

2012



The Golden Pine Cones

October 26, 2012

READERS OF this newspaper are an educated, upscale bunch. And that means they really know their way around a restaurant, what makes a bottle of wine worth the price, where the best stores can be found, and how to pick a lawyer or a doctor. Want proof? It's right here in the list of winners of the 2012 Golden Pine Cones. Whether you're looking for a new restaurant for a night out, a great place for a family hike, or the best place to pick up some top-notch women's accessories, our readers have the quality advice you're looking for.

The results are from a poll conducted earlier this month of more than 10,500 subscribers to our email edition (to subscribe, go to www.carmelpinecone.com). Our readers know what they're talking about, and we make it difficult to stuff the ballot box. And that's why our winners are the real thing — and why, below, you'll not only find the best places to eat, shop and play, you'll learn a lot about your community.

And may we remind you once again: Shop locally!

FOOD and WINE

- Best Neighborhood Market
- Best Butcher
- Best Takeout

Bruno's Market & Delicatessen (also winner in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011) — *Junipero and Sixth - 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily - (831) 624-3821 - www.brunosmarket.com*

A quintessential family-owned, neighborhood market, Bruno's has become a Carmel institution, offering friendly service and a wide range of groceries, custom-cut meats and deli treats. It's also a barbecue joint, providing oak-scented specialties such as tri-tip, ribs, chicken and sausages. The go-to spot for picnickers and beachcombers, Bruno's is a sandwich-lover's dream, providing a myriad of side dishes along with a bevy of soft drinks from a wall-to-wall cold case.

■ Best Supermarket

Crossroads Safeway (also winner in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011) — *The Crossroads Shopping Village, Rio Road and Highway 1 - open 24 hours daily - (831) 625-8820 - www.safeway.com*

Well organized, roomy and lavishly appointed, the Safeway at the mouth of Carmel Valley has become a locals' favorite and has created a Renaissance in the shopping district around it. It's become the go-to place for all the basics, as well as gourmet goods — including one of the best wine inventories around. The store is complete with an olive bar, fresh bakery, salad bar, deli, bountiful produce aisles — and a full-scale Starbucks.

- Best Organic Produce
- Best Fruits and Vegetables

Farmers Markets (also winner in 2009 and 2010) — *www.oldmonterey.org/farmers.html - www.montereybayfarmers.org -*

www.everyonesharvest.org
A plethora of small family farms surrounding the Monterey Peninsula helps provide a variety of seasonal and year-round farmers markets with safe, fresh and sustainable produce. The largest market is held on Alvarado Street in downtown Monterey on Tuesdays from 4 to 8 p.m. (4 to 7 p.m. during the winter). Monterey Peninsula College hosts a market on Fridays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., and the Monterey Fairgrounds opens Gate 8 on Mondays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Pacific Grove enjoys an intimate, Monday afternoon market on Central Avenue from 4 to 7 p.m. A seasonal market at The Barnyard at the mouth of the valley is held Tuesday mornings May through September, and the same group launched a seasonal market last summer outside Whole Foods at Del Monte Center on Sunday mornings through October. The new kid on the block is the Independent Marketplace, which happens the first Thursday of each month in Sand City.

■ Best Seafood Market

Sea Harvest Fish Market & Restaurant (also winner in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011) — *100 The Crossroads - (831) 626-3626; 598 Foam Street, Monterey - (831) 646-0547 - hours vary by location - www.seaharvestcarmel.com*

Keeping seafood fresh is a difficult task, but Sea Harvest owner David Deyerly ensures his staff brings in the best and stores it properly. "Our promise to you is to provide the freshest seafood available," he says. For

Continues next page

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From previous page

26 years, Sea Harvest has purchased fish from healthy, sustainable fisheries to sell deliciously prepared in the restaurant or fresh-wrapped from its well stocked case. The restaurant makes everything from scratch and serves seafood in several preparations.

■ Best Wine Section

Nielsen Bros. Market (also winner in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011) — Northeast corner of San Carlos and Seventh - 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily - (831) 624-6441 - www.nielsenmarket.com

This charming corner market has long had a corner on wine offerings in Carmel. Owned and operated since 2009 by Tigran and Azniv Amirkhanian, the store boasts a cellar housing a collection that spans the globe. The market also offers wine tasting. To complement the wine, Nielsen Bros. carries a large selection of prepared foods and can quickly wrap a gift basket filled with wine, cheese and fruit.

■ Best Bakery

Pavel's Backerei — 219 Forest Ave., Pacific Grove - 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mon. to Fri., 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sat. - (831) 659-5100

For years, Paul and Johanna Wainscoat have produced some of the finest European breads and pastries on the Peninsula out of their cozy bakery off Pacific Grove's main drag. The mouthwatering breads (baguettes, flaky croissants, olive twists, nine-grain loaves) and pastries (cheese Danish, chocolate croissants, scones) have the locals lining up, so arrive early before only crumbs remain. Lunchtime sandwiches are also popular, as are the chocolate-chunk cookies that sell out by early afternoon.

■ Best Catering Company

Michael Jones, A Moveable Feast (also winner in 2008, 2009 and 2010) — P.O. Box 902, Carmel Valley - (831) 659-5100 - www.a-moveable-feast.com

Classically trained in the United States and abroad, the talented and creative Michael Jones is a caterer like no other. For almost 35 years, his incredible and innovative small bites and extensive feasts have delighted guests. A Moveable Feast reflects his philosophy of bringing "New World freshness and innovation to the Old World techniques and tradition of service," using locally grown organic ingredients from small farms, fresh meats and fish caught in Monterey Bay. Whenever you see Jones, with his chef's coat and trademark beret, you know the food will be fabulous.

■ Best Kitchen Shop

Sur La Table (also winner in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011) — Carmel Plaza, lower level - Mon. to Sat., 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Sun., 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. - (831) 626-6433 - www.surlatable.com

Sur La Table nears a 40-year legacy of sharing its knowledge and enthusiasm for cooking, and providing home cooks the quality tools to excel in the kitchen. When the company opened in Carmel Plaza five years ago, Peninsula foodies rejoiced. From bakeware, to cutlery, to the ultimate gadgets, the store seems to have everything to keep a kitchen well stocked. The friendly and knowledgeable employees — and the fact they will even sharpen knives for you — top the list of reasons Sur La Table is a local favorite.

- Best Monterey County Chardonnay
- Best Monterey County Pinot Noir
- Best Tasting Room
- My Favorite Monterey County Wine

Bernardus (also winner in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011)

— Tasting Room at 5 West Carmel Valley Road - 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. - (831) 659-1900 - www.bernardus.com/winery

Bernardus Pon launched his namesake winery in Cachagua more than two decades ago, and it has won awards and accolades far and wide. Pine Cone readers reaffirmed those sentiments by naming it their overall favorite Monterey County wine (specifically, its Chardonnay and Pinot Noir). And, for the first year, its tasting room in Carmel Valley Village earned high praise from readers. Vineyard manager Matt Shea cultivates Bordeaux and Burgundy varietals, and wine-maker Dean DeKorth and his team work to produce compelling vintages, year after year.

■ Best Monterey County Merlot

Galante Vineyards — 18181 Cachagua Road, Carmel Valley; tasting room at Dolores between Ocean and Seventh Avenue, Carmel — noon to 6 p.m. daily - (831) 624-3800 — www.galantevineyards.com

The philosophy at Galante Vineyards is simple: Grow the finest grapes possible and let the fruit express itself in the wine. Galante's estate-grown grapes deep in Carmel Valley produce award-winning wines, most notably premier Cabernet Sauvignon. But its deep ruby-red merlot, with its dry tannins, black pepper and a note of ripe cherry, really appeals to voters. The Galante family has a long history on the Peninsula. Owner Jack Galante's great grandfather, J.F. Devendorf, was one of the founders of Carmel.

■ Best Family Restaurant

Rosine's Restaurant (also winner in 2009, 2010 and 2011) — 434 Alvarado Street, Monterey - Sun. to Thurs., 8 a.m. to 9 p.m., and until 10 p.m. Fri. and Sat. - (831) 375-1400 - www.rosinesmonterey.com

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Carmel Pine Cone



Most appropriate for
portfolios over \$1 million.

From page 2 GPC

For 30 years, family-run Rosine’s has been a Monterey gathering spot, where guests fuel up on coffee and eggs Benedict, fiesta salads and patty melts, and decadent desserts that topple many off the diet wagon. The restaurant draws its fair share of tourists at its charming location in the center of Old Monterey (especially for weekend breakfasts), but Rosine’s really hangs its hat on locals, especially families, who find themselves drawn to the classic menu and the homespun service.

■ Best French Restaurant

Bistro Moulin (also winner in 2011) — 867 Wave Street, Monterey - 5 to 9 p.m. daily - (831) 333-1200 - www.bistromoulin.com

Chef Didier Dutertre could very well be the best chef on the Peninsula, crafting classic yet relevant food at his charming, European bistro in Monterey. From his Parisian-style spinach gnocchi to his decadent duck confit, Dutertre reaches and maintains perfection when it comes to French traditions. But he’s well versed in a variety of techniques and shows a special flair with local seafood. To complement the cuisine, wine director Colleen Manni offers great values (and splurges) while seamlessly handling front-of-house duties.

■ Best Chinese Restaurant

Tommy’s Wok (also winner in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011) — Mission between Ocean and Seventh - 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and 4:30 to 9:30 p.m. Tues. to Sun. - (831) 624-8518

It’s not the easiest place to find in Carmel, but Tommy’s Wok — tucked away in Redwood Court — is worth the search. Tommy’s serves up an irresistible menu of Szechuan, Hunan and Mandarin specialties, earning the restaurant everlasting devotion of locals. Many love to linger in the quaint dining room. Countless others stand

inside the steamy waiting area adjacent to the kitchen, watching frenzied cooks labor furiously over spattering woks — anxiously waiting for their takeout orders.

■ Best Indian Restaurant

Ambrosia India Bistro (also winner in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011) — 565 Abrego Street Monterey - 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and 5 to 10 p.m. - (831) 641-0610 - www.ambrosiaib.com

Chef Bhupender Singh has made his mark in Monterey, serving beautiful, authentically flavorful Indian food in an intimate atmosphere on Abrego Street, the site of the former Clock Restaurant. Ambrosia’s menu offers a delectable mix of vegetarian specialties as well as chicken, lamb and seafood entrees. On weekdays, locals pour into Ambrosia for its irresistible — and bargain-priced — lunch buffet. It has become a go-to place to enjoy lunch or dinner inside, or on the patio by the light of the outdoor fireplace.

■ Best Italian Restaurant

Little Napoli (also winner in 2009, 2010 and 2011) — Dolores and Seventh - 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily - (831) 626-6335 - www.littlenapoli.com

Restaurateur (and recent mayoral candidate) Rich Pèpe embraces his Italian roots at Little Napoli, offering comfort food from Naples — while adding a little New Jersey attitude for fun. His Dolores Street eatery is lively and personable, with the kitchen cranking out Old World classics such as Veal “Osso Buco” Ravioli with porcini-cream reduction and roasted mushrooms. Want fish? How about the Cioppino Rosso? Pèpe’s expansive menu also includes several creative pizzas, sandwiches, salads and entrées.

■ Best Sushi

Sushi Heaven (also winner in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011) — Dolores between Seventh and Eighth - 11:30

a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and 5 to 9 p.m. Mon. to Sat. - (831) 625-2067

Offering authentic Japanese fare — including a mouth-watering mix of more than 150 varieties of fresh sushi and roll — Sushi Heaven attracts a hungry crowd inside is cozy, intimate space. Purists love the elegant sashimi paired with one of several sake selections and being greeted by a hostess wearing a formal kimono.

■ Best Mediterranean Restaurant

■ Best Middle Eastern Restaurant

Dametra Cafe (also winner in 2009, 2010 and 2011) — Ocean and Lincoln, Carmel - 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily - (831) 622-7766 - www.dametracafe.com


Opened by best friends Faisal Nimri and Bashar Sneeh, Dametra Café features a veritable Mediterranean bounty, with a menu listing Greek, Italian, Spanish, Moroccan, Turkish, French, Israeli and Lebanese dishes. Nimri, from Jordan, and Sneeh, from Syria, have reinvented the concept of hospitality, greeting customers warmly and treating them like family. This intimate, familial space fills up with warmth, music and love — and the occasional belly dance.

