



## **Carmel-by-the-Sea: Where Art Is Alive and Around Every Corner**



*Painting by Kathy Sharpe*

**CARMEL-BY-THE-SEA, Calif. (March 7, 2017)** – Even though Carmel-by-the-Sea’s roots as an artists’ colony date back more than 110 years, today “art” is around every corner you turn in the village. And visitors to the charming town along the Pacific can make art of their own with a choice of hands-on creative experiences.

Whether its artists busy at work in their galleries (where there are more in one square mile than any other city in the country), award-winning chefs creating works of edible art in the village’s world-class restaurants, or shop owners crafting head-turning storefronts, the essence of art is as defining to Carmel as its white-sand beaches and fairytale cottages.

“Art is such a wonderfully immersive experience in Carmel-by-the-Sea,” said Kathy Sharpe, local artist and gallery owner. “It may be an altogether different experience than when the artists’ colony got its start here in 1906, but art is indeed alive and thriving in so many ways today.”

Here’s a closer look:

The Carmel Art Festival, an annual event in Carmel-by-the-Sea since 1994, will be held Friday, May 19 to Sunday, May 21. Founded by a group of local gallery owners, the Carmel Art Festival – free to the public – has become one of the most prestigious juried plein air events in the country. The Festival was started not only to have artists immortalize the beauty of the scenic Monterey Peninsula and Big Sur coastline, but also to promote youth art programs to encourage the next generation of talented artists.

At this year's event, Steven Whyte, an internationally acclaimed figurative sculptor whose work is displayed at the Smithsonian, will be creating a large sculpture in Devendorf Park, ideally situated in downtown Carmel where additional "Sculpture-in-the-Park" exhibits and exhibitions are scheduled. Live bands will be entertaining crowds as they enjoy the festivities. All official Festival events will be held on Mission Street between Ocean Avenue & 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, turning the downtown area into a bustling haven for art, whether enjoyed by avid collectors or those simply stopping to admire.

Innkeepers are offering special Carmel [Art Festival hotel packages](#) with discounted rates and free gifts.

The Carmel Art Association (CAA) is the second oldest art cooperative in the country and has defined Carmel-by-the-Sea's art community as it celebrates its 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2017. To commemorate the occasion, the Association is presenting an Historical Exhibition with a show featuring some 200 works of paintings, graphic arts and sculpture created by more than 50 CAA members since 1927.

The exhibit is available to the public through April 4. The CAA gallery, located on Dolores between 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Avenues, is open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily.

Staged by Carmel's 21 artist-owned galleries, the Carmel Art Walk is held the second Saturday of every month. Over a three-hour period, artists can be found in their galleries, showing their works and answering questions, while many are giving free demonstrations.

The next two Art Walks are scheduled from 5 to 8 p.m. for April 8 and May 13.

For a closer look, Carmel Art Tours offers 90-minute guided, informal walking tours to as many as eight of the village's art galleries, where artists are not only found working but telling stories about the process behind their creations. And many local artists offer private sessions and retreats where even beginners can immerse themselves in creative expression.

Even the store windows in Carmel-by-the-Sea are often works of art, such as the storefront at Carmel Bay Company, on the corner of Lincoln and Ocean. Several other stores – those up and down Ocean Avenue, on the side streets, and in Carmel Plaza – also feature dazzling visual appeal.

Then there are Carmel-by-the-Sea's restaurants, which boast a host of talented executive chefs who could hold their own on the world stage but opt for California's Central Coast, where they can marry fresh, local foods with Monterey County's award-winning wines. For instance, Justin Cogley, executive chef at Aubergine, showcases a broad combination of flavors and textures with a balance of innovation and deference to the finest local ingredients. The restaurant has received the Forbes Travel Guide's highest five-star rating of excellence, and Cogley's creations are as appealing to the palate as they are to the eye.

It's never been easier to book a lodging reservation at one of the village's quaint inns. A newly introduced "Book Direct" feature on the Visit Carmel website allows travelers to quickly and conveniently make reservations, with special rates, directly with innkeepers.

Carmel-by-the-Sea is accessible via Monterey Regional Airport (MRY) is just a 10-minute drive away and served by direct flights to and from San Francisco (SFO, United Express), Los Angeles (LAX, United Express, Alaska Airlines), Las Vegas (LAS, Allegiant Air), Phoenix (PHX, American), and San Diego (SAN, Alaska Airlines). San Jose International Airport (SJC) is 75 miles north.

**Visit Carmel** [www.carmelcalifornia.com](http://www.carmelcalifornia.com) is the official destination marketing organization for the City of Carmel-by-the-Sea. The mission of Visit Carmel is to promote Carmel-by-the-Sea as a top-rated, world-renowned destination where one-of-a-kind visitor experiences and discoveries are within walking distance of a variety of charming hotels, inns and B&Bs.

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