

# How to See Monterey Through The Eyes of Big Little Lies

Written by Leslie K. Hughes

Monday, 09 April 2018 17:12 - Last Updated Monday, 09 April 2018 18:25

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Murder. Mystery. Scandal. And a whole lot of lies -- *Big Little Lies*.

Binge watching is an absolute must with [this HBO hit](#), unless you're able to practice some serious self restraint (in which case, please spill your secrets).

With a bottle of California wine in hand, viewers across the country found a new hobby in obsessing over this TV show. It seems as if no one was, or still is, immune to the *Big Little Lies* fever.

And the recent announcement that a second season is in the works has fans returning to season one to relive the story once more.

It's the die-hard viewers' due diligence to prepare for what the fabulous ladies of Monterey, CA will get mixed up in round two.

Though you may have been consumed by the drama (because this show really takes the cake for dramatics), it was impossible to ignore the star of the show that doesn't have an Oscar nomination under her belt -- the [stunning city of Monterey](#).

From the moment you lay your eyes on Bixby Bridge in the show's opening credits, it's impossible *not* to fall in love with the scenery that the areas of Monterey and Carmel have to offer.

This part of California is considered by some to be the most beautiful part of the sprawling California coastline, thus making it the perfect setting for a story filled with seemingly perfect people, but who are each hiding their own very dark side.

The awe-inspiring and, dare we say, dramatic landscape of Monterey with its massive waves crashing against the sharp rocks is home to the show's Madeline, Celeste, Jane, Renata, and Bonnie, but, as you're about to find out, it is home to so much more.

The popularity of this show has driven fans from all over the world to come to this mystical part of California to see where the stories of the cast unraveled.

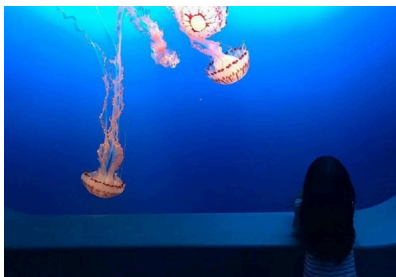
We are bringing you along on our *Big Little Lies* road trip to explore the breathtaking area, and to see why this is a place worth adventuring to beyond the screen.

And you better believe we'll be listening to the show's soundtrack the entire time.

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## What to See

### Monterey Bay Aquarium



Recognized as one of the best aquariums in the country, the [Monterey Bay Aquarium](#) is a must during your road trip.

The major role that the aquarium plays in the Monterey community makes it no surprise that *BLL*'s Renata serves on the board of this local hot spot.

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Stop here to see the first living kelp forest exhibit ever shown in an aquarium, as well as over 35,000 different animals (including local fave, the otters).

Set aside some serious time to explore all that the aquarium offers, and see if you can find the spots where Ziggy and Jane spent an afternoon of fun.

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### Old Fisherman's Wharf



Head to the Fisherman's Wharf to sit at the harborside cafe where Reese Witherspoon, Nicole Kidman, and Shailene Woodley's characters gossip post-morning school drop-off.

You'll find that the leading ladies' go-to spot is not actually a cafe, but rather an Italian restaurant that was transformed for the show.

The restaurant, [Paluca Trattoria](#), comes highly recommended for a fabulous lunch or dinner.

And don't forget to order an obligatory espresso to sip on at *the* famous table for a photo, too.

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### Lover's Point Park



This 4+ acre park is heavenly.

Doing nothing but sitting here and staring out at the mesmerizing water for hours is something you'll find yourself loving, and we certainly won't judge you for doing so.

If you're up for a bit of adventure, grab a kayak or some binoculars to set your sights on some of the area's fabulous native marine life.

*Big Little Lies* fans will surely recognize this park from a number of scenes, including the fender-bender scene where Madeline and Jane's friendship begins.

### Highway 1

Traveling along Highway 1 may be the pinnacle of this road trip.

We strongly urge you to blast "Cold Little Heart" on your car speakers, and you'll feel like you're driving through the opening credits of the show.