■ Best Mexican Restaurant


Baja Cantina — 7166 Carmel Valley Road, Carmel Valley – Mon. to Fri. 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m., Sat. to Sun. 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. - (831) 625-2252 - www.carmelcantina.com

“Fill’er up” is the familiar refrain at this rural roadhouse that serves up authentic Mexican fare, exceptional margaritas and a festive atmosphere. The menu includes favorites such as Guadalajara Carnitas, Chile Verde en Molcajete and Teresa’s handmade tamales. With its vintage automobile memorabilia adorning the restaurant, Baja Cantina is a fun, friendly place to dine,


Continues next page




Katy's Place




2008



2009



2010



2011

The owners and staff of Katy's Place thank Pine Cone readers for voting us

Best Breakfast

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2012

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GOLDEN PINE CONES

From previous page

catch up with friends, watch sporting events, or hang out on the patio, where local bands play frequently.

Best Thai Restaurant

Baan Thai Restaurant (also winner in 2010 and 2011) — 1760 Fremont Blvd., Seaside - 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and 5 to 9 p.m., Mon. to Fri., noon to 9 p.m., Sat. - (831) 394-2996 - www.baanthaiseaside.com

Located in a not-so-fashionable strip mall, Baan Thai churns out authentic, flavorful food for reasonable prices. Baan Thai offers a wide variety of regional Thai specialties, most notably the crispy half-duck on baby bok choy, panang curry, tom kha gai soup and khao tung (crispy rice cakes with ground-chicken curry sauce). While the menu features no shortage of meat and seafood, vegetarians — and even vegans — will be right at home here.

Best Restaurant for Seafood

Flying Fish Grill — Mission between Ocean and Seventh, Carmel Plaza, lower level – 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. daily – (831) 625-1962 – www.flyingfishgrill.com

Owner/chef Kenny Fukumoto begins with the freshest seafood and uses his unique East-West fusion to bring the food to life at this discreet, Zagat-rated restaurant at the edge of Carmel Plaza. Fish fans rave about the Black Bean Halibut steamed in paper with fermented Chinese black beans, or the Yin-Yan Salmon, with angel hair pasta and flying fish roe garnish. Couples can share the Seafood Clay Pot, a veritable ocean of shrimp, scallops, mussels, squid, salmon and halibut.

Best Restaurant for Steak

Grasing’s Coastal Cuisine — Sixth and Mission, Carmel – Lunch, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.; dinner, 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. - (831) 624-6562 — www.grasings.com

Carnivores winced when Kurt Grasing closed Kurt’s Chop House a few years ago, but the restaurateur quickly reassured the faithful by moving most of the meat-centric menu items onto the list at his iconic Grasing’s. “Chop House Favorites” include USDA Prime steaks from Nebraska, including a 16-ounce, bone-in rib-eye, milk-fed veal chop and a Prime-natural New York. Classic steakhouse sides include creamed spinach, mac ’n’ cheese, leek rings and baked potato.

Best Restaurant For Vegetarians

Tillie Gort’s Cafe (also winner in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011) — 111 Central Ave., Pacific Grove - 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily - (831) 373-0335 — www.tilliegortscafe.com

Since it was founded in 1969 by Gil Tortellini — the restaurant’s namesake — Tillie Gort’s has been the Monterey Peninsula’s indisputable favorite for vegetarian food. Two fresh soups are offered daily, and the cafe’s menu is filled with vegetarian, vegan and organic options (including gluten-free cakes for dessert). There’s also plenty on the menu for non-vegetarians in this warm, wood-trimmed restaurant with a coffee-house atmosphere.

Best Appetizers

Mundaka (also winner in 2009) — East side of San

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Carlos, north of Seventh, Carmel - 5:30 p.m. until late daily - (831) 624-7400 - www.mundakacarmel.com

Mundaka burst onto the local dining scene in 2009, and Pine Cone readers responded that year by naming it Best New Restaurant. Talented chef Brandon Miller translates owner Gabe Georis’ love for Spain onto an exciting, eclectic menu. In Miller’s hands, tapas (small bites) have evolved into a sophisticated, mouth-watering experience that becomes a long, festive meal. Now with a full liquor license, Mundaka complements its thoughtful wine list with fes-

tive, creative cocktails. Mundaka is hip and loud, serving up food and fun well into the night in true Spanish tradition.

■ Best BBQ

Henry’s BBQ *(also winner in 2010 and 2011)* — 401 Lighthouse Ave., Monterey - Mon. to Thurs., 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Fri. and Sat., 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., and Sun., 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. - (831) 646-6999 - www.henrys-famousbbq.com

Henry’s stands as one of the few true barbecue joints left standing on the Peninsula. Locals love the mounded plates of tender, juicy, flavorful meats, including ribs, chicken, pulled pork or

pork loin. A common starter is the plate the pork riblets glazed with Henry’s special honey BBQ sauce. Meals here come with beef and bean chili, potato salad or macaroni salad, cole slaw, green salad or French fries and Bert’s Bacon-Cheese Bread or garlic bread.

■ Best Breakfast

Katy’s Place *(also winner in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011)* — Mission between Fifth and Sixth - 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. daily - (831) 624-0199 - www.katysplacecarmel.com

Katy’s Place has been a Carmel tradition since 1982, proving to residents and visitors alike that breakfast is not only the most important meal of the day, but the tastiest as well. The menu is laden with specialties, starting with 16 varieties of eggs Benedict. Or try one of the eight sinful waffles, including Katy’s signature Belgian. Owner Randall Bernett also offers blintzes with fresh berries, Swedish pancakes, corned beef brisket hash and Miss Audrey’s biscuits and gravy, just to name a few. And if you don’t rise until noon, no worries: Katy’s serves breakfast daily until 2 p.m.

■ Best Coffee

Carmel Valley Coffee Roasting Co. *(also winner in 2008 and 2010)* — Roasting facility at 212 Mid Valley Center, Carmel Valley – Mon. to Fri., 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. - (831) 624-5934 - www.carmel-coffee.com

Owners of the only certified organic coffee roaster on the Monterey Peninsula,

Dean and Janet McAthie have hit on a winning formula. Led by roast master Tina Muia, the company slow roasts Arabica beans in one of two 25-pound San Franciscan batch roasters. This radiant/convection method produces the perfect roast by providing constant feedback on the sight, sound and smell of the bean while it is developing. Its signature blend is Organic Carmel Foglifter, served in each of its six coffeehouses and at venues countywide.

■ Best Desserts

Patisserie Bechler *(also winner in 2008, 2010 and 2011)* — 1225 Forest Ave., Pacific Grove - Tues. to Sat., 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., Sun. 7 a.m. to noon - (831) 375-0846 - www.patisseriebechler.com

French-born Gérard Bechler is a master pastry chef who spent his formative years at the famed Auberge de l’Ill, a Michelin three-star temple of haute cuisine in Alsace. This talented and meticulous baker opened his shop in Pacific Grove in 1984 and has been pleasing palates ever since. The quality and creativity found in his stellar cakes shine in everything he and his staff bake, from tarts and cookies, to petits fours and cakes. He also makes the best quiche on the Peninsula, if not the country.

■ Best Coffeehouse

Carmel Coffee House & Roasting Co. *(also winner in 2009, 2010 and 2011)* — South side of Ocean west of San Carlos - 7 a.m. until afternoon/evening daily - (831) 626-2095 - www.carmelcoffee.com

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2011

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Formerly Caffè Cardinale, Carmel Coffee House & Roasting Co. has the town’s only onsite roaster, processing USDA organic beans in small batches to ensure freshness. Known for its expert service and quality espresso drinks, Carmel Coffee House also offers a nice selection of baked goods, sandwiches and snacks. A hidden and intimate courtyard yields long chat sessions with locals, particularly those with dogs in tow.

Best Happy Hour

Vesuvio — *Junipero and Sixth, Carmel – daily 4 p.m. to 11 p.m. - (831) 626-7373 – www.vesuviocarmel.com*

This hip trattoria, bar and pizzeria combination reinvigorated the downtown corner spot previously occupied by Piatti. Restaurateur Rich Pèpe put his stamp on the restaurant and upstairs Starlight Lounge, and turned the reins over to his son Christian. The happy hour runs from 4 to 6 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday and features \$5 cocktails and half-price items off the bar menu, either at the main or upstairs in Carmel’s only rooftop lounge (complete with fire pits and cushioned seating).

Best Ice Cream

MYO — *685 Cannery Row, No. 103, Monterey - (831) 649-3769 and 491 Alvarado St., Monterey - (831) 375-3769 – Sun. and Mon. to Thurs. 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., Fri. to Sat. 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. - www.myofrozenyogurt.com*

Actually, it’s yogurt, not ice cream, but MYO (which stands for Make Your Own) is hands-down the favorite frozen sweet for locals looking for a healthy snack, a decadent dessert or a fun interactive experience. With more than 50 fresh toppings (from exotic fruit such as kiwi, lychee and pomegranate to gummies, candy bar crumbles and cookie dough), MYO is always a yummy destination.

Continues next page

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2010

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Best Pizza

Allegro Gourmet Pizzeria
(also winner in 2008, 2009 and 2010) — 3770 The Barnyard - 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily - (831) 626-5454 - www.allegrogourmet-pizzeria.com

Since it opened in 1988, Allegro has been known for its unique pizza creations and relaxed atmosphere. Its owners say they wanted to create a “soulful pizzeria like the kind that exists in every Italian neighborhood ... no big deal, just great food, friends and wine.” The pies get most of the attention, but the kitchen also cranks out fresh salads, pasta, panini and other Italian favorites. A new wine bar offers sips and samples, and retail deals on fine bottles.

Best Fast Food

Chipotle (also winner in 2010 and 2011) — 500 Del Monte Center, Monterey; 2140 California Ave., Sand City - Mon. to Sun., 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. (DMC) and 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. (Sand City) - (831) 899-1096 (DMC) and (831) 641-9353 (Sand City) - www.chipotle.com

It may be fast food, but it’s good food: fresh, high-quality ingredients, humanely raised meats and abundant portions, all for decent prices. Steve Ells opened his first Chipotle in the site of a former Dolly Madison ice cream shop in Colorado in 1995 and has since expanded the chain promising “food with integrity.” Best known for its burritos, which could easily feed two, Chipotle also offers burrito bowls, salads, crispy and soft tacos, and chips and guacamole.

Continues next page

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GOLDEN PINE CONES

From previous page

- Best Buffet
- Best Piano Bar
- Best Brunch
- Best Outdoor Dining

Mission Ranch (also winner in 2008, 2009 and 2010) — 26270 Dolores Street - Dinner nightly from 5 p.m., Sunday Jazz Brunch 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. - (831) 624-6436 - www.missionranchcarmel.com

Former Carmel Mayor Clint Eastwood bought this rustic property in 1986 and restored the ranch-style building to its original integrity. Hugely popular with steak-lovers, jazz fans and those who adore the pastoral view, Mission Ranch also puts on one of the finest brunches on the Peninsula. The Sunday Jazz Brunch starts with a glass of bubbly, and includes a salad station, main dishes such as eggs Benedict and whole baked salmon, an omelet station, carving station, classic breakfast dishes and desserts.

The property’s exquisite views present meadows stretching to the south and joining the wetlands and Carmel River Beach. Point Lobos appears in the distance across Carmel Bay. Inside, the restaurant, with its casual cuisine, full bar and popular patio at happy hour, is perhaps best known for the piano bar, which features local favorites at the keyboard and just about anyone with a sense of song. And, once in awhile, Clint.

In the evenings, a savory dinner is served in the dining room or outdoors on the deck. Equipped with heaters for those chilly Peninsula evenings, the venue offers sweeping views of pastures with grazing sheep, the lagoon and arc of white sand framing Carmel River Beach.

- Best Wine List
- Most Romantic Restaurant
- Best Restaurant in Carmel

Casanova (also winner in 2008, 2009 and 2010) — Fifth Avenue between Mission and San Carlos, Carmel - 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily - (831) 625-0501 - www.casanovarestaurant.com

Established in 1977 by brothers Walter and Gaston Georis, sister Denise and her friend Michel, Casanova combines old-world elegance and hospitality with culinary innovation. The restaurant’s legendary wine list is deeply varied and a point of pride for the wine-savvy Georis family. Walter also owns Georis Winery in Carmel Valley. Casanova’s menu changes often, but memorable dishes include lamb brochettes, linguini with seafood, and fresh mussels with shallots.

