

Angel's

*Be Alive!*

Angel Gomez,  
The Club's  
Director of  
Member  
Services

# Solvang and Hearst Castle

## Hello, everybody!

During our holiday break, I took the family up north to visit a few places. We took a short road trip through Solvang and to Hearst Castle. This trip was a relaxing voyage from beginning to end. My family

loved every second, and the views were incredible, with all the beach and land, rolling hills and open area. Beautiful! I would recommend to everyone. Let's begin.

## First Stop: Solvang

Solvang is in Santa Barbara County and is one of the communities that make up the Santa Ynez Valley.

Solvang was founded in 1911 by a group of Danish educators, who traveled west to escape Midwestern winters. The city is home to bakeries, restaurants and merchants that offer a taste of Denmark in California.

The architecture of many of the buildings follows traditional Danish style.

There is a copy of the famous "Little Mermaid" statue from Copenhagen, as well as one featuring the bust of famed Danish fable writer Hans Christian Andersen, who wrote the "Little Mermaid" story, among others. A

replica of the Copenhagen observatory Rundetårn was finished in 1991 and can be seen in the city center.

Mission Santa Ines, one of the California missions, is near the center of the town, at the junction of State Route 246 and Alisal Road.

Solvang is a great place to visit and spend the day shopping and trying Danish treats.

I loved the buildings and all the great architectural designs. Many people visit; my guess is because there are restaurants, coffee shops and antiques to visit. Solvang has lots to see and is a great place to stop during your trip north, or on your way back again -- you get a second chance to stop by and pick up a few treats for your loved ones. Enjoy!



Angel Jr. is making a call.



Angel Jr. and Aden ride the shoe.



Aden, Kathy and Angel Jr. stand in front of the visitor center in Solvang.

## Hearst Castle

Hearst Castle is a palatial estate on the central California coast and a National Historic Landmark. It was designed by architect Julia Morgan for William Randolph Hearst, a newspaper magnate from 1919 until 1947. In 1957, the Hearst Corporation donated the property to the state of California.

Since that time it has been maintained as state historic park, where the estate and its considerable collection of art and antiques are open for public tours. Despite its location far from any urban center, the site attracts roughly 1 million visitors per year. Hearst sometimes called it "the Ranch," and it's also sometimes referred to as "San Simeon," without distinguishing between the Hearst property and the unincorporated town of the same name.

### In its Heydey

Invitations to Hearst Castle were highly coveted during its heyday in the 1920s and '30s. The Hollywood and political elite often visited, usually flying into the estate's airfield or taking a private Hearst-owned train car from Los Angeles. Charlie Chaplin, Cary Grant, the Marx Brothers, Charles Lindbergh, Joan Crawford, Clark Gable, James Stewart, Bob Hope, Calvin Coolidge, Franklin Roosevelt, and Winston Churchill were among Hearst's A-list guests. While guests were expected to attend the formal dinners each evening, they were normally left to their own devices during the day while Hearst directed his business affairs.

Hearst Castle was the inspiration for, but not the shooting location of, the "Xanadu" mansion of the 1941 Orson Welles film *Citizen Kane*, which was itself a fictionalization of William Randolph Hearst's career.

### Design

The estate is a pastiche of historic architectural styles that its owner admired in his travels around Europe. Hearst was a voracious buyer who did not so much purchase art and antiques to furnish his home as built his home to get his bulging collection out of warehouses. This led to incongruous elements such as the private cinema, whose walls were lined with shelves of rare books. The floor plan of the Main Building is chaotic due to his habit of buying centuries-old ceilings, which dictated the proportions and decor of various rooms.

Amazing work!



Angel and the Hearst Castle sign.

Hearst Castle featured 56 bedrooms, 61 bathrooms, 19 sitting rooms, 127 acres of gardens, indoor and outdoor swimming pools, tennis courts, a movie theater, an airfield, and the world's largest private zoo. Zebras and other exotic animals still roam the grounds. There's a gravity-based water delivery system from a nearby mountain.

The total square footage of the castles on the estate exceeds 90,000 square feet. The area of Casa Grande, the "castle," is 60,645 square feet.

One highlight of the estate is the outdoor Neptune Pool, located near the edge of the hilltop, which offers an expansive vista of the mountains, ocean and the main house.

The Neptune Pool patio features an ancient Roman temple front transported wholesale from Europe and reconstructed at the site.

Time sure flies by when you are having fun; this trip was awesome! I recommend everyone take a weekend trip up north and enjoy all there is to see.

Thanks again for always stopping by and reading my small section on outdoor and indoor activities.

**Until next month,  
be safe and Be Alive!**

**— Angel**

Ceiling architecture above dining room.

### Directions and Info:

#### To Solvang:

- Take 405 north.
- Take US 101/Ventura Fwy. toward Ventura.
- Take the Ca-246 exit toward Lompoc/Solvang.
- Bear right for 5 miles to Solvang.
- 1576 Mission Drive Solvang, Ca. 93463

#### To Hearst Castle:

- US 101 north to San Luis Obispo, then the US 101 north about 40 miles.

#### HEARST CASTLE TICKET PRICES:

**Experience Tour:** \$24 adult; \$12 ages 6-17  
**Tours 2, 3 or 4 (each):** \$24 adult; \$12 ages 6-17  
**Evening Tour:** \$30 adult; \$15 ages 6-17

- Children younger than six are free when accompanied by paying adult.
- While tickets may be purchased at the Visitor Center upon arrival, tour reservations are strongly recommended and may be reserved online or by calling (800) 444-4445.

#### HEARST CASTLE HOURS:

- March – Sept.: 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. Mon.-Fri.; 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. weekends.
- Oct.-Feb.: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Mon.-Fri.; 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. weekends
- There are extended hours on the first of every month (except January).



The famous Neptune Pool.



"The Ranch."

