

CENTRAL COAST LIVING

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THE TRIBUNE F

SLO COUNTY ON THE SILVER SCREEN

From Hearst Castle to the Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes, the Central Coast is a popular backdrop

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Sun-soaked beaches. Sleepy small towns. Winding country roads and acres upon acres of oak-covered hills, sand dunes and majestic ocean bluffs. No wonder Hollywood loves the Central Coast. San Luis Obispo County has provided the backdrop for countless commercials, television shows and films ranging from Cecil B.

DeMille's 1923 epic "The Ten Commandments" to the popular "Pirates of the Caribbean" trilogy. The region has doubled for Maine and the Midwest, ancient Rome and America in the 21st century. In honor of the Oscars, televised live tonight on NBC, we've tracked down several examples of Central Coast movie magic. Read on.



Talk about the fast and the furious. Angry Cholame residents complained when stuntmen screeched down rural roads while filming "The Junkman." The 1982 movie, shot in parts of Paso Robles and Shandon, includes a tribute to actor James Dean, who died in a car crash near Cholame.

HEARST CASTLE

Hearst Castle stood in for an ancient Roman villa in Stanley Kubrick's 1960 film "Spartacus."



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Scream queen Jeanne Carmen fell prey to the title creature in "The Monster of Piedras Blancas," a 1959 horror movie filmed in Cayucos.

PASO ROBLES

MOVIES FILMED COUNTYWIDE

The Central Coast's rolling hills and lush grasslands doubled for the la Drang Valley in "We Were Soldiers," Mel Gibson's 2002 Vietnam War drama, left. Cast and crew members filmed in Morro Bay, Camp Roberts and Fort Hunter Liggett.



MOVIEWEB

Sandra Bullock played a police detective on the trail of two teenage killers in 2002's "Murder by Numbers," filmed in Los Osos, Morro Bay and San Luis Obispo.

Steve Martin and Rick Moranis teamed up for 1990's "My Blue Heaven" a wacky comedy about a mob informant and his straightlaced FBI handler. Atascadero, Paso Robles and San Luis Obispo all served as elements of a sleepy California town.

"Personal Best" director Robert Towne picked Baywood Park, Los Osos, Morro Bay High School and Cal Poly as settings for his movie about a track star (Mariel Hemingway) vying for the national team.

A twisted killer takes his victims on a "Midnight Ride" through Grover Beach, Morro Bay, Pismo Beach and San Luis Obispo in this 1990 thriller. Mark Hamill, best known as Luke Skywalker in "Star Wars," starred as the psychotic hitchhiker who preyed on a cop (Michael Dudikoff) and his wife.

Rick Moranis returned to the Central Coast as a misfit football coach in 1994's "Little Giants," filmed in Arroyo Grande and San Luis Obispo. The comedy also stars Ed O'Neill, Cal Poly alum John Madden and pro football players Emmitt Smith, Tim Brown, and Bruce Smith.

Giant killer spiders invaded the quiet hamlet of Cambria in "Arachnophobia," starring Jeff Daniels and John Goodman. Filmed here in 1990, the creature feature highlighted Coast Union High School, Moonstone Beach and Adelaida.

CAMBRIA

ATASCADERO

Beau Bridges and Maud Adams strolled down a Morro Bay boardwalk in 1971's "The Christian Licorice Store." The movie follows a tennis champ who falls for a pretty photographer.

Film noir classic "The Lady from Shanghai" features footage shot at Morro Rock. Rita Hayworth starred alongside Orson Welles, who also wrote and directed the 1947 film.

CAYUCOS

MORRO BAY

When Walter Matthau and Jack Lemmon reunited for 1992's "The Odd Couple II," they set up shop in the sunny Los Osos Valley.

LOS OSOS

MONTAÑA DE ORO STATE PARK

Disney film crews built a 52-foot lighthouse on a Point Buchon bluff for 1977's "Pete's Dragon," about a boy and his scaly friend. Montaña de Oro State Park substituted for Passamaquoddy, Maine.

AVILA BEACH

Tragedy struck during the filming of the 2003 Bruce Willis action movie "Tears of the Sun" near Oceano. A parachuting stuntman missed his target, landed about 300 yards offshore and drowned.

SAN LUIS OBISPO

PISMO BEACH

ARROYO GRANDE

OCEANO

GUADALUPE-NIPOMO DUNES

At the beginning of 2007's "Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End" Captain Jack Sparrow slides down a local sand dune to land in the sparkling Pacific Ocean. Local fans flocked to the Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes to catch a glimpse of star Johnny Depp and company.

Archaeologists are still digging plaster set pieces out of the Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes, the setting of Cecil B. DeMille's 1923 Biblical epic "The Ten Commandments."

The shifting sands also served as the backdrop for 1921's "The Sheik" and its sequel, "The Son of the Sheik," both starring silent film heartthrob Rudolph Valentino.

OTHER MOVIES FILMED LOCALLY

"Of Mice and Men" (1939): Filmed at Hearst Ranch and in San Luis Obispo.
"California Dreaming" (1979): Filmed in Avila Beach, Morro Bay and San Luis Obispo.
"To Live and Die in L.A." (1985): Filmed at California Men's Colony.
"Commando" (1985): Filmed at Hearst Castle and in San Luis Obispo.

"Aria" (1987), filmed at Madonna Inn.
"My Cousin Vinny" (1992): Filmed in Atascadero.
"Patriot Games" (1992): Filmed in Morro Bay.
"The Whole Ten Yards" (2004): Filmed at the Oceano Dunes.

SOURCE: IMDB.COM

TRIBUNE FILE PHOTOS



MOVIEWEB

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