- Best New Restaurant

Il Vecchio — 110 Central Ave., Pacific Grove – Tues. to Sat. 5 to 9:30 p.m., Sun. and Mon. 5 to 9 p.m. - (831) 324-4282 - www.ilvecchiorestaurant.com

Although the venue is new, Il Vecchio means “the old one,” a sensibility created by the atmosphere of this traditional Italian restaurant. Located in Pacific Grove, the trattoria romana transports patrons to the narrow cobble streets of Rome, where servers brush past waiting customers, carrying steaming plates of rigatoni, gnocchi or soup. Some sip from a chilled stem as they talk among themselves, unconcerned with the time. In establishing Il Vecchio, Carl Alasko, who lived in Rome from 1963 to 1974, has brought the culture and flavors of Italy to town, as well as head chef of the legendary Maccheroni in Italy, to train his staff in the precise timing and taste of true Italian cooking.

- Best Place to Take Clients

Rio Grill (also a winner in 2009 and 2011) — 101 Crossroads Blvd., Carmel - Lunch Mon. to Sat. 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., brunch Sun. 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., dinner from 4 until 10 p.m. Sun. to Thurs., 4 to 11 p.m. Fri. and Sat. - (831) 625-5436 - www.riogrill.com

Southwestern flair meets Southwestern flavor in a fusion of art and ingredients at iconic Rio Grill restaurant, whose colorful décor complements the cuisine by Chef Cy Yontz. His appetizers are such culinary art projects that some guest make a meal out of several. Consider the Dungeness crab cakes, Castroville artichoke, buffalo carpaccio with crispy capers, bacon-wrapped scallop bruschetta and a haystack of super thin and crisp onion rings, and you might just not have room for the main course. But you don’t want to miss out on pumpkin seed-crusted salmon or baby back ribs and that basket of fries with signature aioli sauce. Pair it with a glass of wine, and save room for the pie.

- Most Dog-Friendly Restaurant
- Best Place to Listen to Music

Cypress Inn (also winner in 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011) — east side of Lincoln north of Seventh, Carmel - lunch, noon to 4 p.m.; afternoon tea, 1 to 4 p.m.; dinner, 5 to 10 p.m. daily - (831) 624-3871 - www.cypress-inn.com

When the inn is located in one of the world’s foremost canine communities, and co-owned by Doris Day, who is devoted to dogs, there is going to be room at the inn and a place at the table for your pet. Whether you’re looking for lunch, dinner, cocktails or afternoon tea,

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GOLDEN PINE CONES

From previous page

accompanied by your faithful furry companion, Terry’s Restaurant & Lounge in the Cypress Inn will welcome you both. The specialty lunch menu includes crab cakes served with orange and Grand Marnier cranberry chutney, and the Cypress Burger topped with Gruyere cheese. Dinner is also delicious, featuring full entrees and tapas made from fresh, local ingredients, and afternoon tea is particularly pleasant. The complete tea ser-

Highlands Inn, 120 Highlands Drive, Carmel Highlands - dinner 6 to 9 p.m. nightly - (831) 622-5445 - www.pacificsedg.com.

When you live in one of the most beautiful places on the planet, it’s OK to celebrate an anniversary, birthday or other significant event at home. Make your memories at the grand Pacific’s Edge. Perched above the ubiquitous Pacific Ocean, the restaurant in the Hyatt Carmel Highlands inn offers exceptional contemporary cuisine by executive chef Matt Bolton, an extensive

use of seasonal, local ingredients, making the meal and the moment a memorable occasion. On a sunny summer day, there’s no better place to watch for whales while enjoying a magnificent meal. As the sun sets on the day, the night is lit by a thousand stars, putting a sparkle on the table setting. The wine list and full bar are exceptional, and the service is impeccable.

■ Best Restaurant in Carmel Valley

Café Rustica (also winner in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011) — 10 Delfino Pl., Carmel Valley - Tues. to Sun., 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and 5 to 8:30 p.m. - (831) 659-4444 - www.caferrusticacarmel.com

Anything rustic is, by definition, casual; distinguished from city elegance by being charmingly suited to the country. Which doesn’t mean you can’t dress up. Café Rustica’s charming simplicity is complemented by an extensive menu that melds the best of California and Mediterranean cuisine. The fresh local produce and housemade soups, thin-crust, wood-fired pizzas and unique pastas make owner Julien Belliard’s restaurant one of the busiest in the valley. Eat indoors or in the warmth of a heated patio table.

■ Best Restaurant in Pebble Beach

Roy’s (also winner in 2008, 2010 and 2011) — The Inn at Spanish Bay, 2700 17-Mile Drive, Pebble Beach - breakfast, lunch and dinner daily - (831) 647-7423 - www.pebblebeach.com

The father of Hawaiian-fusion cuisine, celebrity chef Roy Yamaguchi is known for his culinary innovation and pairing of tantalizing flavors at this sophisticated Pebble Beach restaurant. Fresh seafood is most prominent on the menu, such as sushi, sashimi, blackened ahi and crab-crusted sea bass, but Roy’s ginger-scallion encrusted New York Steak and charred garlic honey-mustard beef short ribs remain in demand. The atmosphere is contemporary and casual, ideal for intimate dining or big celebration, where every age is the in crowd. Right up till sunset, the views of the shoreline and golf course complement the cuisine and the culture at Roy’s.

■ Best Restaurant in Pacific Grove

Fandango (also winner in 2008 and 2011) — 223 17th St., Pacific Grove - 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and 5 p.m. until closing, daily - 831-372-3456 - www.fandangorestaurant.com

Pierre and Marietta Bain’s Fandango restaurant is a longtime favorite for its welcoming atmosphere, fresh food and extensive wine list. A warren of dining rooms accommodates large parties or dinner for two, and the extensive Mediterranean menu has something for everyone. Particularly popular are the Croque Monsieur souffle style, cassoulet and paella. And the decadent desserts are de riguer. A testament to the Bains’ conviviality is their dedicated staff and regular customers.

■ Best Restaurant in Monterey

Montrio (also winner in 2009, 2010 and 2011) — 414 Calle Principal, Monterey - 4:30 to 10 p.m. nightly, and until 11 p.m. Fri. and Sat. - (831) 648-8880 - www.montrio.com.

Pair creative cuisine with European and American influences, add an historical Monterey firehouse and a fabulous bar, and introduce exceptional service, and you have Pine Cone readers’ Favorite Monterey Restaurant for four years in a row. Chef and co-owner Tony Baker constantly updates the menu, retaining some old favorites while deftly applying his creative touch — and love of rich, bold food — to craft his savory pork-trio, bacon & egg salad and ratatouille risotto fritter, and working with sustainable seafood. The Happy Hour is a main attraction, and this small bistro with big-city ambiance is one of Monterey’s favorites for all occasions.

■ Best Restaurant in Sand City

Sweet Elena’s — 465 Olympia Ave., Sand City - (831)



Winners of The Golden Pine Cone receive a handsome framed certificate signed by publisher Paul Miller. The certificates start popping up in store windows and on office walls as soon as they’re presented. This certificate will go to Casanova restaurant on Fifth Avenue between Mission and San Carlos, which has won “Best Restaurant in Carmel” five years in a row. Quite an accomplishment!

vice features a selection of homemade scones with jam and thick cream, cookies, sandwiches, cakes, and Mighty Leaf teas. Dogs dine from their own tea tray of delectable doggie treats.

The Cypress Inn offers every comfort, including recently remodeled rooms and the personal service of a thoughtful staff, not only for its human guests, but for their canines, who are seen snoozing in the bar while their owners enjoy cocktails or make friends with other pet lovers in the lobby. The Cypress Inn has 44 rooms on two floors, a living room which doubles as a jazz lounge, and a beautifully landscaped courtyard, both with fireplaces.

■ Best Restaurant for a Special Occasion

Pacific’s Edge (also winner in 2010 and 2011) —

wine list assembled by wine director Paul Fried, paired with gracious ambiance and impeccable service. An evening at Pacific’s Edge often proves unforgettable, making it ideal for celebration.

■ Best Restaurant in Big Sur

Sierra Mar (also winner in 2011) — Post Ranch Inn, Highway 1, Big Sur - 12:15 to 9 p.m. daily - (831) 667-2800 - www.postranchinn.com.

Dining at Sierra Mar is an epicurean event, which unfolds in courses throughout the evening. Situated on the ridge overlooking the expansive Pacific Ocean, the restaurant at the Post Ranch Inn stands out for its stunning architecture, setting, cuisine and service. Executive chef John Cox and executive sous chef Matt Millea constantly impress with their deft and creative

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Best Restaurant in Carmel Valley



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GOLDEN PINE CONES

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393-2063 – Mon. to Fri. 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Sat. 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Closed Sun. – www.sweetelenas.net.

The name fits the pastry chef and her pastries. Elena Salsedo-Steele brings an international flavor to her artisan bakery, where everything is made from scratch and enjoyed fresh. Since 1992, Elena has created her mouth-watering confections, working with local ingredients and her Italian Mediterranean influence to bring her home country cooking to Sweet Elena's in Sand City. Just off the main drag, in a warren of warehouses amid a tracery of side streets, the bakery café, with its cement floors and simple furniture, popped with bright colorful art, offers succulent fruit pies and tarts made with local Meyer lemons; cherries, peaches, nectarines and apricots. Savor vegetable or chicken and chard galettes, or spinach and mushroom quiche. Taste fresh granola made with Amen bee honey, crisp biscotti with anise, and star cookies filled with raspberry jam. Just don't show up for Sunday brunch.

■ Best Restaurant in Seaside

Fishwife (also winner in 2008, 2009 and 2011) —
789 Trinity Ave. at Fremont, Seaside - lunch and dinner
daily - (831) 394-2027 - www.fishwife.com

Fishwife focuses on seafood, offering “California cuisine with a Caribbean accent.” Daily specials feature the local fresh catch and seasonal fish, including Monterey Bay sand dabs, salmon, mahi mahi, halibut, swordfish and sea bass. Salinas Valley produce and delicious house-made desserts complete the meal. The atmosphere is colorful and casual, prices are reasonable, and friendly servers contribute to a warm and welcoming ambiance.

■ Best Restaurant Service

Marinus (also winner in 2009 and 2011) — Bernardus Lodge, 415 W. Carmel Valley Rd. Carmel Valley - Wed. to Sun., 6 to 9 p.m. - (831) 658-3595 - www.bernardus.com

Whether you're staying at Bernardus Lodge or just in for the evening, Marinus is a popular special-occasion restaurant. With executive chef Cal Stamenov in the kitchen, the food is as special as the setting in this elegant dining room. Yet the experienced, attentive staff makes the occasion truly special. Wine director Mark Buzan, offers expert advice, while the warm and welcoming wait staff creates a pleasant atmosphere. Named for lodge owner Bernardus Marinus Pon, the restaurant carries his signature sophistication and elegance.

RECREATION and THE ARTS

■ Best Local Artist

Doug Steakley — *P.O. Box 736, Carmel Valley - (831) 601- 0632 - www.douglassteakley.com*

Photographer Doug Steakley's work is evolving into what he calls landscape photography. "I'm trying to avoid the postcard images," he says, "and, instead, go out to discover what is there. Not unlike the Carmel Mission, Yosemite is probably the most photographed place in the world, but I still go up there to find a new way of looking at it. And the Big Sur coastline is probably the second-most photographed place in the world. Again, I seek to represent it with images that view it differently. I'm always looking for that fresh image; sometimes it's just a matter of the lighting and the time of day that give us a new way of seeing what we have looked at before." His work has become emblematic for the beauty of the Monterey Peninsula, and for many places around the world.

■ Best Photo Gallery

Weston Gallery (also winner in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011) — north side of Sixth between Dolores and Lincoln, Carmel - 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Tues. to Sun. - (831) 624-4453 — www.westongallery.com

In the community where it essentially all began with pioneering image maker Edward Weston, what better place than the eponymous gallery to learn about the tremendous impact a handful of local photographers made in the world of fine art. In addition to presenting the work of the senior Weston and his sons, Cole and Brett, the gallery features the photographs of Ansel Adams, a former Carmel Highlands resident who is perhaps the most famous of all fine art photographers.

