

## See Monterey's Report to the County of Monterey

### ARPA Activity Report: Calendar Year 2024 (Year End)

*Recognizing the critical importance of the tourism economy in Monterey County and the severe impact from COVID-19, the Board of Supervisors allocated a portion of ARPA dollars to help the industry recover. This report highlights Calendar Year 2024 activities from See Monterey in partnership with other community stakeholders.*

#### OVERVIEW

The County of Monterey's investment in See Monterey's FY 2023-24 Business Plan is critical to maintaining the health of the destination's tourism economy. As the second largest economic generator in the County, tourism at its peak in 2019, the industry:

- employed nearly 30,000 residents
- produced \$3.24 billion in visitor spending within the County
- generated \$80M in tourism occupancy taxes countywide
- contributes \$296 million in total taxes and \$153 million local tax dollars that directly benefit our community

The goal of the County of Monterey with the ARPA allocation to See Monterey is to bring the industry back better than 2019.

#### PLAN PURPOSE

The primary focus of this plan is to accelerate the recovery of tourism in Monterey County. It is designed to bolster, extend and add new elements to our destination marketing approach. This plan will boost the recovery of hospitality industry businesses, jobs and tax revenue from the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic. This will enable the destination to:

- Accelerate the recovery of visitor spending which drives TOT revenue for the County
- Assist in restoring countywide employment
- Allow expansion of important programs including Meetings and Conferences, Agri and Eco Tourism, Air Service, South County and Wine Promotion
- Enable Monterey County to compete more collaboratively and aggressively against a better funded competitive set

#### 2024 MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITIES

##### Responsible Travel Advertising: Bay Area Billboards – May - August

Ahead of the busy summer travel season, See Monterey once again purchased high-visibility billboards in the Bay Area in two spots along the U.S. 101 freeway. The billboards remind visitors to explore Monterey County responsibly, with the goal of catching people on their drive into the destination.

##### Results:

- 6.7 million impressions





#### **Agritourism & Heritage Promotion: Atlas Obscura Media Partnership – June – October**

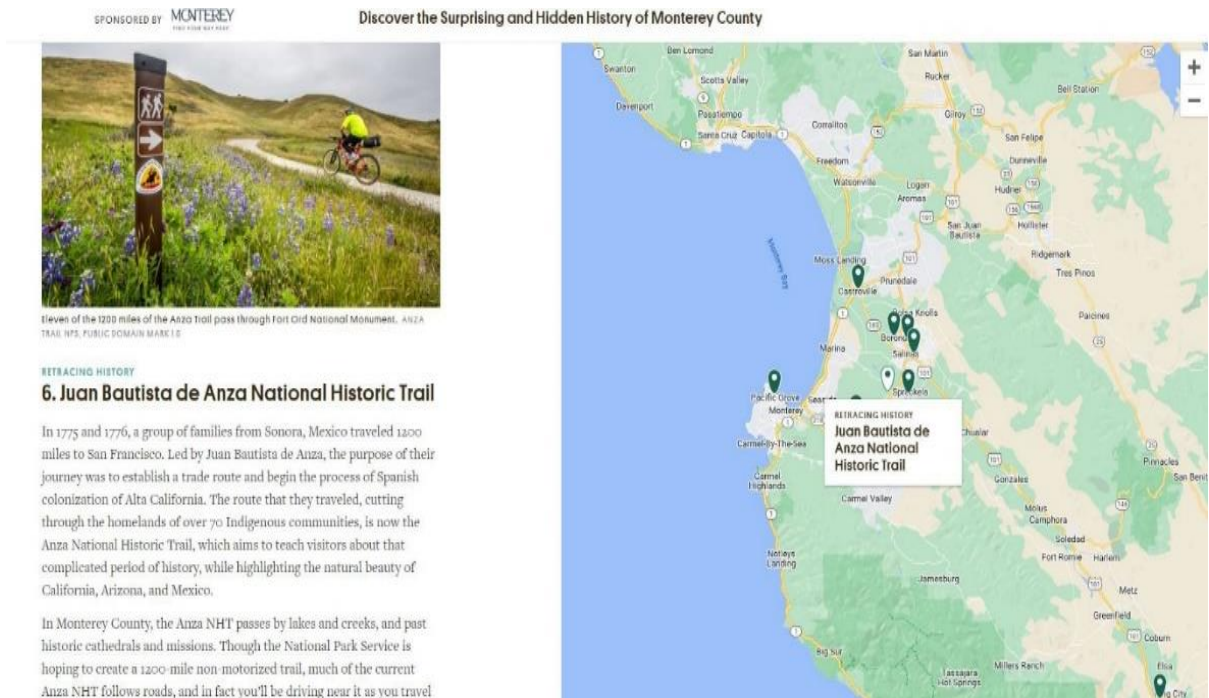
The Marketing Communications team has been diligently working on enhancing See Monterey's history and heritage program, aiming to showcase Monterey County's rich history and illustrate how visitors can engage with it today. Using ARPA funds, See Monterey launched a media partnership with [Atlas Obscura](#). "The Atlas" is a renowned website and media company with a global community of 10 million travel-ready followers. Atlas Obscura's mission is to connect curious travelers with extraordinary places and experiences worldwide, including places like Monterey County.

