

Monterey County

The Monterey County Courthouse in Salinas.
Part 1 of 5: Moss Landing, Castroville, Salinas, Marina, Fort Ord, Sand City, Seaside, Chualar, Gonzales.



Monterey County

Population: 401,762 (Rank: 22)

Land Area (square miles): 3,322 (Rank: 16)

Monterey County is in the coast range. It lies on the south edge of Monterey Bay. The Salinas River flows north through the county into the Bay. Close to the bay the valley forms a broad coastal plain. Further inland it forms a narrow valley of highly productive farmland. To the east of the valley is the Gabilan Range. The Gabilans contain the Pinnacles National Monument. To the west is the Sierra de Salinas Range. Along the coast, separated from the Sierra de Salinas by the Carmel River and valley is the Santa Lucia Range. The coast is very rugged with the mountains plunging straight down into the ocean. There are few beaches. In the Santa Lucia Range is the Ventana Wilderness Area.

Most of the people live along the coast in the towns of Salinas and Monterey. Highway 1 follows the coast. Along this highway are Moss Landing, Castroville, Marina, Seaside and Monterey. Fort Ord is also located here. Fort Ord was a basic training camp for the army from World War II until recently. Now part of the base has been converted to Cal State University at Monterey.

The Monterey Peninsula helps shield the Bay from the ocean. It is noted for its charming towns, Carmel and Pacific Grove, and its golf courses. Seventeen Mile Drive, a scenic private toll road, winds its way from Pacific Grove to Carmel.

Below Carmel there are no towns to speak of because of the steep cliffs. Highway 1 is carved into the edge of the mountains and overlooks the ocean making it one of the most scenic highways in the nation.

While tourism is important with Carmel, Monterey and Pacific Grove attracting many thousands, the driving force of the economy is agriculture. Monterey has the third highest farm income in the state. The Salinas Valley, because of its climate, is one of the leading producers of lettuce in the world.

Highway 101 cuts down the middle of the Salinas Valley. There are the farm towns of Gonzales, Soledad, Greenfield and King City regularly spaced along the road. The Valley was once called the Salinas Desert. The Salinas River flowed only during the winter months and in the summer went underground. The construction of two reservoirs, Nacimiento and San Antonio, has changed the river so that it flows year around and has changed farming in the Valley from wheat and cattle raising to row crops.

A county road (G14) leads into the Coast Ranges where the Hunter Liggett Military Camp contains Mission San Antonio and the Hearst ranch house.

Monterey was one of the original counties in the state. Its name was derived from Monterey Bay, which was named by Sebastian Vizcaino in 1602 to honor Conde de Monterey, the Viceroy of New Spain. "Monte" means "mountains" and "rey" king in Spanish.

Cities: Salinas, Soledad, Gonzales, Greenfield, King City, Monterey, Pacific Grove, Carmel-by-the-Sea, Del Rey Oaks, Sand City, Seaside, Marina. Towns: Moss Landing, Bradley, San Ardo, San Miguel, Big Sur, Castroville, Chualar, Carmel Highlands, and Carmel Valley.

Monterey County



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Moss Landing

(April 2002)



Moss Landing

(April 2002)



Moss Landing

(April 2002)



Moss Landing

The population is 204. The town was founded as a whaling station in 1895. It changed its name to Moss Landing in 1917. The boat harbor holds 600 boats. (April 2002)



Moss Landing

(March 2004)



Moss Landing

(March 2004)



Moss Landing

(March 2004)



Moss Landing

(March 2004)



Moss Landing

(March 2004)



Castroville

(April 2002)



Castroville

Castroville is a farm community specializing in artichokes. 75% of the nation's artichokes are produced here. The town was established in 1863, Today the population is 6,500. (April 2002)



Salinas City Hall

Salinas has a population of 150,000. The city was laid out in 1867 and became an incorporated city in 1874. It is the county seat. (September 2009)



Salinas City Hall

(September 2009)



Salinas

(April 2002)



Salinas

(April 2002)



Salinas

(April 2002)



Salinas

(April 2002)



Salinas

(April 2002)



Marina

Marina has a population of 20,000. It became a city in 1975. It is next door to Fort Ord and always had a military flavor. Now it is becoming a college town with the establishment of Cal State University Monterey Bay. (March 2004)



Marina City Hall

(March 2004)



Marina

(March 2004)



Marina Beach

(March 2004)



Marina

(March 2004)



Marina

(March 2004)



Artichoke Field

Artichokes are a thistle that originally came from the Mediterranean. (March 2004)



Artichoke pickers

(March 2004)



California State University Monterey Bay

Fort Ord is now being converted to a university campus. (March 2004)



California State University Monterey Bay

(March 2004)



California State University Monterey Bay

(March 2004)



California State University Monterey Bay

(March 2004)



California State University Monterey Bay

(March 2004)



Fort Ord

Ford Ord trained soldiers to fight in World War II, the Korean and Vietnam wars. The base was open from 1917 to 1994. It is now being converted to civilian use. (March 2004)



Fort Ord

In 2012 President Obama declared 14,000 acres
the Fort Ord National Monument. (March 2004)



Fort Ord

(March 2004)



Fort Ord

(March 2004)



Del Rey Oaks

The city has only 1,650 residents. It was incorporated in 1953.
It didn't get a post office until 1968. (March 2004)



Sand City

The city is mostly industry. It has only 334 residents. It was incorporated in 1960. It has an artists colony on the west end.
(March 2004)



Sand City

(March 2004)



Sand City

(March 2004)



Sand City

(March 2004)



Seaside

Seaside was founded in 1888. In 1954 it became incorporated and now has a population of 33,000. (March 2004)



Seaside



Seaside

(March 2004)



Seaside

(March 2004)



Chualar

Chualar is one of the small farm towns in the Salinas Valley that make up the “Salad Bowl of America.” Lettuce, cabbage, and broccoli are grown here year around. Only 1,190 people live here. The town was founded in 1871 when the railroad arrived. (May 2008)



Chualar

(May 2008)



Chualar

(May 2008)



Chualar

(May 2008)



Chualar

(May 2008)



Chualar

(May 2008)



Chualar

(May 2008)





Gonzales

Gonzales has 8,187 people. It was founded in 1873 and became a city in 1947. Its number one industry is the Blackstone Winery. (May 2008)



Gonzales

(May 2008)



Gonzales

(May 2008)



Gonzales

(May 2008)



Gonzales

(May 2008)



Gonzales

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Gonzales

(May 2008)



Gonzales

(March 2004)



Gonzales

(March 2004)



Gonzales

(March 2004)



Gonzales

(May 2008)



Blackstone Winery – Gonzales

(May 2008)



Blackstone Winery - Gonzales

(May 2008)



Blackstone Winery – Gonzales

(May 2008)



Blackstone Winery – Gonzales

(May 2008)



Gonzales

(May 2008)

