



Coastal waters along Dangermond Preserve © Peter Floyd

# California

## DATES

March 24<sup>th</sup> – March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024

## PRICE

Double Occupancy: \$5,840

Single Occupancy: \$6,570

Your journey begins in Los Angeles, California where you will be met by your Iconic Trip Lead before departing to the Santa Clara River. Here, see how TNC is restoring the river and its tributaries in addition to the wetlands along Ormond Beach. We will continue north another two hours to Bakersfield, California. Your home for the next two nights is the historic Padre Hotel.

Explore the Frank and Joan Randall Preserve, where TNC has protected 70,000-acres of tremendous biodiversity; a massive acquisition, the creation of the preserve has ensured the landscape remains an evolutionary hotspot, allowing animals access to move between the desert, coast, and mountains.

Visit a local working ranch to meet with ranchers and hear how TNC's is promoting conservation values that provide farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners the tools to protect and conserve their land and way of life.

The next day, head towards San Luis Obispo and the beautiful California coast where we'll spend two nights at a quaint bed and breakfast. Hike through Carrizo Plains National Monument and explore its rolling green hills filled with colorful wildflowers, visit Las Piletas Ranch to discuss the San Andreas linkage, and bird watch along the boardwalks of Oso Flaco Lake.

Visit the incredible Jack and Laura Dangermond Preserve; located along the coast, explore this biodiversity hot spot that is serving as a living laboratory. From here, our journey continues south to Ojai, where we'll stay in a small town tucked in the beautiful Topatopa Mountains.

Our final stop is Santa Cruz Island, where more than 1,000 species of plants and animals inhabit the high peaks, deep canyons and coastline.

With exclusive insight from TNC experts, visits to local preserves, and local highlights, you'll experience unique places throughout the Central Valley and coast that most visitors never see.



### ENDANGERED SPECIES RECOVERY

When TNC purchased Santa Cruz Island in 1978 it was in crisis, with feral pigs and sheep overgrazing, plants and animals facing extinction and new island predators altering the natural systems and landscape. With its partners, TNC has implemented an intensive, science-based program, bringing back the island fox and other island endemics and thus revitalizing the natural communities of the island.

### WILDFLOWERS

Wind through back roads and scenic preserves to delight in California's beautiful wildflower varieties. A result of winter rains, the hills turn a potent green and wildflowers such as poppies, lupines, baby blue eyes, and red maids take bloom.

### WINE TASTING ON THE CENTRAL COAST

There are more than 27 vineyards and tasting rooms nestled along the rolling hills of the Central Coast's Edna Valley. Try an array of wines made from sun kissed California grapes while taking in the stunning views around you.

Your trip supports the local communities you're traveling in and The Nature Conservancy's efforts locally and globally. This trip has been planned specifically by The Nature Conservancy's team of scientific experts and travel liaisons to immerse you in the work the Conservancy is doing on the ground that has global consequences.

## TNC TRAVEL VALUES

### KEY ACCESS:

Travel with renowned Conservancy experts and local partners for an exclusive, behind-the-scenes experience. You won't just see amazing places, you'll witness how you are helping save them.

### IMPACT:

See how your commitment to our planet and your passion for conservation are making a difference. You will see the wild places and the communities you are impacting.

### KNOWLEDGE:

Learn how we are applying the latest cutting-edge science to affect global change and drive conservation.

### INSPIRATION:

Immerse yourself in local cultures and awe-inspiring landscapes to foster your own connection to our world.

### GLOBALLY MINDED:

Elevate your understanding of our work by seeing first-hand how TNC and our partners act locally and how we turn local results in to global impact by scaling solutions that work.

### TRAVELER EXPECTATIONS & CODE OF CONDUCT:

Please read [TNC's Traveler Expectations](#), our guide for ensuring that we treat each other with respect, fairness and integrity beyond reproach during travel in accordance with [TNC's Code of Conduct](#).

Following the Code is an expectation and responsibility for everyone in the larger TNC community, including our staff, partners, vendors and supporters. To that end, when registering for a TNC trip, you are agreeing to uphold the Code.



