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I Stayed at the Post Ranch Inn, Big Sur's Most Luxurious Resort

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With its infinite ocean views and imposing cliffs, it's no wonder the late novelist Henry Miller chose to spend several decades of his life residing in Big Sur. And while he lived in humble quarters that are now a library open to the public, about a mile up the road exists one of California's most luxurious hotels: the [Post Ranch Inn](#). It's the kind of place you want to write about, even if you're not much for words.

Located along the Pacific Coast Highway, the Post Ranch Inn is a sprawling resort on the former site of an actual ranch. The hotel first opened its doors in 1992, and though it's since undergone renovations, it's maintained a striking design aesthetic that takes inspiration from the surrounding environment and materials.

I recently stayed at the Post Ranch Inn on a [road trip](#) along the California coast over Labor Day weekend. Though I only spent one night at the storied property, a staff member assured me that the relaxation I would feel after one night at the Post Ranch Inn would equate to a weeklong stay elsewhere. A bold claim, for sure, but looking back now, I get it.

Here's everything curious travelers need to know about what it's like to stay at the Post Ranch Inn, including activities, amenities, and considerations.

About the Post Ranch Inn

- There are 40 rooms spaced across the hotel's 100 acres, including a variety of cliffside, ocean-view accommodations and stilted, treehouse structures.
- The starting nightly rate is \$1,825, although that number may increase depending on the season.
- The hotel is for adults only, and pets aren't allowed.
- The on-site restaurant, Sierra Mar, serves breakfast, lunch, and dinner. In-room dining is also available, and each room comes stocked with complimentary snacks and beverages, including mixed nuts, granola bars, and homemade chocolate chip cookies.
- Amenities include a gym, heated pools, art gallery, and gift shop. The spa offers massages, reflexology, and facials.
- Complimentary activities include nature walks, yoga and meditation classes, wine tastings, and a tour of the chef's garden.

What I Like About the Post Ranch Inn

The moment you arrive in Big Sur, you can instantly feel your shoulders drop. Your brow unfurls and you may unclench your jaw. Well, this sensation is amplified upon arrival at the Post Ranch Inn.

A haven for relaxation, there's a lot to like about the resort. For starters, the service is warm and impeccable. I arrived several hours ahead of the usual 4 p.m. check-in, and to kill some time, I was whisked away on a golf cart to tour the property, which helped me learn where everything was. (Again: the Post Ranch Inn sits on 100 acres.)

After returning from the tour, my room was ready. Oh, the room. I stayed in a [Coast House](#) room, which features a fireplace and sizable terrace with seating. You can spend quite a bit of time just zoning out, staring at the view on that terrace, and I did.

I tend to be picky about hotel beds, and while I often find comforters and pillows too thin for my liking, I had no complaints about this bed, especially once the fireplace got going. And the shower was a surprising favorite, as it also had a perfect view of the Pacific. I cracked the windows open, and it practically felt like an outdoor shower, which, in my opinion, is one of life's greatest joys.



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Big Sur is known for its winding roads, and since I was wary of driving at night, it was convenient to have a restaurant on the property. The resort restaurant, [Sierra Mar](#), offers classic California food with many ingredients sourced from the chef's garden on site. I had the sea bass in a green curry sauce with wild rice and bok choy. It was light and lovely.

During my stay, I most enjoyed just wandering. I highly recommend taking advantage of the many walking trails, which give visitors an opportunity to appreciate redwood trees up close. And if you can manage, I strongly encourage setting your alarm to watch the sunrise; seeing the sun gradually lift above the fog is a memory I'll cherish.

What to Consider Before Booking the Post Ranch Inn

Though the Post Ranch Inn offers an inimitable stay, there are a few considerations. While the restaurant, Sierra Mar, is known for its incredible ocean view, you'll miss it if your dinner reservation is too late. (My reservation was at 8:30 p.m. That said, I did get to enjoy the view at breakfast the following day.) For this reason, I recommend timing your reservation accordingly so you can catch the sunset.

There are two heated infinity pools with quite the view, but they were smaller than I had imagined and may feel cramped if there are several guests in there at a time. For those wanting a little more room, however, there is also a larger lap pool by the gym.

As I mentioned, the walking trails are wonderful, but beware of the poison oak and wild turkeys often shuffling around. They were more *spirited* than expected. I was advised to carry around a stick for intimidation purposes, but thankfully it didn't end up coming to that.

Lastly, there are a few activities that aren't included in the rate: namely the falconry program, which is an added \$200. Having done the two-hour program myself, I will say it is an incredible, memorable experience that allows guests to admire six birds of prey up close, but it of course comes at a cost.



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Who the Post Ranch Inn Is Best For

The Post Ranch Inn is best for [couples seeking a romantic getaway](#). The many vistas are primed for enjoying with a significant other, and the restaurant is practically made for dates with its dim lighting. (Hey, should you choose to get married at the Post Ranch Inn, that's [also an option](#).) The Post Ranch Inn is also a fit for solo travelers seeking to unwind and connect with nature. The various outdoor activities make it a great option for a [relaxing wellness retreat](#) of sorts. Given its adults-only policy, the resort is not a fit for families. Rooms also have a two-person occupancy max, and so the Post Ranch Inn might not be right for larger groups.

Is the Post Ranch Inn Worth the Trip?

I won't sugarcoat it: at nearly \$2,000 a night, the Post Ranch Inn is a splurge. And while it's not the kind of trusty boutique hotel you'd return to again and again, it does offer a once-in-a-lifetime experience. So, for a special occasion, like a honeymoon or milestone birthday, I would say the Post Ranch Inn succeeds in making its high price worth it.

But here's a tip: Sierra Mar is open to the public for dinner, so if you'd like to get a glimpse of the property without actually staying there, simply [make a reservation](#).

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