TRAVEL





# Enjoy 'sick bikes' and burritos on this local's tour of Santa Barbara



Customers line up to order at El Sitio, a favorite in Santa Barbara. (Myung J. Chun / Los Angeles Times)

BY RACHEL SCHNALZER | AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT EDITOR

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### By Rachel Schnalzer

Design and illustrations by Jade Cuevas

Good morning, fellow Escapists. Travel and curiosity to me are inseparable — an experience isn't really an adventure without that inescapable feeling of wanting to know more about a place.

I try to convey that sense of wonder each week in Escapes. This week, you'll read about a Santa Barbara local's favorite under-the-radar destinations, all because Times colleague Mary Forgione was curious and asked him. You'll also learn how to harness your inner botanist at the San Diego Botanic Garden by exploring the inner workings of a unique tropical plant.

What are your favorite travel stories? When or where have you embraced curiosity and stepped out of your comfort zone? I love hearing from readers, so please <u>send me</u> an <u>email</u> if you'd like to share.



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### **‰** Explore under-theradar Santa Barbara

Santa Barbara is no off-the-beatenpath destination for L.A. travelers, but besides State Street and the zoo, the coastal city is filled with hidden gems.

Assistant travel editor Mary Forgione recently went on an insider tour with surfer-artist DJ Javier, who has a

deep-seated passion for sharing his hometown with others.



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Here are a few of his recommendations:



#### PAID CONTENT

### Looking beyond Landsat 7

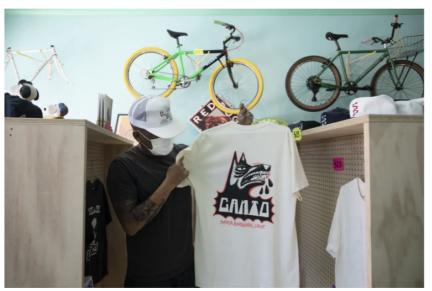
By Raytheon Intelligence & Space

The land-observing satellite was supposed to work for five years. Now, more than 20 years later, Landsat 7 is still going strong.

**Boom Boom Bike Room:** This shop retrofits '80s and '90s bikes with new parts. "Who doesn't love a sick bike?" Javier asked Forgione. It's also worth popping next door to Haven Barber & Shop - an "old-school comfy" place - while you're in the neighborhood.

Museum of Contemporary Art Santa Barbara: "This museum has been around since the '70s and continues to embrace a fresh perspective for change," Forgione writes. Indeed, because exhibitions change three times a year, you'll probably catch new art every time you visit.

El Sitio, on De La Vina: This mom-and-pop-run counter-style Mexican restaurant is where the locals go, Forgione reports. Budget extra time for lunch — there's usually a line of people waiting to devour El Sitio's burritos, tacos and tortas.



DJ Javier's designs are featured on T-shirts such as this one sold at Boom Boom Bike Room. (Myung J. Chun / Los Angeles Times)



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## Become a botanist for a day

Pineapples, air plants, Spanish moss and striking blue puya are all part of the bromeliad family, now on exhibit at the San Diego Botanic Garden in Encinitas.

The garden has assembled interactive displays that show off the tropical plants, sourced from commercial nurseries and members of the San Diego Bromeliad Society. Times feature writer Jeannette Marantos includes the "World of Bromeliad" exhibition in her list of 12 things for plant lovers to do right now.

Visitors to the exhibition can become botanists for a day, using microscopes to explore a bromeliad's "water tanks" — where some of the plants store water — to see organisms that live inside the reservoir.

If you fall in love with the plants, you can shop for some at the garden's bromeliad market, open on weekends.

Tickets to "World of Bromeliad" cost \$10-\$18. Members are free.



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(Jade Cuevas / Los Angeles Times)



# 🦞 A Maine-style adventure in California

Ocean views and a lobster roll — no, I'm not talking about a vacation in Maine, just a jaunt up California 1 to Malibu, where you can pair mouthwatering seafood with a beachy hike.

