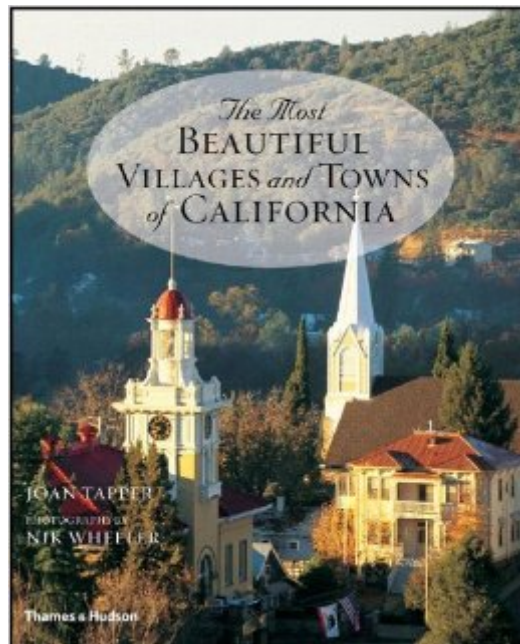


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# The Most Beautiful Villages And Towns Of California



## Synopsis

California's picturesque villages and small towns and its stunning landscape, from rugged sierras and fog-laced headlands to golden sand beaches and rolling oak-studded ranchland. California is nicknamed "The Golden State," and though the name applies literally to the color of its state flower, the golden poppy, it is also a metaphor for the hopes and dreams that have lured generations of settlers. There are villages that grew up around the famed Spanish mission trail, and communities that boomed because of Gold Rush fever. There are places whose natural beauty nurtured artists and writers, and fertile valleys that were home to vintners and cattlemen. The state is known for reinventing itself, yet a surprising number of its towns and villages still offer charming glimpses into its history and heritage. Their architecture may be quaint, historic, or gracious and their physical settings may take the breath away, but they are also vital communities, prized for their small-town values, their lifestyle, food, and wine. This book showcases the most beautiful villages and towns of California in Nik Wheeler's stunning photography and Joan Tapper's perceptive commentaries. These evoke not just historic houses, but also streetscapes, parks, and physical surroundings. The book is divided into four regions: Northern California Coast, Northern California Mountains and Valleys, Central and Southern California Coast, and Central and Southern California Mountains and Valleys. In addition, there are photographic essays on the wine country, missions, and ghost towns, plus essential information for tourists on places to stay and to eat. 323 color photographs.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book is filled with colorful lush photographs of California towns and villages. It is for memories and admiration, not information. The photos are carefully posed for the most romantic interpretation and atmosphere. Some of them present an illusion. I live in one of the towns and had to laugh. In one group of photos, if the photographer had simply turned 180 degrees you would have seen a 4 lane boulevard heavy with semis, trucks and cars on weekdays and tourists on weekends. In another series of pictures just up the road, the 101 freeway was less than 50 feet behind the photographer. It is choked with cars at all times of the day and night and comes to a standstill if there is an accident. Still, the book presents a lovely picture of a California that exists as a Shangri-la. It is enjoyable with the above caveat for those of us who live here.

I purchased this book as a "thank you" gift for a friend in Germany who had visited many of the Coastal towns of California during a vacation long ago. He loved the book and marveled at all the places he remembered from time spent in "The Golden State". Plus, pictures of towns that he hadn't visited were so interesting to him that I'm sure they'll give him ideas for any upcoming visits he may be planning. The photographs are beautiful and the commentaries interesting. While it doesn't highlight the rugged beauty of places such as Yosemite or the California Coast, it serves to reinforce the down-to-earth beauty that can be found in simple, every day towns.

Great coffee table book. Very unique and beautiful images, a great showcase of pictures throughout California. It also has a great index to all the finest hotels and restaurants..

This is a nicely photographed coffee table book that highlights some of the less well-known parts of California as well as the more famous and iconic spots in the state. I bought the book as a transplanted Californian who wants to remember the place as it was "back in the time". The nicely produced volume does do that visually. It's less substantive in its text. What I especially liked about "The Most Beautiful...." were the sections on towns in the north of the state, where things really haven't changed as radically as they have in the south. One of the few entries for the far south, San Juan Capistrano, was really little more than a photo layout of the old mission in that town. There's truly not much else to present although it's a pleasant enough suburb. If you've traveled down Route 1, done the Wine Country or toured the Gold Country, you would certainly enjoy owning this book as a memento of your travels. Before such travels and looking for info about interesting stops, this isn't going to be much help, other than a visual preview. I'm happy to have the book in any event.

I come from uglier places in this fair Union - Wisconsin, Florida, New York. When I arrived in California, I arrived to heaven on earth. But where is my family to go on vacation and look to work and live when every place is beautiful?! This book answers that question and helped my wife and I decide to take the family to Monterey. And, guess what, we' are moving there soon. So watch out if you buy this book or you might find yourself visiting and ultimately moving to a place you absolutely consider heaven on earth!

A book worthy a beautiful state! Images of glitzy LA or cosmopolitan SF frequently overshadow the many other destinations featured in this book. Of course being an overview, the towns listed here are given as cursory highlights without much depth. Nonetheless, the book tantalizes like a plate of appetizers. The diner will have to follow up with his own entree should he want to savor a particular site.

I agreed with the author about the towns spotlighted in the books, they can be very pretty and interesting looking. However, it would have been nice to have included actual photos of the towns. For example, for the town of Julian, there is not a single photo of the town. Kind of the same for St Helena, there are several photos of things around town but from this book you will have no idea what the town looks like. Overall, it's a great pictorial of some of California's pretty sites but not really a great pictorial of towns and villages.

This book is nice but it's out of date. I recommend a more current edition or another book that's newer.

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