■ Best Sculpture Gallery

Steven Whyte (also winner in 2009 and 2011) — *Su Vecino Court on Dolores between Fifth and Sixth, Carmel*
- (831) 620-1917 - www.stevenwhytesculptor.com

One of the world's foremost sculptors, Steven Whyte is also known as the "Sculptor in the Park" at the annual Carmel Art Festival, where he creates a larger-than-life-sized statue of a noted figure in American history at Devendorf Park while an audience looks on. "Visitors see firsthand the work that goes into the art," says Whyte, "and hopefully they leave inspired and educated, and they have a greater appreciation for the pieces they see in the other Carmel galleries." Whyte has been selected to create numerous monuments, among them a tribute to Martin Luther King, Jr., Bob Hope, and Heisman Trophy winner John David Crow.

■ Best Art Gallery

Carmel Art Association (also winner in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011) — West side of Dolores between Fifth and Sixth, Carmel - 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily - (831) 624-6176 - www.carmelart.org

The second-oldest art cooperative in the country, and the oldest art gallery in one of the country's most legendary art communities, the Carmel Art Association was founded in 1927 to advance the knowledge of and interest in art, and to create a spirit of cooperation and

fellowship between artists and the community. Featuring an impressive roster of more than 120 local and regional artists, the art association displays a wide variety of styles and media, and changes its exhibits monthly.

■ Best Concert Venue

Sunset Center (also winner in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011) — San Carlos between Eighth and Ninth, Carmel - (831) 620-2048 - www.sunsetcenter.org

For decades, Sunset Center has been at the heart of Carmel's thriving performing arts scene. A \$21.4 million renovation in 2002 transformed what had begun in the 1920s as a grammar school and assembly hall into a world-class performing arts facility. Christine Sandin is executive director of the center, which is also home to the Carmel Bach Festival, the Monterey Symphony, Chamber Music Monterey Bay and the Carmel Music Society. There is more to the Sunset Center than performing arts, as it provides various local programs and houses various organization on site. Among them, the center promotes the arts in local schools through the Classroom Connections Program. It is also the location of the Yoga Center of Carmel, the Arts Council for Monterey County, and the Center for Photographic Art.

■ Best Movie Theater

Cinemark at Del Monte Center (also winner in 2011) — 1700 Del Monte Shopping Center, Monterey - (831) 373-8051 - www.cinemark.com

When it was determined that outdated couldn't be sufficiently updated, the movie theater at Del Monte Shopping Center became a furniture store, and the center started over with this 13-theater complex, which opened in 2004. Now, movie lovers don't have to leave

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town to enjoy stadium seating, high-tech sound and even digital projection (in all theaters). You can also order tickets online and print them at home or just show your credit card at the door. You still have to stand in line at the refreshment stand, which is more like a food court, with fresh popcorn, ice cream, a candy store, hot dogs and beverages.

■ Best Place to Dance

Sly McFly’s — 700 Cannery Row, Monterey – 11:30 a.m. to 2 a.m. – (831) 649-8050 - www.slymcflys.net

As the story goes, Sly McFly was raised by Maggie McFly, a madam at an elite Nob Hill saloon in San Francisco, until he left home to compete in European race car driving. Yet to secure a win, he placed second at a Trophy Race in Ulster, Ireland, and seemed more disappointed in missing out on the winner’s rose and kiss from beautiful modern dancer Isadora Duncan. Later, after he survived a spectacular crash, Duncan flew to his side, launching a tragic courtship. When driving through the countryside in McFly’s 1929 Ulster, Duncan flung her long, trailing scarf round her neck with dramatic flair, and it promptly caught and wove itself into the spokes of the Ulster’s rear left wheel. Sly McFly didn’t race for a year. More than 80 years later,

his infamous racing career is immortalized in prints and paraphernalia throughout the namesake watering hole known more for its blues and other rhythms that make people get up and dance.

■ Best Local Music Group (classical)

Monterey Symphony — 2560 Garden Road, Suite 101, Monterey - (831) 646-8511 - www.montereysymphony.org

Not only is the orchestration exceptional, but the seasonal selection of performance pieces, paired with renowned guest musicians, makes for a world-class experience and a wonderful night out. “The Monterey Symphony is a unique orchestra,” says Music Director and Conductor Max Bragado-Darman; “most notably because of the quality of its performances, comparable to the leading orchestras in California and because of the anticipation surrounding each of the concerts. I am proud of the artistic excellence of our musicians and the product we achieve together, and I urge everyone to come see what all the excitement is about. Our orchestra is the gem of the Central Coast of California and I feel privileged to be its artistic leader.” The 2012-2013 Season promises memorable performances of the greatest works for piano and orchestra.

■ Best Local Music Group (rock, jazz and pop)

The Money Band — 316 Mid Valley Center, Carmel - (858) 752-3590 - www.moneyband.org

When word gets out that The Money Band is playing, customers turn into crowds, creating standing room only. Which works out well since most people prefer to get up and dance. Not everyone knows their name at the start of the show, but by evening’s end, it could be none

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GOLDEN PINE CONES

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other than the most popular cover band on the Peninsula. Fronted by the dynamic lead vocalist Zoe Alexander, The Money Band plays every style from country to classic rock, disco to funk, reggae to modern rock and plenty of pop. We're putting our money on this one.

■ Best Place to Take Visitors

■ My Favorite Park

Point Lobos (also winner in 2008, 2009 and 2011) — West side of Highway 1 about 3 miles south of Carmel Valley Road - 8 a.m. to 30 min. after sunset - (831) 624-4909 - www.pointlobos.org

Although the phrase is attributed to several legendary artists and writers, reportedly landscape painter Francis McComas said it first, "It is the greatest meeting of land and sea in the world." As such, Point Lobos reportedly inspired the geographical setting for Robert Louis Stevenson's "Treasure Island." It was established as a state reserve in 1933 and has since become a magnet for hikers and outdoor enthusiasts. Noted for its dramatic, rocky coastline and dense groves of Monterey pines and Monterey cypress, the reserve features miles of walking paths that lead to stunning vistas, secluded picnic spots and sandy beaches. Adjacent the reserve is one of the world's steepest submarine canyons, making it a popular destination for divers. A museum at the reserve pays tribute to its fascinating legacy as a whaling center, and also has some interesting exhibits about Hollywood movies made nearby.

■ Best Local Festival

Carmel Bach Festival — NW Corner of 10th & Mission, Cottage 16, Carmel - (831) 624-1521 - www.bachfestival.org

Olive Grimes has attended every Carmel Bach Festival since 1961, and she has the tickets and programs to prove it. This year, its 75th season, she didn't miss a beat. She has survived the \$21.4 million renovation of the Sunset Center, has navigated her way to new performance venues and, this year, missed out on the Carmel Mission Basilica as it readied its new roof. Bach has never left her heart. Olive fell for Bach long before she fell in love with Bruce Grimes, the handsome Basso Cantanti from the Chicago Opera who could sing Bach the way it was meant to be heard. Her husband has been gone for more than 15 years, but she still has Bach. She's not alone. The festival, which continues to create an alchemy of traditional and progressive approaches to classical music remains the favorite festival among townspeople and tourists.

■ Best Church-Sponsored Event

Mission Fiesta — Carmel Mission, 3080 Rio Road, Carmel - (831) 624-1271 - www.carmelmission.org

Staged on the scenic courtyard of the Carmel Mission, the 48th Annual Carmel Mission Fiesta drew record numbers of revelers ready to enjoy the outdoor Mexican celebration. The longtime community tradition attracts in-towners and out-of-towners to enjoy savory barbecue and Mexican food, and dance to live music by the Chicano All Stars Band. Meanwhile, participants shop the open-air market of handmade works by local artisans. Kids can enjoy their own fun-filled festival, with plenty of games and prizes. This festive cultural event is fun for the whole family.

■ Best Place To Watch The Sunset

■ Best Place to Walk Your Dog

■ Best Beach

Carmel Beach (also winner in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011) — Foot of Ocean Ave. and west side of Scenic Road, Carmel

Carmel Beach is everything the postcard promised. The arc of fine white sand framing the slate or cerulean sea is the envy of beachgoers all over the world. Located just down the hill from downtown and in the lee of Pebble Beach, it offers a generous slice of California

Continues next page

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coastline that reaches from Carmel Point to the scenic greens of the famous Pebble Beach Golf Links. The cypress-sheltered shore features less fog and wind than most nearby beaches, making it an ideal location to take in the striations of sunlit skies, and then wait and watch for the signature green flash just as the sun sinks into the horizon.

Carmel Beach is one of the few where dogs are allowed off-leash to run with abandon along the shore. For many dogs and their owners that morning or afternoon walk along Carmel Beach is the social event of the week.

■ Best Hiking Trail

Garland Ranch Regional Park — 700 W. Carmel Valley Road, nearly 9 miles east of Highway 1, Carmel Valley - www.mprpd.org

Less than 10 miles from the seashore, the weather warms up, and mountains rise, and the great Carmel Valley ushers in pedestrians and equestrians to commune with the silent sanctuary of pristine nature. Garland Ranch Regional Park encompasses more than 4,400 acres and features dozens of miles of hiking trails. A vast network of paths climbs more than 2,000 feet, exploring shady creeks and leading to dazzling,

sun-drenched vistas. The park is managed by the local Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District, which doesn't charge visitors a fee for entering the park, but somehow manages to keep the park's trails in top condition — no small achievement in these challenging economic times.

■ Best Bicycle Shop

Bay Bikes (also winner in 2011) — 3600 The Barnyard Shopping Center, Carmel, and 585 Cannery Row, Monterey — 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mon. to Thurs., Fri. and Sat. 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Sun. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. - (831) 624-RIDE (7433) - www.baybikes.com

With a new retail and rental shop fronting a recently completed stretch of the Carmel Hill and River Bicycle Trail, Bay Bikes is betting Carmel is primed to become a major destination for bicyclists. The business is also an official showroom for Specialized Bicycles, the Morgan Hill company that created the world's first mass-produced mountain bike.

■ Best Dive Shop

Aquarius Dive Shop — 2040 Del Monte Ave., Monterey — (831) 375-1933 - Mon. - Fri. 9 a.m.- 6 p.m., Sat. and Sun. 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. - www.aquariusdivers.com

Since 1970, Aquarius Dive Shop is as close as we get to Poseidon, ruler of the sea and protector of those who venture in. Approved as a PADI (Professional Association of Diving Instructors) 5-Star Instructor Development Center, Aquarius offers recreational dive training for beginning, open-water levels up through PADI IDC Staff Instructor, including Specialty and EFR instructors. The shop is known for its commitment to "provide thorough, safe and enjoyable dive training, which is in full compliance with all PADI training standards."

Continues next page

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For information about our other markets, please visit us at: www.montereybayfarmers.org

GOLDEN PINE CONES

From previous page

■ Best Golf Course

Pebble Beach Golf Links (also winner in 2008, 2009, 2010) — 1700 17 Mile Drive, Pebble Beach - hours vary by season - (831) 622-8723 - www.pebblebeach.com

Since 1919, the exquisite beauty and unique dynamics of the Pebble Beach Golf Links have challenged and thrilled golfers and their gallery. The famed course has been the site of golf's most prestigious tournaments, including the annual AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am and the 1972, 1982, 1992, 2000, 2010 and upcoming 2019 U.S. Open Championships. Designed by Jack Neville and Douglas Grant, the course hugs the rugged coastline, providing wide-open vistas, cliffside fairways and sloping greens. It is a delightful day on the green for all players. Pebble Beach Golf Links also includes chipping and putting greens, the Peter Hay par-3 golf course and a practice range.

■ Most Dog-Friendly Hotel

■ Best Hotel

Cypress Inn (winner of Most Dog-Friendly Hotel in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011) — Lincoln and Seventh - (831) 624-3871 - www.cypressinn.com

The Cypress Inn was founded in 1929, a warm, Mediterranean-style establishment designed to showcase the idyllic Carmel-by-the-Sea lifestyle. In the 1980s, the inn became the first dog-friendly hotel in town, and has since welcomed generations of locals and visitors alike to bring their pups along for the fun. According to its website, co-owner and prominent animal-rights advocate, Doris Day, believes that at Cypress Inn, “four-leggeds are as welcome as their humans.”

■ Best Museum

Monterey Museum of Art — 559 Pacific Street, Monterey - Wed. to Sat., 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sun., 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - (831) 372-5477 - www.montereyart.org

The Monterey Museum of Art holds eight galleries of American artwork, spanning more than a century of California history, and is complete with a reference library and a gift shop. The museum is just across from Colton Hall, and has another location at 720 Via Mirada, currently closed for exhibit construction.