The media campaign with Atlas Obscura covers a diverse range of topics, focusing on the area's history and culture, providing an excellent platform to showcase the unique stories of Monterey County. Features include:

- 5 new place pages on the Atlas Obscura
  - [Los Coches Adobes](#) (Soledad)
  - [The Monterey County Agricultural and Rural Life Museum](#) (King City)
  - [Mission Antonio de Padua](#) (Fort Hunter Liggett)
  - [Culturas Hidalgo y Oaxaca restaurant](#) (Salinas)
  - [Lester Rowntree Native Plant Garden](#) (Carmel-by-the-Sea)
- [A Custom Itinerary](#) "Discover the Surprising and Hidden History of Monterey County"
- Social posts that highlight both on [@atlasobscura](#)

#### **Results:**

- 8.37 million impressions
- 60,000 views on content pieces
- 405 clicks to SeeMonterey.com



## **Airlift Development: Minneapolis Flight Launch – June - October**

Working in partnership with Visit Carmel, See Monterey launched a campaign to support the newest direct flight into the Monterey Regional Airport from Minneapolis/St. Paul that ran August 8 – November 2, 2024. In an effort to introduce Monterey County to the Twin Cities and drive bookings for the flight, See Monterey launched comprehensive digital, paid social, connected TV and out-of-home advertising campaign, as well as a robust public relations blitz and media hosting.

### **Results:**

#### **Train Wrap Out-of-home Campaign**

- 3.24 million impressions

#### **PR Coverage**

- 2 journalists hosted
- 260,000 impressions
- 19/20 average Media Quality Score

#### **Digital Influencer Campaign**

- 207,000 impressions
- 8,600 engagements
- 4,000 post saves and shares

#### **Paid Social Campaign**

- 5.4 million impressions
- 3,600 clicks to SeeMonterey.com

#### **CTV Campaign**

- 900,000 impressions
- 465 clicks to SeeMonterey.com



Wrapped two Minneapolis METRO light rail trains August – October running through downtown Minneapolis and St. Paul as well as to the airport.



Hosted two Minneapolis-based journalists in August and September resulting in coverage for the destination.



Hosted Minnesota-based digital influencer @PlanetwithSara on the inaugural flight for a long weekend in Monterey County.



Ran a paid Social Media campaign June – August.





**Groups & Meetings: The Points Guy Editorial Retreat – October 7 – 10**

In an effort to reach meeting planners through non-traditional channels, See Monterey partnered with The Points Guy (TPG) to host the media platform’s Editorial Retreat. The site, popular with frequent travelers and credit card point enthusiasts, receives 9 million unique viewers per month and has 4.5 million social media followers. TPG Editors are regularly tapped as travel experts on the Today Show, Good Morning America, The New York Times and more. The retreat brought 50 members of The Points Guy editorial, content and social media teams to Monterey County for their annual retreat and content they created while in market showcased them planning, hosting and enjoying a corporate meeting/event.

The group was based at the Hyatt Regency Monterey. After their meetings, the group enjoyed:

- Hiking in Big Sur
- Kayaking in Monterey Bay
- Beekeeping in Carmel Valley
- E-biking in Monterey, Pacific Grove and Pebble Beach
- Exploring Carmel-by-the-Sea

Dining and events throughout the retreat were hosted in Monterey, Pacific Grove, Carmel-by-the-Sea, Seaside and Salinas Valley (Rustique Winery, pictured)

**Deliverables include:**

- Instagram Stories posted by TPG team in market
- 3 new and 4 refreshed travel-focused articles on Monterey County
- 1 meetings-focused article on “best destinations for team-building trips”
- 1 short form social videos with a focus on meetings and team building
- 1 short form social video destination guide