Because guess what -- you are.

Along Highway 1 is where each *Big Little Lies* episode begins, with Madeline behind the wheel.

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Park your car at [Garrapata State Park](#) for the most picturesque views of the crashing waves and rugged coastline.

You'll quickly recognize that Garrapata served as the backdrop for a number of scenes in the show. In fact, *Big Little Lies* production designers constructed an entirely new set of stairs for the show that remains in the park today.

Continue on to drive over the famous Bixby Bridge and stop to capture the perfect *Big Little Lies* snapshot.

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## Where to Eat and Drink

### Seventh & Dolores Steakhouse



Though not featured in *Big Little Lies*, [Seventh & Dolores Steakhouse](#) is definitely worth going off your *BLL* road trip track for, and is a place that all our fave characters from the show would have loved.

With steak as its focus, this restaurant offers much more than your favorite cut of beef to diners in the way of naturally-farmed, humanely-raised foods prepared in a way that will truly blow your mind.

Be sure to try the Marrow Roasted Scallops, and anything that comes with fresh black truffle shavings.

But, whatever you do, do *not* miss out on having resident mixologist Carlos Colimodio concoct the drink of your dreams.

We suggest the Smoked Old Fashioned off the menu, but if that's not your style, Carlos will go off-menu to create just what you're looking for.

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### Dawn's Dream Winery



How could you take a trip to Northern California and *not* indulge in a glass of wine or two? We found the perfect place for you to do so, tucked in the cute downtown streets of Carmel-by-the-Sea: [Dawn's Dream Winery](#).

Owner Dawn Galante has taken her passion for helping women and children, and her love and knowledge of wine to produce award-winning wines and share them with wine-lovers all over the country.

The business model that Dawn has created is one that allows her to donate her wine, her time, or her money to support local and international nonprofit organizations. And she could not be more thrilled.

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We can definitely see *BLL*'s Madeline getting on board with this place.

Stop into the tasting room for a glass of Dawn's famous "Nugget" Chardonnay, or one of her other delectable wines. You'll fulfill not only your wine needs, but also fulfill your heart when you know you're helping Dawn continue her support for women and children around the world.

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## Where to Stay

### La Playa Carmel



Called the "Grande Dame of Carmel," this historic hotel was built as a luxurious mansion for a member of the Ghiradelli family back in 1905.

[La Playa Carmel](#) has since then been restored, but has lost none of its classic and elegant charm.

Offering 75 rooms with stunning views of the ocean, and located merely steps away from Carmel Beach and all the shopping you could get your hands on in Carmel, La Playa Carmel is the perfect home base for your *Big Little Lies* road trip.

The hotel's Champagne Breakfast is a major highlight -- it is where you go to put other hotel breakfast buffets to shame.

Enjoy your favorite breakfast eats gourmet-style in the hotel's library featuring, of course, Champagne.

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### Monterey Plaza Hotel & Spa



This iconic hotel in the heart of Monterey's Cannery Row has hosted guests including Oprah and President Obama himself.

However, there's much more than the celebrity sighting worth enjoying at the [Monterey Plaza Hotel & Spa](#).

With an freshly updated outdoor patio, this is where you'll want to be with cocktail in hand come five o'clock (or anytime, really).

And if you want the ultimate peace and relaxation, head to the hotel's top floor for a treatment at the [Vista Blue Spa](#). The rooftop sundeck here is everything you've ever dreamed you could find at a spa.

Surely the leading ladies of *Big Little Lies* have paid a visit or two here.

Post-spa, be sure to visit [on-site restaurant Schooners](#) for a killer view while munching on the area's freshest and finest seafood.

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Though these are our favorite spots to stop during a *BLL* road trip, this magical part of the California coast has beauty and adventure everywhere you turn.

It's no secret why the characters of *Big Little Lies* are willing to do whatever it takes to keep their dark side hidden -- they truly are living in paradise.