■ Best Local Theater Company

PacRep Theatre (also winner in 2010 and 2011) — Monte Verde and Eighth - (831) 622-0100 (box office) - www.pacrep.org

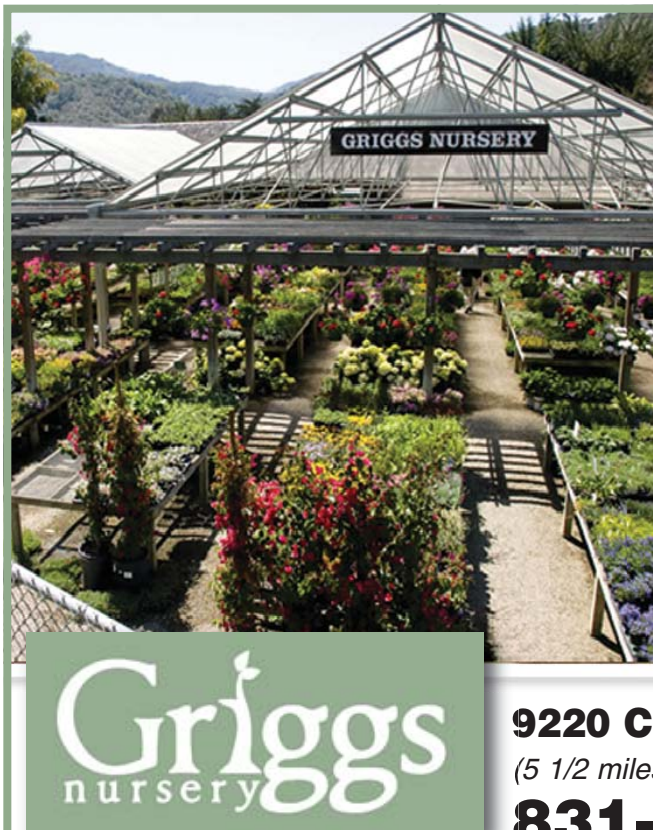
The company describes its mission as producing “bold and daring interpretations of the great plays from the world stage.” PacRep upholds its reputation as the only professional theater on the Monterey Peninsula, having recently finished running Shakespeare’s “Much Ado About Nothing.” Upcoming productions include, “Conversation with Georgia O’Keefe” at the Circle Theater (Casanova between Eighth and Ninth, Carmel) and “Monty Python’s ‘Spamalot’” at the Golden Bough (Monte Verde between Eighth and Ninth, Carmel).

■ Best Fitness/Health Center

Carmel Valley Athletic Club (also winner in 2008, 2009 and 2010) — 27300 Rancho San Carlos Road, Carmel Valley - Mon. to Fri., 5:30 a.m. to 10 p.m., and Sat. to Sun., 6:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. - (831) 624-2737 - www.cvaconline.com

Home to everything from a “cardio theater” and Pilates classes, to personal trainers and “over 5000 pounds of Hammer Strength weights,” Carmel Valley Athletic Club boasts an ever-expanding array of fitness programs for all ages. Along with its signature tennis program, CVAC has garnered recent recognition for the addition of what it calls, “America’s #1 relaxation spa,” Refuge.

Continues next page



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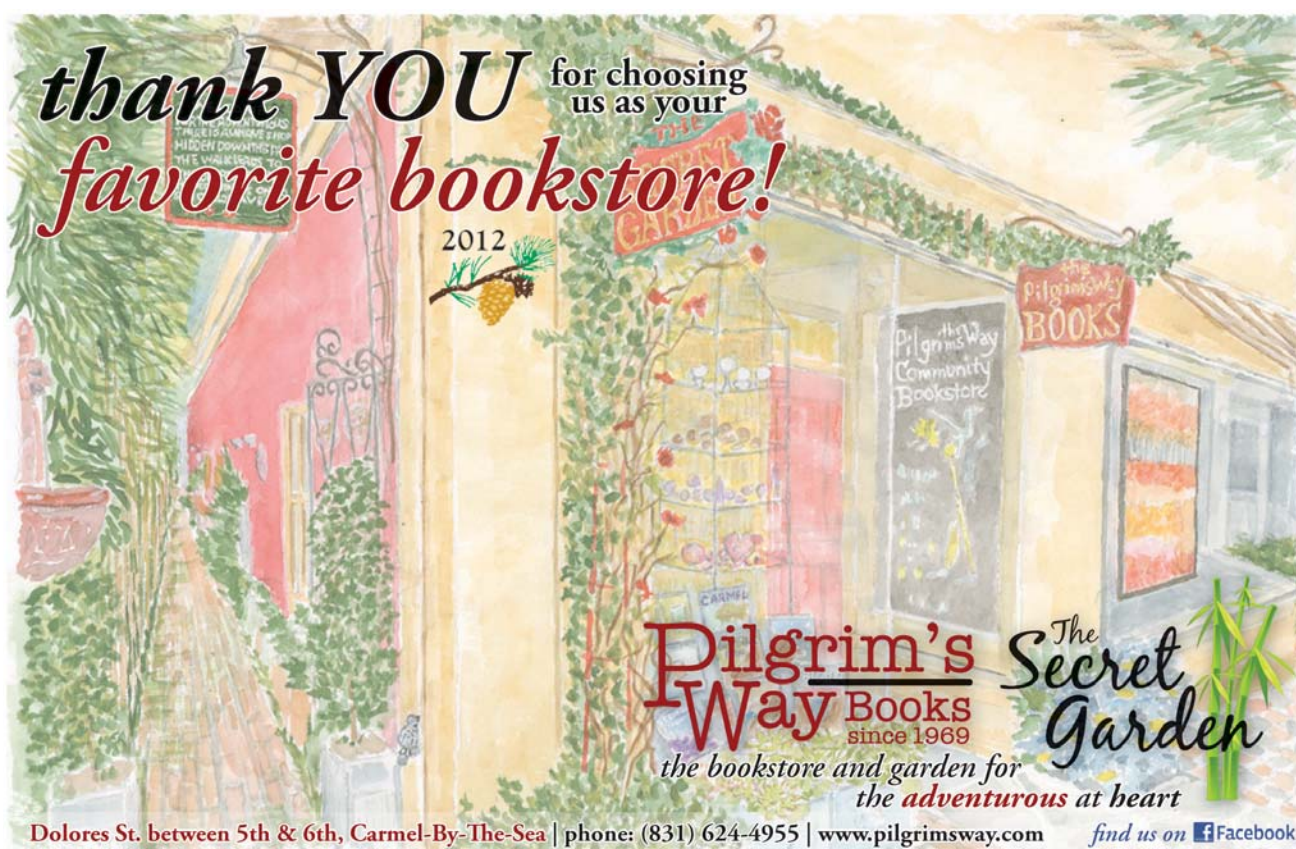
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From previous page

■ **Best Inn/B&B**

The Vagabonds House (*also winner in 2011*) — *Fourth and Dolores - (831) 624-7738 - www.vagabondshouseinn.com*

Currently in its second generation of ownership by the Denny LeVett family, The Vagabonds House offers a selection of eleven quaint suites, complete with complementary breakfast, daily wine receptions, creative workshops, and an array of spa packages.

RETAIL

■ **Best Florist**

Twigery (*also winner in 2011*) — *Seventh Avenue between Lincoln and Dolores - Mon. to Fri., 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sat., 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sun., 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. - (831) 626-8944 - www.twigery.com*

Owned by Michael Merritt, a certified

member of the American Institute of Floral Designers, Twigery specializes in wedding arrangements and whimsical creations for every occasion. Merritt's portfolio highlights natural sculptures crafted with everything from orchids to asparagus, a range of material that is sure to satisfy every request.

■ **Best Furniture Store**

Poppleton's (*also winner in 2009 and 2011*) — *299 Lighthouse Ave., Monterey - Mon. to Sat., 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sun., 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. - (831) 649-3083 - www.poppletonshome.com*

Poppleton's has "captured clients' imaginations" for yet another year, offering a selection of French, American, and Italian-style furnishings that promise an interior ambiance of ornate grandeur. Having "personally selected" each piece, Mike Poppleton continues to fill his showroom with the utmost care and attention to the interests of clientele.

Continues next page



2012

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GOLDEN PINE CONES

From previous page

Best Golf Shop

Pebble Beach Pro Shop (also winner in 2011) — 17 Mile Drive, Pebble Beach - 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. daily - (831) 622-8723 - www.pebblebeach.com

Where better to go for all things golf than one of the sport’s most famous locations? Pebble Beach Pro Shop outfits golfers for a day on the links with clothing, accessories, shoes and equipment.

Best Hardware Store

Knapp Hardware (also winner in 2008, 2009 and 2010) — Mission and Eighth - Mon. to Fri., 7:45 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and Sat., 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. - (831) 624-8231

Nestled on a quiet corner in downtown Carmel-by-the-Sea, Knapp is a hidden hardware treasure. The shop sells tools, plumbing and electrical materials, plywood, and cabinet, shuttering and countertop supplies.

Best Housewares Store

Sur La Table — Carmel Plaza - Mon. to Sat., 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Sun., 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. - (831) 626-6433 - www.surlatable.com

Despite locations all over the country, Sur La Table feels like a truly local institution. The store has a wide selection of culinary equipment, table settings, linens and accents for the kitchen and home. With its many wares and a knowledgeable staff, customers can easily find just what they are looking for.

Best Craft-Knitting-Quilting Shop

Knitting by the Sea — Fifth Avenue near Junipero - Mon. to Sat., 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. - (831) 624-3821 - www.knit-carmel.com
Just off Fifth Avenue rests Knitting by the Sea, a haven for all things crocheting, knitting and crafting. Past the charming window displays, the store shelves both U.S.-sourced and international yarns, books and patterns, and “unusual buttons,” according to its website. Along with supplies, the shop offers knitting and crocheting lessons.

Best Pet Store

Diggidy Dog (also winner in 2009, 2010, and 2011) — Ocean and Mission - 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily - (831) 625-1585 - www.diggidydog.com

With its wide selection of all things dog and cat, and appropriately pet-loving employees, Diggidy Dog is a pet lover’s heaven. Whether your choice is a bedazzled collar, plush toy, pet stroller, or gourmet cookies, Diggidy Dog is fit to treat the very best of four-legged companions.

Best Garden Shop

Griggs Nursery (also winner in 2008) — 9220 Carmel Valley Road, Carmel Valley - Mon. to Fri., 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sat., 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sun., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. - (831) 626-0680 - www.griggsnursery.com

A Carmel Valley institution for more than 37 years, Griggs Nursery continues

to display its expertise in the business of plants and pottery, selecting their wares from local farmers and craftsmen. According to a client review, there are nothing but “great experiences” at Griggs.

Best Camping/Skiing/Surfing Store

REI (also winner in 2009, 2010, and 2011) — Imjin Parkway and Second, Marina - Mon. to Fri., 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Sat., 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Sun., 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. - (831) 883-8048 - www.rei.com

REI is the Peninsula superstore for all things outdoors, its products ranging from weatherproof tents to kayaking equipment. The enormous Marina location houses a professional bike shop, ski and snowboard shop, and plenty of rental gear, so you can be ready to take on the elements.

Continues next page



Carmel Valley Athletic Club was voted best Fitness/Health Center for the fourth time, and this year the club’s spa, “Refuge” (right), also won a Golden Pine Cone in its category.

Best Brunch

20082009201020112012

Best Buffet

2009201020112012

Best Outdoor Dining

200920102012

Best Piano Bar

20082009201020112012

Cocktails from 4 PM
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From previous page

■ Best Place to Buy Athletic Equipment

Sports Authority — 905 Playa Avenue, Sand City - Mon. to Sat., 9 a.m. to 9:30 p.m., and Sun., 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. - (831) 899-1436 - www.sportsauthority.com

Judging by its name and nomination, Sports Authority has become the local authority for athletic gear. The sporting goods store recently joined the Sand City Shopping Center (where Circuit City used to be), stocking athletic equipment, apparel and accessories from many popular companies such as Nike, Adidas and Columbia.

■ Best Pharmacy

Carmel Drug Store (also winner in 2009, 2010, and 2011) — Ocean and San Carlos - 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily (the pharmacy opens at 9 a.m.) - (831) 624-3819 - www.carmeldrugstore.com

Since 1910, Carmel Drug Store has stood on Ocean Avenue, serving locals and tourists as they come for its full-service pharmacy and to peruse the various cosmetics, sunglasses, cameras and gifts. Carmel Drug Store now offers over-the-phone and online ordering for both the pharmacy and general store. Truly, a Carmel institution.