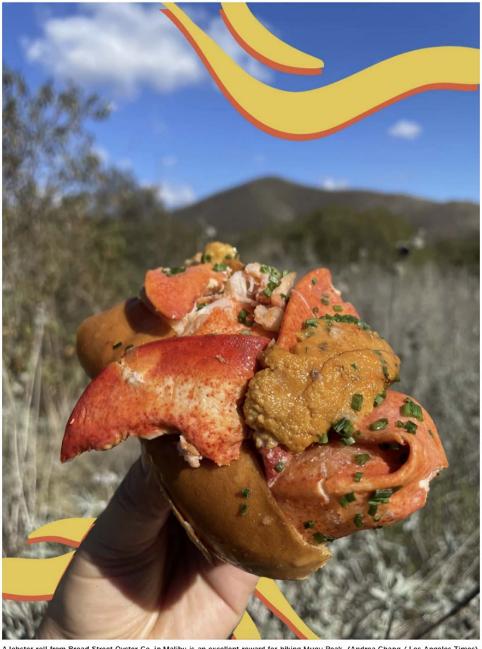
Times business reporter Andrea Chang included this adventure earlier this year in her story "The Right Sandwich for 22 Different Hikes in L.A." She suggests pairing the lobster roll from Broad Street Oyster Co. in Malibu with a hike to Mugu Peak, 20 minutes up the coast.

"It's pretty extra to bring a lobster roll on a hike, but this trail begins with a punishing ascent and you deserve a reward after gaining 900 feet in the first 2/3 of a mile," Chang wrote.

She recommends ordering in advance and requesting the roll be wrapped in foil to make it as hike-friendly as possible.

Another piece of advice from Chang: "If the thought of buttery seafood on a hike makes you squeamish, John's Garden at neighboring Malibu Country Mart has conventional deli sandwiches."

Want more hiking inspiration? Take a look at our ultimate guide to hiking.



A lobster roll from Broad Street Oyster Co. in Malibu is an excellent reward for hiking Mugu Peak. (Andrea Chang / Los Angeles Times)



### A charming cabin near Morro Rock

Need a nature retreat this fall? Consider a stay at this <u>creekside cabin</u> nestled in the Central Coast woods.

Frog Hollow Farm Stay's accommodation earned a spot on HipCamp's "best in 2021" list, and it's easy to see why. Though rustic — visitors must "pack in/pack out" their garbage and bring their own drinking water — the cabin includes camp-chic furnishings and a warm welcome from Shiloh, the resident border collie, and Jed, the friendly farm cat.

Frog Hollow Farm Stay is an ideal jumping-off point for exploring the region. It's 10 minutes from Morro Rock and a short drive to San Luis Obispo and Paso Robles wine country.

The cabin costs \$127 a night.



Frog Hollow Farm Stay's cabin is 10 minutes from Morro Rock, on California's Central Coast. (Allen J. Schaben / Los Angeles Times)

# 🔤 What I'm reading

- <u>Airplane food</u> is back but it's not like what you remember, writes Times business reporter Hugo Martín.
- An Airbnb with <u>its own entrance</u> to Joshua Tree National Park? Andrea Romano covers the luxe home in Travel + Leisure.
- "Hawaii restricts unvaccinated domestic travelers. Why doesn't California?" asks
  Eric Ting in SFGate.
- Molly Sinclair McCartney celebrated turning 80 by <u>visiting all five national</u> <u>parks in Utah</u>. She wrote about her experience in the Washington Post.
- Have you heard of <u>"trip stacking?"</u> If not, you will soon, reports Concepción de León in the New York Times.







(Jade Cuevas / Los Angeles Times)

# Photo of the week



Visitors take in the sights at Mendocino Headlands State Park. (Jay L. Clendenin / Los Angeles Times)





Song: "From These Heights" by Jelani Aryeh

Favorite lyric: "I'm searching for the furthest flight away from here"

Best place to listen: On the beach in Marina del Rey, watching planes take off from LAX.



(Jade Cuevas / Los Angeles Times)