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An Engagement Primer
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4 Great Coastal Escapes
Relaxing, meetings-friendly respites near major metros

A Mindful Conference Survival Guide
9 self-care tips for busy meeting professionals
Waterfront meetings near major metros offer faraway appeal

BY KATE CRIPE

A coastal meeting or event can be closer than you think. Beach activities, ocean views, waterfront venues and the relaxed feeling that coastal destinations provide can be found a short drive or plane ride away from major metropolitan hubs.

Monterey, California

Monterey is situated on the north end of California’s Central Coast, about 75 miles from downtown San Jose and about 100 miles from San Francisco. The city is home to attractions such as Cannery Row, the Monterey Bay Aquarium and Fisherman’s Wharf. The Monterey peninsula is also home to Pacific Grove, Pebble Beach and Carmel-by-the-Sea.

The Monterey Conference Center completed a $50 million renovation and expansion in 2017 that resulted in an LEED certification. The facility is adjacent to the Portola Hotel & Spa. The property boasts 379 guest rooms and more than 60,000 square feet of meeting space when combined with the adjacent Monterey Conference Center.

Along with the Monterey Marriott across the street, these properties offer 85,000 square feet of meeting space, 19,150 square feet of exhibition space and 700 guest rooms in downtown Monterey.

“Both meeting planners and attendees have often said what an incredibly beautiful destination Monterey is, filled with countless ways to enjoy and be inspired,” said Janine Chico, general manager of the Portola Hotel & Spa.

Coastal Group Activities:

- Boating and whale watching: There are several companies that can take groups out for whale watching year-round. There are also tours and charters that showcase local wildlife.

- Biking, hiking and horseback riding: There are multiple trails for all levels of bikers and hikers, from the paved Monterey Bay Coastal Recreation Trail to the cliffs of Big Sur, just south of Monterey. Groups can arrange for tours and rides.

PHOTOS, TOP TO BOTTOM: WILMINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA; MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA; NOODY GARDENS STEAMBOAT, GALVESTON, TEXAS; VENTURA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA