



# A GOURMAND'S GUIDE

## to the Pacific Coastal Highway



### 5 Foodie Destinations Worth Braking For

By Greg Barbera

Everyone knows that a day at the beach is fun for the whole family, but a road trip along California's legendary Pacific Coastal Highway doubles the fun—whetting your appetite as well as your wanderlust.

So grab your sleek, spacious [Traverse](#)—with up to 12 cup holders for *everyone's* beverages and Smart-Slide second-row seating for easier hops in and out of the car—and whisk your hungry brood to these five foodie destinations.

With the sun at your back and the ocean at your side, tap into your inner gourmand. From foraging for wild mushrooms and tasting artisanal olive oil to sampling garlic ice cream and getting your hands on the elusive ghost pepper, this is one scenic *and* satisfying drive, no matter if you're in Southern, Northern or Central California.

(Do yourself a favor and take your mind off directions—[OnStar](#) will handle that.)

Are we there yet?

#### Santa Cruz

Your car's V6 will power you with quiet precision along the coast to the town of Santa Cruz, located an hour and a half south of San Francisco. This is [wild mushroom hunting territory](#). Chanterelles grow in the damp soil and thick leaf mulch at the foot of trees and by fallen branches; they are not grown commercially. Put your foraged fungi into a plastic bag and then simply cook them up with a little olive oil, garlic and salt and pepper. Make sure you are with an experience hunter or travel with a field guide to properly identify edible mushrooms.

#### Gilroy

Nicknamed the "Garlic Capital of the World," the city of Gilroy hosts [an annual garlic festival](#) for all those who like it pickled, minced or powdered. This versatile ingredient—a close cousin to the onion and shallot—is a chef favorite as it is a key element found in the dishes of most cultures throughout the world. Whether raw or cooked, it has an unmistakable scent. Just 50 minutes southeast of Santa Cruz, a trip to Gilroy will satiate any passenger's garlic jones.

#### San Luis Obispo

Located on the central coast of California about halfway between San Francisco and Los Angeles, San Luis Obispo's Mediterranean-like climate makes it a haven for vintners. But the weather isn't just ideal for growing grapes for wine—it is also great for growing olives. At [Pasolivo Farm](#) in the neighboring town of Paso Robles, visitors can sample some of their oils infused with lime, lemon or tangerine as well take a tour of the farm's olive press.

#### Camarillo

Just forty-five minutes north of Los Angeles is Camarillo, a bedroom community with a history that dates back to the Chumash Indians. It is also home to the orange-red pepper known as the "ghost pepper," once recognized as the hottest pepper in the world by the *Guinness Book of World Records*. How hot is this pepper? Think 400 times hotter than Tabasco sauce. Ouch! Take a detour and travel to the [McGrath Family Farm](#) and pick your own peppers.

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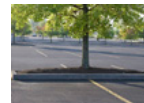
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growing produce up in tiers without the use of soil takes up less space, uses less water, can be grown year-round and keeps the greens safe from pesticide and fertilizer contamination. If it's green—like kale, lettuce, chard or arugula—it can be found at [Alegria Farm](#). If your hands are full of produce you just couldn't resist, don't forget to use your Traverse's Remote Start key fob to unlock the doors and start your car.

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