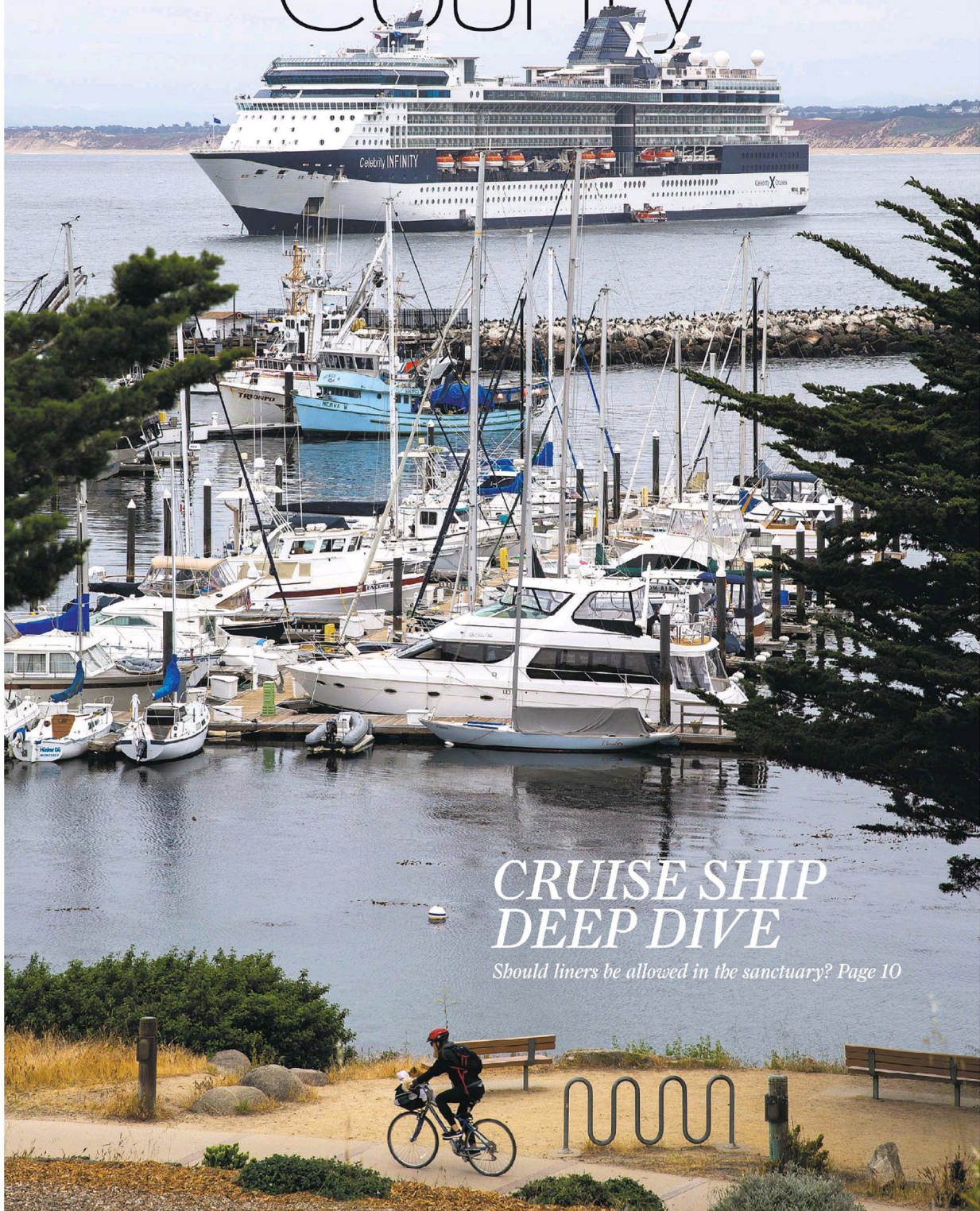


Monterey County



CRUISE SHIP DEEP DIVE

Should liners be allowed in the sanctuary? Page 10

BIG SUR HIGHWAY ONE IS ALMOST OPEN. **PAGE 2** | **SUITE SPOT** ULTIMATE GLAMPING. **PAGE 3**

PERFORMANCE LOCAL TROUPE PAYS HOMAGE TO OLD HOLLYWOOD. **PAGE 4**

HONEY HUB CARMEL HIDES THE SWEET STUFF. **PAGE 6** | **DINING** NEW KITCHEN REELS IN FRESH FISH. **PAGE 12**

MONTEREY COUNTY



THE BUZZ AROUND CARMEL IS BEEKEEPING, HONEY TASTING

By Nathan Hurst

Bees can't see the color white, Mariah McDonald tells me as she helps me into white coveralls with a zip-over hood, the traditional beekeeper's uniform. This is how she dresses attendees of the Amazing World of Bees, Carmel Valley Ranch's new 90-minute educational tasting and experiential tour.

Covered head to toe, McDonald, who has been beekeeping manager at the ranch since it restructured its previous bee experience for the 2018 season, opens one of the hives and points out the queen.

Inset: Mel (left) and Jacquie Stringham of Seattle check out a beehive honeycomb with the help of beekeeper Mariah McDonald of the Amazing World of Bees.





Photos by Patrick Tehan / Special to The Chronicle

Above left, clockwise: Bernardus' Cal Stamenov, whose bee-themed offerings include a roasted pear salad with honey black truffle vinaigrette, and drinks such as Honey You're Driving, Queen Bee and Epipen.