*Ranchers Bill and Tom Parker; the family sold Parker Ranch's land development rights to TNC in 2008, joining the 270,000-acre ecological corridor named the Frank and Joan Randall Preserve. © Scott Copeland*

## THE CONSERVATION LANDSCAPE

### **FRANK AND JOAN RANDALL PRESERVE**

Through the creation of the Frank and Joan Randall Preserve, The Nature Conservancy has secured more than 70,000 acres of habitat critical to land and regional geology. As the largest preserve in California, TNC is addressing severe land fragmentation; as urban expansion, wildfires, extreme heat, and drought become more prominent, animals are being forced to relocate due to habitat loss. By protecting and linking these lands, it will enable species to move and adapt, and ensure long-term survival. Currently, in partnership with Caltrans, TNC is creating a linkage that reconnect habitat for mountain lions and other species whose ranges will need to expand in the face of climate change.

### **WATER SUSTAINABILITY**

The Central Valley watershed, a vast, 450-mile-long corridor, is California's most productive agricultural region, producing fruit, vegetables, and nuts. Of the three drainage systems, the San Joaquin Valley is the driest and most threatened; amidst California's looming water crisis and climate change, the region's natural resources are stretched thin, forcing thousands of acres of farmland to be retired. The Nature Conservancy is working with public and private sectors to build a new green industry on retired lands, supporting the development of solar energy and water-friendly habitat restoration projects that will bring back jobs and create a more sustainable future for the region.

### **SANTA CRUZ ISLAND**

Twenty-five miles off the coast of southern California lies Santa Cruz Island, the largest of California's eight Channel Islands. Once on the brink of ecological collapse, Santa Cruz Island now offers visitors a glimpse of what southern California used to be like hundreds of years ago. When The Nature Conservancy purchased most of Santa Cruz Island in 1978, Feral pigs and sheep overgrazed the island, severely altering its natural systems and landscape, ten species of plants and animals faced extinction, and the island's native bald eagles had been wiped out by DDT contamination. Today, for the first time in over 150 years, the island is free of non-native animals and native species are flourishing.

# ITINERARY

**DAY 1 — Sunday, March 24<sup>th</sup>** | Arrive in Los Angeles by noon. Upon arrival at the airport, you will be welcomed by your Iconic Trip Leader and Nature Conservancy host. Making our way north, we will stop at the Santa Clara River; threatened by development on all sides, this small oasis of critical landscape is home to chaparral, grasslands, oak woodlands, riparian forests and wetlands. On a short walk through the landscape, hear what TNC is doing to protect this habitat and its endangered and threatened species. Afterward, continue towards Bakersfield, where you'll have time to settle into your room at the historic Padre Hotel before enjoying a cocktail reception followed by dinner.

## OVERNIGHT AT PADRE HOTEL

**DAY 2 — Monday, March 25<sup>th</sup>** | After breakfast at the hotel, we will travel 45 minutes to the Frank and Joan Randall Preserve. Here, TNC hosts will give you an overview of the area; at 70,000-acres, it is the biggest, and newest, preserve in California and has been identified as a critically important conservation landscape due to the high levels of biodiversity. Discuss habitat integrity, the significance of this landscape's convergence of four ecoregions, and how it is connecting two major mountain systems. We'll go on a short hike, before heading out to visit a local ranch.

At the ranch, we will have the opportunity to have lunch with local ranch partners to learn more about their land and how the implementation of energy and water-friendly habitat restoration projects are conserving it for generations to come. In the afternoon, return to the Padre Hotel where we will have dinner at a favorite local restaurant.

## OVERNIGHT AT PADRE HOTEL

**DAY 3 — Tuesday, March 26<sup>th</sup>** | Today we will make our way to the California coast! Stop along the way at Carrizo Plain National Monument; first acquired in 1988, this 250,000-acre parcel is a prime platform for TNC and partners to conduct scientific research and implement cutting-edge conservation approaches. Learn about new technology such as using satellite to track threatened and endangered species. Hike amongst rolling grasslands and take in the breathtaking assortment of wildflower blooms. Lunch will be enjoyed in the sunshine, before continuing onto Las Piletas Ranch for the afternoon.

