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What's New in Pismo Beach for Fall 2026

New places to drink and dine are opening across downtown Pismo Beach, from a new walking trail for monarch season to an intimate chef's kitchen on Pomeroy.

[September 16, 2026 – Pismo Beach, CA] – Pismo Beach is having a big year in the travel press. Sunset Magazine named the town a Coastal Classic in its 2026 Sunset Travel Awards, just weeks after Travel + Leisure named it America's Best Small Beach Town of 2026. Both honors follow two USA TODAY 10Best wins earlier this year, when Pismo took #1 Best Beach in California and repeated as Best Small Coastal Town. Travel + Leisure cited the town's growing dining scene as one reason to visit now, and a new round of downtown openings gives travelers even more places to eat and drink between the pier and Pomeroy Avenue.

NEW COASTAL TRAIL

Monarch Butterfly Medallion Trail

A new series of Monarch Butterfly Medallion signs now marks a 1.1-mile coastal route running south from Pismo Beach Pier to the Pismo State Beach Monarch Butterfly Grove, one of the largest overwintering sites for Western Monarchs in California. The medallions make the grove easy to reach on foot from downtown, and they turn the walk into something more deliberate than a route between two points. Walkers can scan QR codes at each medallion to pull up the trail map with the visitor's position marked, so anyone partway down the coast can see how far they've come and what's ahead. Monarchs are present at the grove from October through February, with the season peaking between Thanksgiving and Christmas, and admission is free year-round.

NEW BAR

Star Bar at Vespera Resort

Peregrine Hospitality's Vespera Resort has opened Star Bar, a poolside bar next to the resort's oceanfront Starlight Lawn, a two-minute walk from Pismo Beach Pier. Cocktails and local wines headline the menu, meant to be enjoyed by the pool or around the outdoor fire pits as the sun sets. Groups can reserve a private fire pit on the lawn for two hours, and each booking includes

a complimentary s'mores kit. Vespera sits directly on the boardwalk at 147 Stimson Avenue, within walking distance of downtown.

NEW RESTAURANT

Bare Bones Eatery

Chef Jared Hurst built a local following during his time at Oyster Loft, and now he has a kitchen of his own in downtown Pismo Beach. He and his wife, certified sommelier Rachel Hurst, opened Bare Bones Eatery in September at 361 Pomeroy Avenue, a small, casual fine-dining room where the menu draws on French technique and Asian flavors. The team doesn't try to fit the food into one category. "We serve the food we would want to eat," they tell diners who ask. The menu runs the gamut from a poke tower and octopus to sablefish, duck, Caesar salad, and ribeye, with Rachel pairing wines to match. Save room for the crème brûlée. They're open Wednesday through Sunday from 5 to 8:30 p.m.

Pismo Beach's newest openings give fall travelers more reasons to visit.

Press kit with high-res photos, b-roll, and additional details on each opening: PRESS KIT.

Please reach out to Emma Rhoads at emma@tjaadvertising.com to arrange interviews with business owners or best contacts.

About the City of Pismo Beach

Located on California's iconic Highway 1 on the Central Coast, Pismo Beach is the epitome of a California beach town. With cliffside ocean views, a lively and walkable downtown, extensive outdoor adventures, and a laid-back local vibe, visitors get the perfect balance of excitement and tranquility. Whether surfing, kayaking, watching wildlife, wine tasting, clamming, or catching a sunset over the pier, Pismo Beach provides a serene getaway for all travelers.
Follow the adventures on Instagram and Facebook: @PismoBeachCA and facebook.com/PismoBeachCa/

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