



Regenerative Travel Experiences in California

Support the planet on your next trip to the Golden State with these environmentally friendly destinations and attractions



Did you know that California is one of only 36 biodiversity hotspots in the world, according to the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund? The Golden State also boasts more **national parks, state parks**, and native species than any other state in the country. As responsible travelers, we can help make sure this special destination stays that way by engaging in regenerative travel.

So, what is regenerative travel and how is it different from sustainable travel?

Whereas sustainable travel aims to prevent further environmental harm by mitigating any existing negative impacts to a destination, regenerative travel goes one step further and seeks to leave a destination better than it was found. At its core, regenerative travel is about connecting eco-minded travelers with likeminded communities and businesses that are fully committed to long-term improvements.

If you're serious about regenerative travel, start by ensuring that your travel dollars are spent with purpose and intention. Research your accommodations, tour providers, restaurants, and the specific destinations you plan on visiting and review their policies. If you like what you see, book away. If you don't, keep looking for ones that better reflect your values. Here are some additional suggestions on how you can travel with a regenerative focus.

Choose planet-friendly accommodations

California has long been the home of innovation and forward thinking, especially in the hospitality industry. At **The Ranch Malibu**, staff support local wildlife by planting native species around the hotel's 200-acre property in the **Santa Monica Mountains**. Additionally, all barbed-wire fencing on the property has been removed to allow for natural animal migration. Admire the reforestation efforts on an invigorating daily hike through the mountains, located just three miles above the Pacific. The renowned wellness escape is also dedicated to minimizing its carbon footprint. The Ranch offers an exclusively plant-based menu made from ingredients grown in its certified organic garden—take a tour to learn how a regenerative farm works, then put your knowledge to use in a vegan cooking class.

In Orange County, **The Ranch at Laguna Beach** (no relation) is a member of Beyond Green, a global portfolio of hotels, resorts, and lodges that exemplify sustainability leadership. As a guest, you will be given the option of adding a “tree fee” to your room charge that will pay for a tree to be planted on the property. Each tree planted removes around a ton of carbon from the atmosphere over the course of its life. Enjoy a sustainably sourced meal at **Harvest**, which was named Laguna Beach's first “ocean friendly” restaurant by the **Surfrider Foundation**.

Recycling is big at this Orange County hidden gem—even the room keys are biodegradable. Staff are encouraged to bring their trash from home to the hotel, where it is composted and used in their on-site biodynamic garden. For their “Bottles to Bunkers” initiative, every glass bottle is crushed into a fine sand that is then used to fill the resort's golf course bunkers and for other landscaping as well. To learn more about The Ranch at Laguna Beach and its environmental initiatives, listen to the **“How to Hack Orange County”** episode of the California Now Podcast.

Get in touch with nature

If a heart-pumping expedition is more your speed, consider a trip with **Intrepid Travel**. The tour operator has not only achieved carbon-neutral status, but owners also plan to make it the world's first “climate-positive” travel company, removing more carbon dioxide from the atmosphere than they produce. The company achieves this through investing in wildlife conservation projects, human rights initiatives, local communities, and the environment. Intrepid Travel also incorporates an offset cost with every trip it offers.

You can choose from a variety of action-packed Intrepid tours through the Golden State, including cycling in **Sonoma** and **Napa Valley** and **hiking, biking, and kayaking adventures** in the **Sierra Nevada**. On the **hiking through Yosemite and Kings Canyon** tour, guests enjoy a guided walk through the historic Ahwahnee village in **Yosemite National Park** and learn about Native American heritage. This tour also explores the fauna and flora at **Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks**.

Support regenerative businesses

Though it may be a novel concept in the world of travel, the regenerative movement is hardly new. In fact, the agriculture and design industry have used regenerative strategies for decades. **Beltane Ranch** in **Glen Ellen** is one of many regenerative vineyards and farms in **Sonoma County**. Six-generation owners Lauren and Alex Benward also manage over 100 acres of open space in the heart of **Sonoma Valley**, providing habitat for wildlife, pollinators, and native flora, as well as recharging groundwater and sequestering carbon.

Beltane Ranch is also home to the **Farm Stay Inn**, a historic landmark built by abolitionist and businesswoman Mary Ellen Pleasant. Today, the inn consists of six airy rooms overlooking the impeccably maintained property. **Take a tour** of the heritage vineyard's 105-acre nature preserve for a behind-the-scenes look at a regenerative agriculture operation. Explore the benefits of growing heirloom produce, discover what goes into a pollinator habitat restoration project, and learn the importance of being stewards to the land.

Food & Farm Tours, also in Sonoma County, is a female-owned small business specializing in Northern California's sustainable and regenerative agriculture scene. On their **Flavors of Point Reyes** food tour, discover the world of eco-friendly oyster production, learn about the process of slow bread-making using locally sourced ancient grains, and harvest seasonal fruits and veggies on a regenerative farm. As instructive as it is delicious, a visit to Food & Farm Tours also goes a long way toward preserving the community's local agrarian economy.