■ Best Camera/Photo Store

Green’s Carmel Camera Center (also winner in 2008, 2010 and 2011) — Fifth and San Carlos - Mon. to Sat., 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Sun., 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. - (831) 624-8880 - www.greenscamera.com

Green’s Carmel Camera Center knows quite a lot about cameras, providing general tune-ups as well as selling a full range of digital cameras and equipment. Both online and in-store services are provided for printing images up to 24x36, as well as for professional photo editing. Green’s puts it best when they say, “Come in to see the Green’s Carmel Camera difference.”

■ Best Toy Store

Thinker Toys (also winner in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011) — San Carlos and Seventh - Mon. to Thurs., 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Fri. to Sat., 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Sun., 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. - (831) 624-0441 - www.thinkertoys.com

Whether you are drawn to displays of puzzles, games and stuffed animals, or the enormous Ferris wheel perched in its window, Thinker Toys is a must-visit. Both the Carmel and the Del Monte Shopping Center stores offer a wide selection of traditional and modern toys for customers both young and old.

■ Best Children’s Clothing Store/Boutique

Heaven — Lincoln between Ocean and Seventh - Mon. to Sat., 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Sun., 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. - (831) 624-6550 - www.heavenincarmel.com

According to owners Monique and Ash Vasanji, they have “spent years traveling the world” to ensure the utmost quality and fashion-forwardness in every piece sold at Heaven. Whether it is a pair of metallic sandals or one of their signature tulle skirts, Heaven presents charmingly feminine looks for every little girl.

■ Best Men’s Clothing Store

J. Lawrence Khaki’s (also winner in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011) — Carmel Plaza - Mon. to Wed., 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Thu. to Sat., 9:30 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Sun., 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. - (831) 625-8106 - www.khakisofcarmel.com

In Khaki’s, Carmel finds yet another claim to fame, due to its nomination as one of the best men’s stores in America by Esquire magazine. Providing made-to-measure pieces, personal shopping consultants, home delivery and complimentary tailoring, Khaki’s showcases the most stylish of men’s apparel, footwear and accessories, with great service to match.

■ Best Men’s Shoe Store

Hedi’s (also winner in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011) — Ocean and Mission - 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily - (831) 624-5580; and 3630 The Barnyard - Mon. to Sat., 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Sun., 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. - (831) 625-2055 - www.hedi.com

With its two Carmel locations, there is no excuse not to make a stop at Hedi’s. According to the store’s website, this family-owned shoe boutique is well into its 20th year of providing great service and “only the finest comfort brands,” such as Ecco, Soffit, and Ariat.

■ Best Women’s Clothing Boutique

■ Best Place for Brides to Shop

Intima — San Carlos between Ocean and Sixth - Mon. to Fri., 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sat., 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Sun., 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. - (831) 625-0599 - www.inti-macarmel.com

The team at Intima scours both the American and European markets to ensure the best in lingerie and swimwear, pulling from popular brands like Cosabella, Falke and many more. With owner Sylvie Howe, a graduate of the Fashion Institute, at the helm, Intima offers professional bra fitting and bridal services to round out its resume.

■ Best Women’s Accessories

Carried Away (also winner in 2011) — 612 Lighthouse Ave., Pacific Grove - Mon. to Sat., 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and Sun., 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. - (831) 656-9063 - www.carriedawayboutique.com

Owners Rosemary and Bill Valuch first tested the waters of the fashion market upon a shelf at their P.G. garden store,


Continues next page



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GOLDEN PINE CONES

From previous page

Miss Trawick’s. Riding on the success of these fashion accessory sales, Carried Away was born. The store embraces a sense of stylish whimsy in its array of hand-bags, jewelry, accessories and home goods.

Best Women’s Shoe Store

Lloyd’s Shoes (also winner in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011) — Ocean Avenue at Dolores Street - Mon. to Sat., 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Sun., 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. - (831) 625-1382 - www.lloydsshoes.com

Evident in its constantly bustling atmosphere, Lloyd’s is a favorite stop among locals and visitors alike. According to its website, Lloyd’s has provided “a unique and extensive collection of quality women’s footwear” since 1975, frequently updating its stock with the latest from brands such as AGL and Stuart Weitzman.

Best Place to Buy Designer Clothes

GBG (also winner in 2008, 2009 and 2011) — Mission and Seventh - 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily - (831) 626-3368

The cool, hushed atmosphere and stylish staff of GBG provide a perfect environment to showcase its large collection of contemporary, upscale designers. Offering beautiful designs from Diane von Furstenberg, Vince, Miu Miu, Marc Jacobs and many more, GBG tempts women of all tastes to indulge themselves in some serious retail therapy.

Best Place to Buy Vintage Clothes

Yellow Brick Road Benefit Shop (also winner in 2009, 2010 and 2011) — 26388 Carmel Rancho Lane - Mon. to Sat., 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. - (831) 626-8480

Vintage is back in style, and Yellow Brick Road can help you to embrace the look with gently used clothes, accessories and home goods. Because the store donates its profits to more than 300 schools and charities around the Peninsula, you can be on-trend and serve your community at the same time.

Best Jewelry Store

Hesselbein’s (also winner in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011) — 143 The Crossroads - Mon. to Sat., 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Sun., 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. - (831) 625-2522 - www.hesselbeins.com

With “loyal customers from all over the U.S., Europe and Asia,” Hesselbein’s has garnered both local and international recognition as a superior source of fine jewelry. Certified gemologists work behind the scenes to ensure the utmost quality and craftsmanship in every piece, along with providing repair and maintenance services.

Best Shopping Center

Del Monte Center (also winner in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011) — Munras Avenue at Highway 1, Monterey - (831) 373-2705 - www.delmontecenter.com

With new additions seeming to pop up every few months (the most recent being H&M and Prunedale’s Provence Bakery), Del Monte Center is ever evolving. The mall includes favorites like Williams-Sonoma, Apple, Gap, Macy’s and more, as well as a 13-screen Cinemark movie theater and several restaurant options, from Chipotle to P.F. Chang’s.

Best Antique Shop

Trotter’s Antiques (also winner in 2008 and 2010) — 590 Lighthouse Ave., Pacific Grove – Mon. and Wed. to Sat., 11a.m. to 4:45 p.m. - (831) 373-3505 - www.trotter-santiques.com

P.G.’s resident antiques expert, Madeline Trotter, hand-selects every piece in her 6,000 square foot showroom, having done so with each 17th, 18th and 19th century antique that has passed through Trotter’s since 1963. Mrs. Trotter is in the store six days per week, ready to share her expertise and help you select the perfect piece.

Best Bookstore

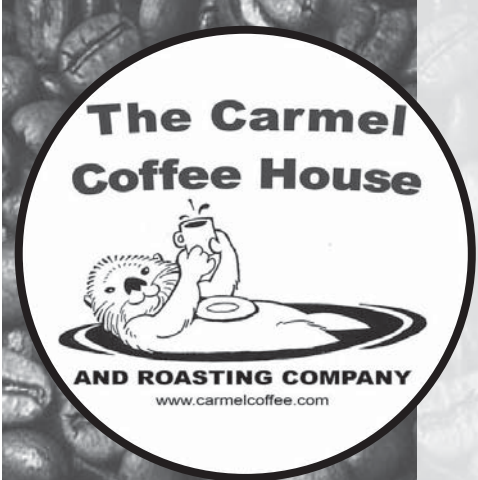
Pilgrim’s Way — Dolores and Sixth - Mon. to Tue., Thu. to Fri. and Sun., 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Wed., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sat., 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. - (831) 624-4955 - www.pilgrimsway.com

As “Carmel-by-the-Sea’s Last and Only Bookstore,” Pilgrim’s Way is a trademark of our seaside village, and has attracted a loyal local following as a result. A family-owned business, Pilgrim’s Way offers a pleasant shopping experience with its cozy store and collection of books, home goods, music and charming gifts.

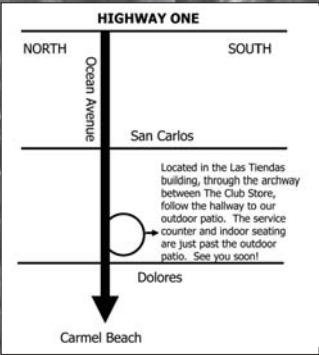
Best Car Dealer

Mercedes-Benz of Monterey (also winner in 2008)

Continues on page 21 GPC




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2010



2011

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■ “Thank you for providing balanced and researched reporting and upbeat articles. I hope we have The Pine Cone around for many years to come. If it gets down to it, I would pay for the subscription to keep the paper viable.”

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■ “Thanks for the consistently great job you do with your newspaper. I regularly read several newspapers from around the country and yours has the best editorial integrity — bar none. Keep up the good work!”

■ “I look forward to The Pine Cone more than you will ever know.”

■ “The Pine Cone used to be my Friday morning habit, and now it’s my Thursday night habit. I also love the fact I can get the entire paper online when I’m out of town.”

■ “I am a regular advertiser in your paper, and I have been meaning to tell you how much I enjoy your writing. It accomplishes exactly what I guess you want it to: I always want to read on. I appreciate and enjoy your talent.”

■ “I just wanted to tell you how much I appreciate The Pine Cone and the fact that it seems to be the only news medium that does not feel it must serve up a diet of perversion, doom, gloom and controversy in order to glean and keep readers.”

■ “I am writing to thank you for your excellent newspaper, especially since it is available online. God Bless you and your editorial and production staff.”

■ “I love your newspaper!”

■ “I am so grateful to read all about the local news.”

■ “I just want to tell you how much I enjoy receiving The Pine Cone online ... it keeps me connected with Carmel. I love what you guys do.”

■ “I don’t know where all the good reporters have gone, but I sure miss them when I read other local papers. Keep up the good work. Your community needs you.”

■ “I can’t begin to tell you how much I look forward to The Pine Cone. It gives me more news in one week and one edition than the Herald does all week. You and your staff seem to have an ability to sniff out what is really important and of interest to Carmelites, weed out all the extras, and deliver it in a concise and timely manner. I can’t thank you enough for it.”

■ “I love Carmel and your enticing commentary. You’re creative.”

■ “Probably 50 people came to our event because of the article you printed. I kept asking people, ‘How did you hear about this?’ and pretty much to a person they said, ‘the article in the paper,’ which meant The Pine Cone. Thank you so much.”

■ “I have always been amazed at your editorials in The Pine Cone in that I do not believe I have ever disagreed with one of them. From taxes to the economy, to our current leaders, the crazy historical preservation efforts in Carmel, our court system, you have been a voice of sane reason in an increasingly insane world. I call you the ‘anti-Chronicle,’ and, believe me, that is a huge compliment.”

■ “Thank you for your excellent, easy-to-read, always-appreciated newspaper.”

■ “Your team is doing a great job! I have been a subscriber for a while now. The paper lets me know what’s going with my Favorite Place On Earth.”



*‘They love us ...
they really,
really love us!’*

— *unsolicited subscriber comments*

20,000 copies in print • 10,800 subscribers online • 98 years of serving the community

GOLDEN PINE CONES

From page 19 GPC

■ Best New Car

Lexus (also winner in 2008, 2010 and 2011) — sold locally by Lexus Monterey Peninsula, 1721 Del Monte Blvd., Seaside - (877) 204-2818 - www.lexusmontereypeninsula.com

Lexus is known for its sleek range of sedans, SUVs, convertibles, and hybrids, vehicles that push boundaries in innovation and design. The company has even formed a Lexus Covenant, based on doing things “right from the start,” with excellent service to accompany “the finest cars ever built.”

■ Best Gas Station

Carmel Shell (also winner in 2009, 2010 and 2011) — Fifth and San Carlos - (831) 625-3513

Carmel Shell captures the spirit of Carmel-by-the-Sea, providing reliable service while advertising itself in appropriately Carmel fashion (a simple wooden scallop, emblazoned with the word “Shell” hangs in front of the station). Carmel Shell has continued to implement commercial excellence in our local environment, garnering much praise along the way.

■ Best Car Wash

El Estero Car Wash (also winner in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011) — 590 Fremont St., Monterey - Mon. to Sat., 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and Sun., 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. - (831) 373-1801 - www.elesterocarwash.com

Getting your car washed at El Estero is quite a production, with machines

Pebble Beach reads The Pine Cone

buzzing and employees buffing vehicles to perfection, as cars come and go in a continuous stream. To round out its excellent reputation, El Estero recycles all wash water, and supports the community with donations to local schools and charities. The facility was recently remodeled, and features a comfortable waiting area, clean restrooms, and some interesting shopping while you’re waiting for your car to be spiffed up.