## Preliminary Results

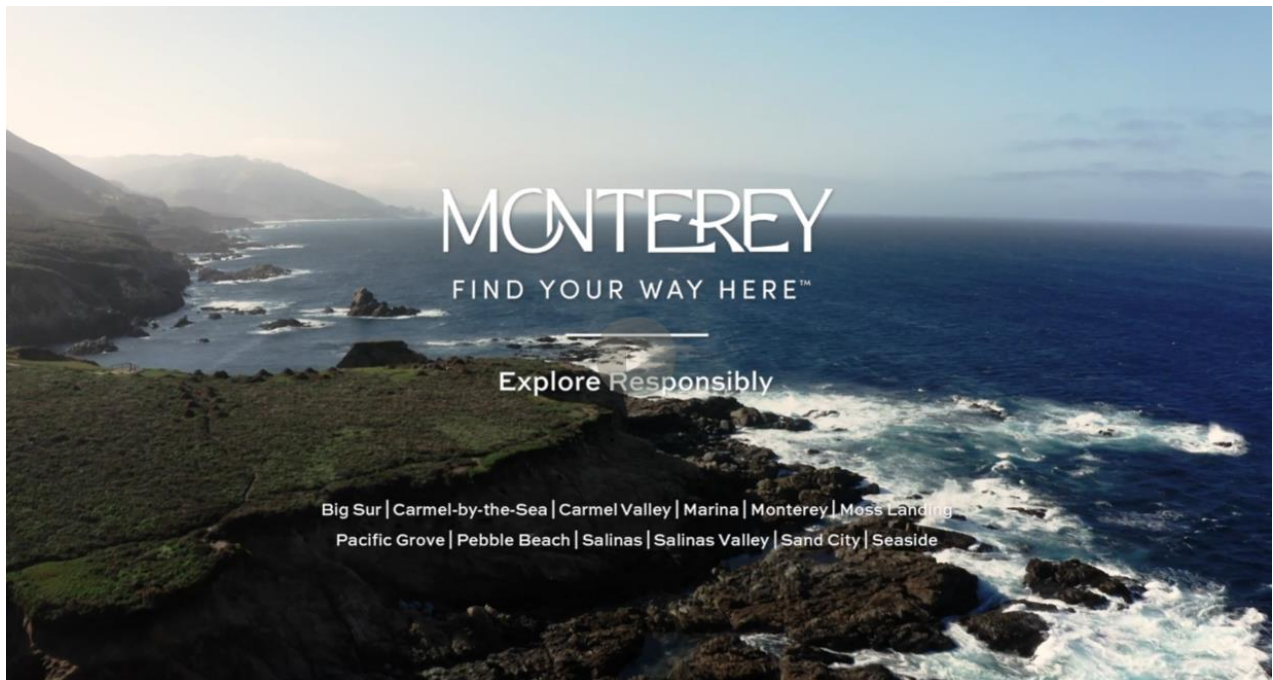
- 70+ tagged Instagram stories
- 45,000 social views
- 500 likes

## Countywide Advertising: Winter Escape Campaign – November – December

Looking to provide one last big push for the year, See Monterey launched a holiday season advertising campaign with a revised :30 spot pushing winter escapes to Monterey County. The spot ran in Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Diego, Sacramento and Fresno, nearby markets that are more likely to plan a trip in a short time frame.

## Results:

- Impressions: 2,645,837
- Site visits: 2,217



## 2024 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

### California Plaza Activation at IPW (May)

The Business Development team utilized ARPA funds to support a large activation at the U.S. Travel's IPW Trade Show event that occurred in May in Los Angeles, CA. IPW is the world's largest inbound travel trade show and connects travel buyers and media with America's top travel exhibitors through an efficient face-to-face show format. This year IPW welcomed 5,700 delegates, including 2,000 buyers and media from nearly 70 countries. The Visit California Plaza activation showcased dozens of top California destinations to high value travel buyers. Monterey County brought partners from the Cannery Row Company and Monterey Touring Vehicles and held more than 140 one on one appointments with top international travel buyers.





### **Corporate FAM (November)**

With a focus to bring qualified clients in-market, we executed a Corporate FAM November 17-19 ahead of Meeting Professionals International (MPI) Regional Business Exchange. ARPA dollars used to cover planner travel, transportation and entertainment. A target of 15-20 planners will experience Monterey County hospitality. Rooms were secured at the Monterey Marriott, lunch was held at The Quail followed by a destination immersion. Guests had the opportunity to spend the day at the Monterey Conference Center to participate in a certificate program on Artificial Intelligence and the Meeting Industry.















#### FINANCIAL SUMMARY

ARPA PROGRAM ELEMENT	TOTAL SPEND
Groups & Meetings - California Plaza Activation at IPW	\$50,000
Groups & Meetings - Corporate FAM November 17-19	\$20,746
Responsible Travel Advertising – Bay Area Billboards	\$53,799
Agritourism and Heritage Promotion – Atlas Obscura	\$35,000
Airlift Development – Minneapolis Flight Launch	\$143,077
Groups & Meetings – The Points Guy Editorial Retreat	\$38,646
Countywide Advertising – Winter Escape Campaign	\$103,773
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$445,040</b>