If you go

CARMEL VALLEY RANCH

1 Old Ranch Road, Carmel; (831) 626-2577; www.carmelvalleyranch.com/play-for-all-ages/activity-field-guide/bee-happy

BERNARDUS LODGE AND SPA

415 W. Carmel Valley Road, Carmel Valley; (831) 658-3400; www.bernarduslodge.com

CARMEL HONEY COMPANY

Carmel Plaza Shopping Center, Suite 118, Carmel-by-the-Sea; (831) 687-8511; www.carmelhoneycompany.com

CARMEL LAVENDER CO./THE BEE EXPERIENCE

316 Mid Valley Center, Carmel; (800) 949-2645; www.carmellavender.com; www.thebeeexperience.com

"We talk about a lot of information, and have an overview of bees and their behavior," she says. "Some people aren't totally engaged, and then once we get them in a bee suit and actually in the apiary and

pull a frame of bees, that magic is just undeniable and penetrates everyone's heart and mind."

The Amazing World of Bees is just one of several initiatives by Monterey County beekeepers seeking

to make the area not just a great place to keep bees, but a place for visitors to learn about bees, taste honey, and get up close and personal with the eusocial insects.

At nearby Bernardus

Lodge and Spa, Chef Cal Stamenov keeps three hives in a purple lavender, catnip and echium garden on the property, and uses the honey in dishes at Lucia

Bees continues on M15

Bees from page M7

Restaurant and Bar. Drop by, and he'll happily show you around the chef's garden, alive with the audible buzz of thousands of bees. Visit the bar for a Smoky Stinger (mescal with bitters, lemon and honey) or the ever-popular EpiPen (whiskey, honey, bitters and soda). Or check out the spa, which periodically has treatments inspired by, or even featuring, honey, especially during September, National Honey Month.

Perhaps Monterey County's best-known beekeeper is 15-year-old Jake Reisdorf. With the help of his family, he turned a fifth-grade project into a business managing 125 hives around the region and even as far away as Oregon, selling four types of honey (available in local shops or at www.carmelhoneycompany.com), and operating a store in Carmel's downtown plaza that also sells bee shirts, bee totes, wax candles and plush stuffed bees.

If you come weekends or afternoons when he's out of school, the highly knowledgeable Jake will walk you through a tasting featuring honey dripped on apples with brie, crackers with goat cheese, peanut butter banana and more. It's a bit like listening to a sommelier when he talks about the light, mellow black button sage honey, the more complex orange blossom, the local honey from a variety of wildflowers and the meadowfoam honey, which tastes of vanilla and toasted marshmallows.

John Russo, a veteran beekeeper who maintains about 50 hives around Carmel Valley and also runs a lavender farm, has even worked with sommeliers to provide tasting notes for his honeys. "It's



Patrick Tehan / Special to The Chronicle

A bee looks for nectar on the flower of an echium plant at Bernardus Lodge and Spa in Carmel Valley. Honey is used in dishes at the lodge.

“When you eat honey, you’re essentially eating a Carmel Valley meadow in a jar.”

John Russo, a veteran beekeeper

kind of like wine, except people aren't as knowledgeable about it, because it's not something that you find everywhere," he says.

Before Carmel Valley Ranch hired McDonald, the program there was called the "Bee Experience," and Russo ran it. Now he has started a company called Mellifera B for a new kind of Bee Experience,

featuring a 90-minute presentation, tastings and tours at a small ranch in the valley.

Honey is so much more than just a sweetener for your tea, Russo is fond of pointing out. Tastings and educational experiences are helping people understand both the importance of our bees and the ways we can use their honey, and putting Carmel on the map for sweet experiences.

"When you eat honey, you're essentially eating a Carmel Valley meadow in a jar. It's the pollens and nectars from those flowers that you see around you, poured all over your breakfast," says Russo.

Big Sur from page M5

father, a stone carver who apprenticed with artist Edmund Kara, one of the central figures in Big Sur's bohemian-Hollywood connection.

Kara was a celebrated costume designer in Hollywood in the 1950s but moved to Big Sur in 1962 to become a sculptor. His first creation was the Phoenix Bird, a 5-foot-tall sculpture made from oak with feet forged from bronze that stands in the courtyard at Nepenthe and that locals have embraced as a symbol for the Big Sur community. In 1964, Kara created a redwood sculpture of Taylor, Hollywood's biggest female star of the time and a good friend who then was shooting "The Sandpiper."

The performance event "is a tribute to Edmund, Elizabeth and the Phoenix," said Webster, standing before the bird sculpture on Nepenthe's famous patio. "It's in honor of the relationship between the city and the country and how people like Edmund came here to let go, and how they were able to be reborn with a new enthusiasm for life."

Kara's life-sized nude sculpture of Taylor — it was said to have weighed more than 700 pounds — was featured in "The Sandpiper" and was shipped to Paris, where it was unveiled in a highly publicized gallery opening in 1964 featuring Taylor's then-husband, Burton.

What became of the statue is uncertain. In Webster's telling, the statue came to a bad end, the subject of a dispute between Burton and another man vying for Taylor's attentions.

"Edmund chainsawed it in half, and one got the breasts and one got the head," she said. "There's this whole underlying folklore that nobody talks about. That's where we bring the legend in."