■ Best Computer Store

Apple (also winner in 2009, 2010 and 2011) — 240 Del Monte Center, Monterey - Mon. to Fri., 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Sat., 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Sun., 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. - (831) 647-4480 - www.apple.com

The Peninsula has a serious case of Apple fever. And how can you not, walking into a store filled with beautiful gadgets and staff so helpful that they greet you even before you enter the store? Del Monte’s Apple store stocks the very latest in iPhone, iPad, iMac and more.

■ Best Gift Shop

Carmel Bay Company — corner of Ocean and Lincoln - 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily - (831) 624-3868 - www.carmelbaycompany.com

Carmel Bay Company stocks a selection of goods that rivals the breadth of any shop in Carmel. Items range from garden products and kitchen supplies, to fashion accessories and wall décor, ensuring that customers can find something to please even the most discerning of recipients.

■ Best Music Shop

DO Re Mi Music & Video (also winner in 2011) — 26135 Carmel Rancho Blvd., Suite B1 - Mon. to Fri., 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Sat., 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Sun., 11-5 - (831) 625-1229

Though music has made a dramatic tran-

sition to digital platforms in the past decade, DO Re Mi serves as a reminder that sometimes, personal service trumps an instant search. Keeping a mix of hard-to-find artists along and new releases, DO Re Mi has earned the praises of Pine Cone readers and local music-lovers alike.

■ Best Candy Shop

Cottage of Sweets — Ocean between Monte Verde and Lincoln - Mon. to Sat. and Sun., 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Fri. to Sat., 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. - (831) 624-5170 - www.cottageofsweets.com

On Ocean Avenue, The Cottage of Sweets is a beacon of sugary delight. Where else is the air content labeled, “5 calories per sniff?” With a saccharine selection ranging from freshly made fudge to imported wafers, the shop ensures that every customer leaves with a little white bag in hand.

■ Best Carpet and Flooring Store

Bereman Carpets (also winner in 2009, 2010 and 2011) — 1070 Del Monte Ave., Monterey - Mon. to Fri., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sat., 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. - (831) 373-

7759 - www.beremancarpets.com

Bereman Carpets is a full-service flooring and carpeting company and has been serving Monterey County for years. In addition to traditional hardwood floors, tile and carpet, they now offer environmentally friendly bamboo floors. They also have flooring made from recycled cork, which means last year’s wine corks may be coming to a floor near you soon!

■ Most Environmentally Friendly Store

Eco Carmel (also winner in 2011) — San Carlos between Seventh and Eighth - Mon. to Sat., 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sun., 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. - (831) 624-1222 - www.ecocarmel.com

Eco Carmel’s wide variety of green products for everything from pets to cosmetics and home products is now available through their website. They’re expanding their line of home products to include countertops and carpet. Look for a revamped nursery department with new baby furniture in November, too.

Continues next page

Thank you for voting

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BEST CARPET & FLOORING STORE

2009 2010 2011 2012

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One block north of Lake El Estero
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We want to thank the Monterey Peninsula for again naming Dr. Douglas Sunde

“Best Plastic Surgeon”

2012



2011



2010



2009



2008



Douglas Sunde, M.D., F.A.C.S.
Plastic Surgeon
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Monterey, CA 93940
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Grazie Tante!
(thank you)

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LITTLE NAPOLI
BISTROT ITALIANO

2012 

Corner of Dolores & 7th (831) 626-6336

www.chefpepe.com

From previous page

SERVICES and HEALTH CARE

■ Best Place to Volunteer

Carmel Foundation — Southeast Corner of Eighth and Lincoln - Mon. to Fri., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sat., 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. - (831) 624-1588 - www.carmelfoundation.org

The Carmel Foundation, at age 62, is older than some of the seniors for whom it provides services. Over 200 valued volunteers take on diverse jobs from delivering meals to housebound seniors to acting as tour hosts on bus trips to San Francisco.

■ Best Retirement Community

The Park Lane — 200 Glenwood Cir., Monterey -
Mon. to Fri. 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. - (831) 250-6159 -
www.theparklanemonterey.com

The Park Lane should know something about retirement - it's been around since 1967. Services like transportation that's available daily and 12-hour dining service keep residents happy. Exercise opportunities including yoga and weight training, along with educational lectures and events keep body and mind active.

■ Best Place To Work

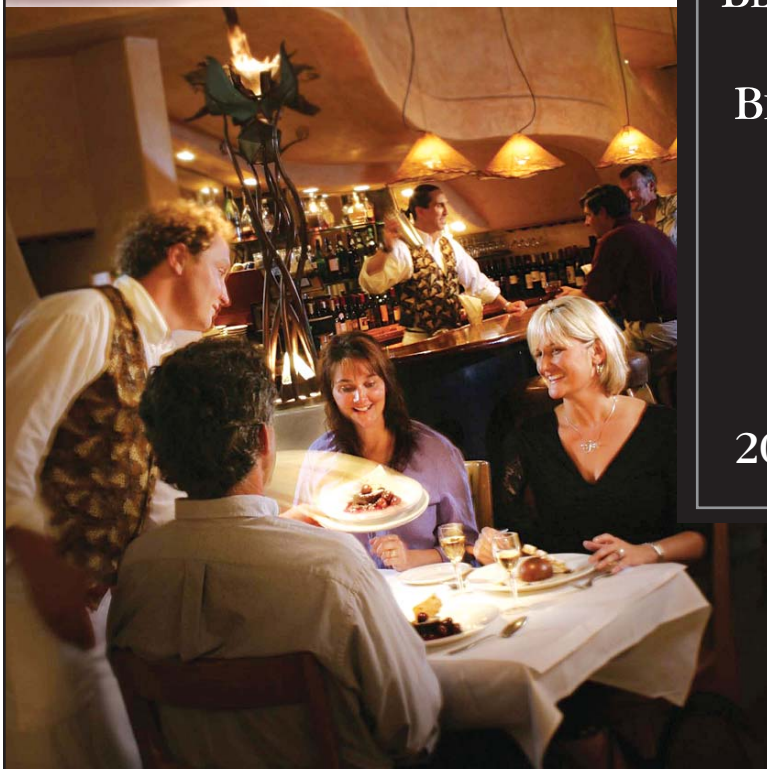
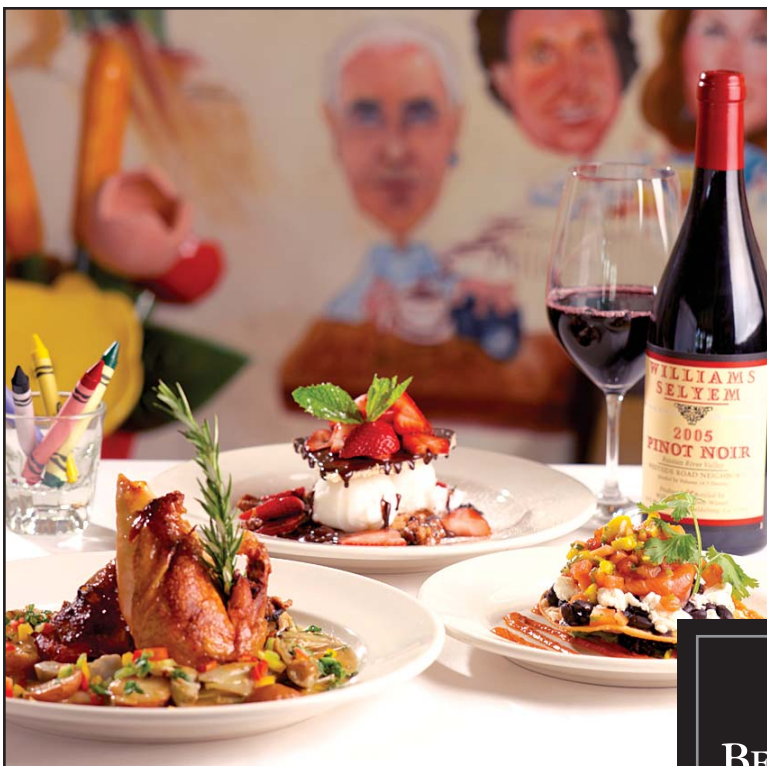
Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula (also winner in 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011)
— 23625 Holman Highway, Monterey, and numerous
other locations - (831) 624-5311 - www.chomp.org

Competitive pay and benefits aren't all that attract employees to Community Hospital. According to Brenda Moore, Assistant Director of Communication and Marketing, "I think people like to work here because they can play a part in making sure everyone gets the best care possible." What a great feeling!

■ Best Place To Get Married

Carmel Mission (also winner in 2008, 2009 and 2010) — 3080 Rio Road, Carmel - 9 a.m. to noon; 1:30 to 4 p.m. - (831) 624-1271 - www.carmelmission.org

Continues next page



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next concert
and let us
thank you
in person!**



November 16, 17, 18, 2012

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montereysymphony.org

GOLDEN PINE CONES

From previous page

The dignified and weathered stone edifice of the Basilica has been the setting for more weddings than anyone cares to count. In addition to the Basilica, the Blessed Sacrament Chapel is available for smaller ceremonies. Wedding planning guidelines are located on the Mission's website.

■ Best Electrician

Cate Electrical (also winner in 2008, 2009 and 2010) — Dolores and Seventh, Carmel-by-the-Sea - (831) 624-5361 - www.K8Electric@aol.com.

This family-owned business has been around since 1961. Cate Electrical is committed to the local community in emergency work, residential, commercial, remodel, repair and generators. With four professional electricians, including Mike Cate, Jud Boone, Sean Morgan and Nic Beatty, Cate Electrical provides top quality service, with honest and high attention to detail with satisfaction guaranteed.

■ Best Plumber

A&R Plumbing, Inc. (also winner in 2008, 2010, and 2011) — 1720 Contra Costa St., Sand City - (831) 394-7221 - www.aandrplumbinginc.com

Clogged pipes? Need a new washer installed or a sewer line inspected? A&R does all that and more. Since its founding in 1974 the business has grown to 20 employees, including many family members of the original owners. They pride themselves on traditional values of hard work and fair pricing.

■ Best Architect/Designer

Eric Miller (also winner in 2010 and 2011) — 157 Grand Ave., Pacific Grove - (831) 372-0410 - www.ericmillerarchitects.com

Eric Miller, designer of numerous high-profile projects, including The Carmel Foundation's Trevett Court, prides himself on designs that "respond to the client's vision for architectural style and lifestyle preferences," according to Jana Reitzell, Business Manager. His extraordinary designs and execution bring him back again as our readers' favorite.

■ Best General Contractor

Stocker & Allaire (also winner in 2011) — 21 Mandeville Court, Monterey - (831) 375-1890 - www.stockerallaire.com

Stocker & Allaire has been one of the Monterey Peninsula's most successful contractors since its founding in 1983 by David Stocker and David Allaire. Unafraid to push the creative envelope, Stocker touts their latest project - a rammed-earth house powered by solar and geothermal energy.

■ Best Landscaper-Gardening Service

Town and Country — 26362 Carmel Rancho Lane, #214 - Mon. to Fri., 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. - (831) 625-3105

Town and Country's customers are bound to hear a familiar voice when they call - most of the staff have been there for over ten years. They pride themselves

on doing good work and giving their customers good value for their money. With over 30 years' experience, they're the local "go-to" for gardening.

■ Best Real Estate Company

Carmel Realty (also winner in 2011) — 5 SW of Dolores & Seventh and two other locations - (831) 622-1000 - www.carmelrealtycompany.com

Owned by Dan and Shelly Mitchell, Bill and Vicki Mitchell and Peter and Cara Butler, Carmel Realty strives to provide the highest level of customer service to clients. "We are a quality-driven company and not a quantity-driven one," notes Peter Butler. They will celebrate 100 years in business in 2013.

Continues next page

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2010

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From the desk of
Roya Javid, MD, MHS

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*As a thank you, we are extending our popular Carmel Laser
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Thank You

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Coastal Valley Dermatology

26366 Carmel Rancho Lane, Carmel CA

Carmel reads The Pine Cone

GOLDEN PINE CONES

From previous page

experienced staff will help match furry friends’ personalities to facilities from deluxe doubles to luxurious kitty condos.

