The weather around here can go from hot and sunny to cold and windy—and back again—quickly. So bring water and wear layers. Stay on the trails and watch out for:

POISON OAK
This itch-inducing plant is abundant along the sides of the trails. Don’t touch any plant unless you’re sure of what it is, and remember: “Leaves-of-three, let it be.”

RATTLESNAKES
Though common to these parts, rattlesnakes are more afraid of you than you are of them. They don’t attack unless threatened, and they can strike only as far as the length of their coiled body. So if you see one, just give it a wide berth and be on your way.

MOUNTAIN LIONS
The likelihood of an encounter with one of these big cats is next to nothing, but they do live in the nearby hills. If you spot one, don’t approach. Make noise, try to look as big as possible, and back away slowly.
HORSESHOE (.67 miles; Easy-to-Moderate)
Our most popular trail, starting just beyond the 10th green and ascending to the Yoga Platform, under shady oaks draped with lace lichen. Bird’s-eye views of the golf course and the River Ranch on one side give way to sweeping vistas of Robinson Canyon on the other.

SPUR (1.12 miles; Easy)
A short walk up from the Yoga Platform to Sunrise Knob. At the top, the trail curves to the left, dropping down between the trees to a spine that rises to Sunset Point. Panoramic views of Carmel Valley offer a glimpse of the ocean to the west and the Santa Lucia Mountains to the southeast.

GITALONG WAY (.7 miles; Easy)
An easy downhill stroll from the Vineyard Lawn to the River Ranch. Stop for a swing beneath the Ranch’s signature oak tree before picking up the dirt path that leads to the organic garden, salt house, chicken coop and apiary. Then drop down through the trees to Old Ranch Road, cross at the Clubhouse, and continue along the golf course on the dirt path to the River Ranch.

APPALOOSA (.15 miles; Easy)
An easy jaunt to the former site of a coral, tack barn, and other remnants of the horseback riding concession run by previous owners of the Ranch.

MUCKLEHEAD (.57 miles; Easy)
An easy hike from the top of the Horseshoe Trail into the tranquility of Robinson Canyon. Lush foliage on both sides of the trail soon drops away to reveal the canyon—an expanse of redwoods, pines, and rock formations dotted with caves. At the fork, stay to the left. A bit further, turn back at the “Trail Closed” sign or continue to the left to enjoy the views from Snively’s Ridge.

SNIVELY’S RIDGE (3.43 miles; Challenging)
An invigorating hike on an old fire road that ascends the ridge above The Ranch, climbing steadily southeasterward into Garland Ranch Regional Park. A longtime locals’ favorite, this trail offers unparalleled views and connects with dozens of other trails once in the park. Take plenty of water, as the trail can be hot in the summer.

PALISADES (1.84 miles; Moderate-to-Challenging)
A steep drop down from Snively’s Ridge on a winding trail that snakes its way through a quiet, sunny canyon. The soil is loose in some places; boots with good traction are recommended. At the trail sign about 1 mile down, return to The Ranch by taking a left to cut over to Fairway Lane. Then take Fairway Lane to Old Ranch Road and turn right.