack Brewing:** Drive through and patio service has been the style at this nano-brewery for the past year. But

co-owners Brandon Padilla and Nathan Van Zandt draw fans for their innovative beers like the new Jala-Pale-Eñiyo strong pale ale brewed with jalapeños, lemongrass and black pepper. Also check out the kitchen-made lunches, daily changing food trucks and cute events like "Pawtraits," painting parties to benefit dog rescues. (138 Fern St., Santa Cruz, 831-316-0800, [www.shantyshackbrewing.com](http://www.shantyshackbrewing.com))

**New Bohemia Brewing Co.:** Crafting a mix of traditional and experimental beers, the brewery

and "Pleasure Point" beer garden welcomes guests with pours like the "extra dank" piney, malty and fruity Hook West Coast IPA. (1030 41st Ave., Santa Cruz, 831-350-0253, [www.nubobrew.com](http://www.nubobrew.com))

**Seabright Social:** The sprawling patio beckons for al fresco, casual American dining and signature suds including the smooth, medium-bodied, golden Pelican Pale Ale, and the Blur, a Pacific Northwest IPA made with Cascade, Lemondrop and Calypso hops. (519 Seabright Ave., Santa Cruz, (831) 426-2739,

[www.seabrightsocial.com](http://www.seabrightsocial.com))

**Discretion Brewing:** A large tent keeps the dog-friendly beer garden protected from the elements, while guests toast the joys of artisanal brews. Unusual recipes feature drafts like the Raspberry Smile Tart Raspberry Ale, a Barrel-Aged Allegedly Double Cream Ale and the "new school" Jugo Nuevo Hazy IPA brimming with aromas of tropical fruits and plenty of big hops. (2703 41st Ave., Suite A, Soquel, 831-316-0662, [www.discretionbrewing.com](http://www.discretionbrewing.com))

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# Storied Santa Cruz area bakeries hit sweet spot

By Matt Villano

Bakeries are often the heart and soul of a community. They're the places where people gather for yummy indulgences and the spots where families go to buy goodies that celebrate milestone occasions.

Put simply, communities do good with baked goods, and the Santa Cruz region is teeming with places to find them.

A rudimentary search for bakeries around town yields nearly a dozen options, including some of the most storied institutions in the entire region. Turns out Santa Cruz is a great destination for those with a sweet tooth.

"We do have a lot of bakeries," said Beth Holland, CEO of Beckmann's Old World Bakery, arguably the most famous of the bunch. "Maybe it's because we're a college town. Maybe we just like our treats."

Beckmann's is one of the older bakeries in town, dating back to 1985, when a German immigrant named Peter Beckmann founded it to perfect and sell breads he had learned to make while apprenticing in Heidelberg.

The bakery grew exponentially in the early years, selling directly to consumers out of a retail location on the West Side of town and at grocery stores and farmers' markets all over the central coast. Today, though the retail operation has closed, the bakery cranks out between 10,000 and 14,000 loaves each week. The signature approach: Clean, organic baking with no preservatives, ever.

"We've always baked things we wanted to raise our families on," said Holland, who joined in 1991.

Beckmann's is known for its sourdough, a milder spin on the sourdough you'd find at most bakeries in the Bay Area. The bakery also recently has launched a line of pies that has become popular; Holland said the company is gearing up to launch a new apricot pie later this year.

The CEO added that the production facility on 17th Avenue is open for (masked) tours by appointment, even as the region comes out of safety protocols connected to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Other Santa Cruz bakeries have established cult followings



PHOTOS BY BRIAN FEULNER

**Gayle's Bakery & Rosticceria in Capitola** opened in 1978 and features sourdough bread, eclairs and cookies as well as hot dishes.

for different specialties. The Buttery, for instance, has been famous for its cakes since Janet Platin founded it in 1984.

Companion Bakeshop, which started in 2006 and now occupies the former retail space for Beckmann's, is renowned for its variety — depending on the day you might find nearly two dozen options.

(Word to the wise: the Goat Horn, sourdough with goat cheddar, will change your life.)

Emily's Good Things to Eat is quirky, and offers six different kinds of croissants daily, as well as a host of sandwich options.

Then, of course, there's Gayle's Bakery & Rosticceria in Capitola, arguably the grand dame of them all.

Gayle's dates back to 1978, making it the oldest bakery in the entire area. The place is named after co-owner Gayle Ortiz, who opened it with her husband, Joe, and has run the place every day for 42 years and counting.

The lineup of baked goods at

## Details

**Beckmann's Old World Bakery:** 1053 17th Ave., Santa Cruz, 831-423-9242, [www.beckmannsbakery.com](http://www.beckmannsbakery.com)

**The Buttery:** 702 Soquel Ave., Santa Cruz, 831-458-3020, [www.butterybakery.com](http://www.butterybakery.com)

**Companion Bakeshop:** 2341 Mission St., Santa Cruz, 831-471-8378, <https://companionbakeshop.com>

**Emily's Good Things to Eat:** 1129 Mission St., Santa Cruz, 831-429-9866, [www.emilysbakery.com](http://www.emilysbakery.com)

**Gayle's Bakery & Rosticceria:** 504 Bay Ave., Capitola, 831-462-1200, [www.gaylesbakery.com](http://www.gaylesbakery.com)

Gayle's is legendary — before the COVID-19 pandemic the place was cranking out roughly 150 different items a day. This roster included usual suspects such as sourdough bread, eclairs and cookies. It also featured the famous Downtowners, a croissant-based cinnamon-sugar rolls that pay tribute to a bakery in Healdsburg.

While locals line up for these sweet treats, what sets Gayle's apart from other bakeries in the area is the rosticceria, which

offers hot dishes served from trays. This part of the business emerged organically in the early 1980s. Gayle and Joe went to Italy for inspiration and noticed that they were buying all their meals from these fast-casual restaurants arranged in this manner. That's when it hit them: Why not bring a similar concept back to Capitola?

"It worked out well for us because it brought in customers at off times," said Gayle Ortiz, looking back. "We added more

options and created a whole new line of business for ourselves."

Today some of the popular dishes on the rosticceria side include chicken enchiladas, teriyaki salmon, spinach gorgonzola pasta and farro, apple and arugula salad. On most days, there are at least 12 to 15 hot-food options in the case, as well as five to seven salads.

Gayle's also offers a Blue Plate Special every weekday; \$22.95 gets you a main course and two sides.

If those aren't enough options, Gayle's also operates a grab-and-go case with premade sandwiches, pizza kits, salads and cold pastas. Most days a cold version of the Blue Plate Special also is available.

"We've really evolved to the point where we offer something for everybody," Ortiz said. "I'm proud of what we've built and the food we make. More than anything I'm delighted we have created a place in the community where everybody can come together."



Left: Gayle's Bakery in Capitola is known for many unique item, including kouign-amann, a French pastry. Right: Orlando Comenarez layers cakes with frosting at Gayle's.




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