Best Yoga Studio

The Yoga Center of Carmel (also winner in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011) — San Carlos and 10th - (831) 624-4949 - www.yogacentercarmel.com

Director Kathleen Karachale and her staff of certified instructors offer daily classes, weekend workshops and training for teachers. She says the key to the studio’s success is “respecting that each individual is unique,” and providing a range of practice styles to benefit a diverse body of clients.

Best Martial Arts Studio

American Karate — 623 Lighthouse Ave, Monterey - 3:30 to 9 p.m. Mon. to Fri., 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Sat. - (831) 372-KICK (5425) - www.amerikankaratemonterey.com

American Karate teaches students of all ages, but specializes in children’s programs. Starting as early as age 3, kids can learn coordination and self control through the martial arts. Owner Matt Durney offers a free week of karate lessons and a free month of cardio-kickboxing for new clients.

Best Car Repair Shop

Nystrom Automotive (also winner in 2010 and 2011) — San Carlos and Fifth - 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Mon. to Fri. - (831) 626-4407

When it comes to cars, Nystrom Automotive pretty much does it all - oil changes, tires, batteries, air conditioning repairs. Eric Nystrom, a lifelong resident of Carmel, acquired the former Lugo’s Shell in 2004. The shop is known for its convenient location and Nystrom’s personable service.

Best Auto Body Shop

Gene’s Import Auto Body — 531A Shasta Ave., Sand City - Mon. to Fri., 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. - (831) 899-0343 - www.genesimportautobody.com

This Mercedes Benz- and BMW-certified repair shop has been open since 1979. Using state-of-the-art equipment, Gene’s skilled technicians work hard to restore damaged autos to their former glory. According to their website, “Our job is to melt away your stress and anxiety with professionalism, efficiency and courtesy.”

Best Dry Cleaners

Carmel Cleaners (also winner in 2009 and 2010) — Junipero and Third - Mon. - Fri., 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sat., 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. - (831) 624-3616.

Owned by Deok Chong for the past 30 years, Carmel Cleaners says, “Good clothes deserve good care.” It also calls itself a “wedding-gown expert.” In addition to dry cleaning, the shop performs alterations and other laundry services. One online reviewer described the customer service as “kind” and even “compassionate”.

Best Airline from MRY

United (also winner in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011) — Monterey Peninsula Airport and hundreds of destinations around the world - (800) 864-8331 - www.united.com

Of the five airlines that fly out of Monterey, only United flies to San Francisco, Los Angeles and Denver. From there, the world is yours for the traveling - for business to Chicago or to take time off and relax on a beach in Hawaii, Cabo or Paris.

Bernardus in Carmel Valley (right), owned by Ben Pons, is a regular winner of The Golden Pine Cone, not only for its excellent wines, but also for the quality of its restaurant, Marinus.



Best Travel Agent

P.G. Travel (also winner 2008, 2009 and 2010) — 593 Lighthouse Ave., Pacific Grove - Mon. to Fri., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. - (831) 373-0631 - www.pgtravel.com

“Yes, travel agents do still exist,” laughs Joe Shammas, P.G. Travel’s owner. “Clients don’t want to go through thousands of Internet pages and book with someone they don’t know. We have more than 80 combined years of experience to guide clients to the best choices.”

Best Hair Salon

March Hare (also winner in 2009, 2010 and 2011) — Fifth Ave. and Mission - Tues. to Sat. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. - (831) 624-3024 - www.marchharesalon.com

“The stylists here at the Salon love bringing out the best in people by creating styles unique to each one,” says owner MaryAnna Wagner Stahl. Stahl, who’s been doing hair for 43 years, has had March Hare since 1985. She says the spa-like atmosphere and “amazing customer service” are her winning combination.

Best Skin Care

Coastal Valley Dermatology — 26366 Carmel Rancho Lane, Carmel - Mon. to Thur., 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. - (831) 293-8458

Located in the Carmel Rancho area, Coastal Valley Dermatology says “everyone deserves healthful skin at any age.” Treatments are by Dr. Roya Javid, who says she focusses on always providing the “highest quality dermatologic care available.”

Best Nail Salon

Nails Spa by the Sea (also winner in 2009, 2010 and

2011) — Seventh and Monte Verde - Call for appointment - (831) 625-2623 - www.nailsspabythesea.com

Nails by the Sea offers an impressive menu of services well beyond manicures and acrylic nails. How about a one-hour spa pedicure including sea salt scrub, hot towels, massage and polish? Waxing is available, as well as selection of massages including Shiatsu, Swedish and Aromatherapy.

Best Massage Therapist

Stephen Hekhuis (also winner in 2011) — Call for appointment - (831) 224-4669 - www.amritaloka.com

Stephen Hekhuis calls his work a “glorified janitorial service - I pull stress out of others and throw it away.” His practice is outcall-only; he does both individual massage and mini-sessions for parties. With 25 years of experience, Stephen works intuitively to help clients relax and heal.

Best Spa

Refuge — 27300 Rancho San Carlos Rd. - Daily, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. - (831) 620-7360 - www.refuge.com

Carmel valley Athletic Club’s spa isn’t even a year old and it’s already a hit with our readers! For just \$39, guests can warm up in the giant sauna or eucalyptus steam room and then plunge into one of four cold pools, relax, and repeat until bliss ensues.

Best Dentist

Steve Austin (also winner in 2011) — 16 Ford Road, Carmel Valley - Call for hours and appointments - (831) 659-4944

Continues next page

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2009

2010

2011

2012

Christine Chin
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Linda Griffin Wilson
Escrow Officer

Justin Tyme Noren
Escrow Assistant

Doug Toby
Sales Manager

Lynda Bounsall
Escrow Officer

Jeniffer Kocher Murphy
Escrow Assistant

Doug Otmar
County Manager

3855 Via Nona Marie, Suite #100 Carmel, CA 93923 • 831-625-5980

GOLDEN PINE CONES

From previous page

“Gentle, patient and kind” are all words you want to hear when heading off to the dentist, and according to his staff, Dr. Austin is all three. The practice offers a full range of dental services and convenient Saturday appointments for patients.

■ Best Dermatologist

James Rheim and Joseph Rheim (also winner in 2008, 2010 and 2011) — 757 Pacific St., Monterey - (831) 373-4404 - www.jamesrheimmd.com

James Rheim and son Joseph Rheim work with their

staff to help clients achieve healthier skin through prevention and treatment. Patients seeking help with conditions like acne, sun damage and skin cancer, or those seeking cosmetic services like dermal fillers, are treated with respect and compassion.

■ Best Ophthalmologist

Leland Rosenblum (also winner in 2008, 2009 and 2010) — 21 Upper Ragsdale Drive - (831) 372-1500 - www.montereyeye.com.

Dr. Rosenblum’s expertise includes cataract surgery, glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy, refractive surgery and oculoplastic procedures. In practice since 1994, he prides himself on a personal approach to eye care, treatment and prevention and a winning strategy for every vision goal.

■ Best Orthopedist

Richard Dauphine — 980 Cass St., Monterey - Mon. to Fri. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. - (831) 375-2489 – www.drdauphine.com

Dr. Dauphine specializes in restoring mobility to knees and shoulders. According to his website, he’s performed over 6,000 operative arthroscopies of the knee and shoulder and has over 30 years of experience. Dr. Dauphine and his staff are committed to each patient’s treatment outcome.

■ Best Plastic Surgeon

Douglas Sunde (also winner in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011) — 856 Munras Ave., Monterey - (831) 372-0200 - www.plasticsurgery.org/md/drunde.html

A Stanford grad who also specializes in reconstructive surgery, Dr. Sunde treats his patients with respect and discretion. He provides personal consultations and individualized solutions tailored to the patient’s needs. Check the website for a list of his specialties.

■ Best Physical Therapist

Chuck Krpata, Krpata Sports Therapy — 26617 Carmel Center Pl., Carmel - Mon. to Fri. 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. - (831) 622-0599 - www.krpatapt.com

Chuck Krpata brings over 40 years experience - including a stint as Head Athletic Trainer with the 49’ers - to

his practice. He says he really enjoys all his patients, whom he describes as “very motivated and willing to work” when it comes to recovering from an injury or surgery.

■ Best Divorce Lawyer

David A. Parnie — 2100 Garden Rd., Ste. I, Monterey - Mon. to Fri., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. - (831) 624-1222

David Parnie has a reputation for taking good care of his clients — especially their children. His paralegal, Roxanna Martinez, describes him as a “nice man with a big heart.” Add 42 years of experience and a Stanford pedigree and you’ve got a great family lawyer.

■ Best Estate Planning Attorney

Kyle Krasa, Krasa Law — 704-D Forest Ave., Pacific Grove - Mon. to Fri., 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. - (831) 920-0205 - www.krasalaw.com

If you’re looking for an estate planning attorney who puts people before paperwork, look no further! Kyle Krasa says he believes that “estate planning is more than just a transaction.” Krasa’s warm, friendly manner puts clients at ease when difficult decisions need to be made.

■ Best Lawyer if You Need to Sue Somebody

Andy Swartz, Spiering, Swartz, and Kennedy — 550 Hartnell St., Ste. A-3, Monterey - Mon. to Fri., 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. - (831) 373-3235 - www.ssklawmonterey-ca.com

Andy Swartz came to Monterey in 1973. “I’ve been suing people and representing nice people who are being sued ever since,” he says, tongue slightly in cheek. He really thinks of himself as a problem solver, helping people through mediation and arbitration, with a trial as the last resort.

■ Best Defense Attorney

Larry Biegel, Biegel Law Firm — 2801 Monterey-Salinas Highway, Suite A, Monterey - Mon. to Fri. 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. - (877) 223-8982 - www.biegellaw.com
Larry Biegel and his staff of three attorneys vigorously

Continues next page

*Thank you for voting us
Best Women’s Accessories*

2011



2012

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Kyle A. Krasa, Esq.

*I am honored to have won
a Golden Pine Cone as
“Best Estate
Planning Attorney”*

2012



*I want to express my great
appreciation to the
readers for bestowing upon
me this prestigious award.*

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2009

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2011

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GOLDEN PINE CONES

defend clients who bring everything from DUI's to murder cases to his firm. He's even been known to set up a mock trial with a jury to preview a case. He knows that any arrest is traumatic and works hard to lessen the impact.

■ Best Insurance Agent

Matthew A. Little Jr., Carmel Insurance Agency — *San Carlos and Eighth - Mon. to Fri., 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. - (831) 624-1234*

What makes Matt Little a favorite among insurance agents? Co-workers say he really goes to bat for his clients and will battle with insurance companies to get them to do the right thing. Add great customer service, and you have an award-winning combination.

■ Best Internet Service Provider

Comcast — *They're Everywhere - They Never Sleep - (888) 266-2278 - www.comcast.com*

To Xfinity and beyond! In the ongoing wars involving cables, dishes and bundles, the ubiquitous Comcast emerged victorious among our readers. We suspect if we could penetrate their phone tree for comment, they'd say something slightly creepy like, "We're pleased, but not surprised. It was e-voting, after all."

■ Best Shoe Repair

Federico's Drive In Shoe Service — *542 Abrego St., Monterey - Mon. to Fri., 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. - (831) 649-3322*

The Federicos have been repairing shoes since 1939, beginning with Charles Federico, and continuing today with son Henry. They'll also fix your luggage, do engraving, create signs and banners, and do glass etching. Now that's one-stop shopping!

■ My Favorite Non-Profit

SPCA for Monterey County — *1002 Monterey-Salinas Highway, Salinas - Mon. to Fri., 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. - (831) 373-2631 - www.spcamc.org*

Catering to critters from cute kittens to abandoned horses and injured wildlife, the SPCA has been around since 1905. With its shelter, veterinary clinic, dog training classes and wildlife center - to name just some of its services - the SPCA helps thousands of animals and owners annually.

■ Best School

Carmel River Elementary School — *Monte Verde and 15th - Mon. to Fri., 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. - (831) 624-4609 - www.carmelunified.org/river*

Whether they're starting the day with "The Morning Mile", learning to use the well-stocked library, or enjoying music classes, Carmel River Elementary's students benefit from a rich learning environment and dedicated staff and faculty. Parents are welcome at events and receive weekly online communications from the principal about school activities.

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We rocked it again!

For the fifth time, Community Hospital was voted the **Best Place to Work** by readers of the *Carmel Pine Cone*. We want to say "thank you" to all of our employees, who are the heart and soul of Community Hospital. This honor again belongs to you.

 Community Hospital
of the Monterey Peninsula®