On arrival in San Luis Obispo, settle into Petit Soleil, our home for the next two nights. This evening, enjoy free time to explore downtown before dinner as a group at a local restaurant.

## OVERNIGHT AT PETIT SOLEIL

# LODGING



### Padre Hotel

First opening its doors in 1928, this eight-story Spanish Colonial Revival hotel had a colorful history until falling into disrepair in the 60's. In 2010, it went through an extensive renovation, and is now a boutique hotel with luxurious guest rooms. Photo Credit: The Padre Hotel



### Petit Soleil

Located in the heart of San Luis Obispo, Petit Soleil is a stylish European-inspired boutique bed and breakfast. A delicious homemade breakfast of scones, granola, quiche, biscotti and more, is provided each morning. Photo Credit: Petit Soleil



### Blue Iguana Inn

A boutique bohemian Inn in Ojai, Blue Iguana Inn is the perfect place to stay in this quintessentially peaceful town. Photo credit: Blue Iguana Inn

## ITINERARY, CONT.

**DAY 4 — Wednesday, March 27<sup>th</sup>** | Enjoy a homemade meal at our bed and breakfast this morning before heading out for the day. Our morning will be spent at Oso Flaco Lake, walking along the scenic boardwalks. This 75-acre landscape features viewpoints of the Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes as well as a lake with ample opportunity for bird watching. Hosting both local and migratory birds, bring your binoculars for this leisurely 2-mile round trip stroll.

Next, we will head to Biddle Ranch Vineyard for wine tasting and lunch. The afternoon is yours to spend at leisure before enjoying dinner in town.

### OVERNIGHT AT PETIT SOLEIL

**DAY 5 — Thursday, March 28<sup>th</sup>** | Rise early and pack your bags as we head south for a spectacular day on the coast. The Jack and Laura Dangermond Preserve is one of the last places on the California coast that remains untouched by development. At 24,364-acres, this Preserve's unusual geography makes it a globally significant site for conservation due to its diverse marine and terrestrial habitat. Join TNC experts on-site and hear how this landscape is serving as a living laboratory that is facilitating research and environmental education. We will hike the hillsides, viewing various ecotones, take a driving tour to discuss restoration projects and rangeland management, and enjoy a scenic walk with views of the coast and Point Conception Lighthouse.

In the afternoon, we will continue onto Ojai; on arrival, settle into your room at Blue Iguana Inn before heading to dinner in town.

### OVERNIGHT AT BLUE IGUANA INN

**DAY 6 — Friday, March 29<sup>th</sup>** | Breakfast is to-go this morning as we head out to the largest of California's eight Channel Islands, Santa Cruz Island. Over four decades, TNC and its partners have restored this land, providing a glimpse of what Southern California used to be like hundreds of years ago. Today, more than 1,000 species of plant and animals live amongst the island's high peaks, deep canyons, and coastline. On our journey, look for dolphins swimming alongside us during the boat ride to Santa Cruz Island before arriving and setting off with local TNC staff to learn more about the island's history, flora, and fauna. We will have a picnic lunch and time for additional explorations.

Our final dinner will be spent as a group reflecting on a memorable and educational week.

### OVERNIGHT AT BLUE IGUANA INN

**DAY 7 — Saturday, March 30<sup>th</sup>** | Transfers back to Los Angeles will begin at 9:30am; plan to book flights that depart after 2pm.



© Bill Marr/TNC

### The Jack and Laura Dangermond Preserve

The last wild coast, Dangermond Preserve is advancing science and education; TNC is partnering with research institutions to foster leading-edge collaboration, tech innovation and data science to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of conservation.



© Bill Marr/TNC

### PRICE DETAIL

Double Occupancy: \$5,840  
Single Occupancy: \$6,570

Price is based on a minimum of 12. Trip size not to exceed 14 travelers.

Price **includes** all lodging, domestic transportation, activities, tips, meals, TNC expert staff and local guides. Price does **not include** your roundtrip flight to Los Angeles, California.

**PLEASE NOTE:** This itinerary is representative of your trip, and like all natural history excursions, activities are subject to modification based on weather and unforeseen events. We will do our best to keep you informed on any necessary changes.