

# News Release



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## What to do with Holiday Relatives Coming to Your House this Year

### How about a Holiday Season Field Trip?

With the holiday season in full swing and a house full of relatives to entertain for days, California State Parks has some great ideas for entertaining that group. We suggest you consider a holiday field trip to tour our locomotives, a Civil War era post, the State's first power plant, an historic town draped in Christmas cheer, or another of our fun places.

California State Parks has 50 State Historic Parks and one State Historic Monument and a visit to any one of them is an entertaining and educational way to get the gang moving and out of the house on a fun holiday season field trip. You can make this field trip just an hour or two, or a whole afternoon, your choice.

To give you some thought provoking ideas, let's start with a quiz. (Answers at end)

1. What was the first electric generating powerhouse in California and where is it located? You can go there and see the restored electric turbines, still in place as they were 100 years ago, and it is interactive with switches for the kids to turn on and off.
2. Where will you find the oldest continuously used intact Chinese temple in California, built in 1874? Amazing color and beauty.
3. Where can you find the only intact Civil War era U.S. Army post on the West Coast? If you get there on time, the kids can help fire the cannon.
4. The U.S. Army's 1<sup>st</sup> U.S. Dragoons established a permanent fort here in 1854? Many soldiers who fought in the Civil War on opposite sides were together here before the war.

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California State Parks on the Internet: <<http://www.parks.ca.gov>>



5. This was the home of the last governor of Mexican California, now restored with adobe bricks and furnishing to look as it did in 1850? This was California before statehood.
6. Where is the only town founded, financed and governed by African Americans, a town where you can walk through homes, businesses, churches and a turn-of-the-century schoolhouse?
7. Where can you find a whole town that is right out of the American West, restored to the Gold Rush Era, with Christmas decorations to match?
8. Where can you see and tour an 1840s style mill that turns grain into flour, a place where the kids can run the mill as part of the tour? You will be impressed with the size of the water wheel here. It still works.
9. Where can you tour one of the largest smoke-belching, steam locomotives in the world, where the wheels are six feet tall?
- (10) Where can you walk through the home of America's most beloved humorist, a horse-loving man that made a living at roping cattle and razzing the politicians of the day?

If you want more of a selection, then go to the California State Parks web site, [www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov), and wander around. There are State Historic Parks in virtually every section of the state. Meaning, you are sure to find one not too far from your holiday dinner table. In addition, the website has a listing of Christmas events at various parks across the state.

A visit to any one of California's historic sites will be like a trip through time, with many of the locations having docents and volunteers dressed in period costumes to tell the stories better. California has been a trend setting state from the time the first gold seekers hit the road from all across the world to seek their fortune in the Golden State. And that brings to mind another quiz question: Where was gold discovered in California? Too easy, right? Well, you can walk the ground on that site, Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park along the American River at the town of Coloma, not far from Auburn. If you love our Golden State, you will love learning a bit about the folks who came before us, and the docents, interpreters and volunteers at all these places will challenge and thrill families of all ages.

**Answers to quiz: (1) Folsom Powerhouse SHP, Folsom, (2) Weaverville Joss House State Historic Park, west of Redding, (3) Camp Reynolds on Angel Island in the San Francisco Bay, (4) Fort Tejon, along Interstate 5 south of Bakersfield, (5) Pio Pico SHP in Whittier, (6) Colonel Allensworth SHP, south of Visalia off Highway 99, (7) Columbia SHP near Sonora, (8) Bale Grist Mill SHP in the Napa Valley, (9) California State Railroad Museum, Sacramento, and (10) Will Rogers SHP, near Santa Monica and Los Angeles.**

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