



# 2013 Sonoma County Visitor Center Report

## An overview of the local Visitor Centers



# Table of Contents

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---

1	Executive Summary
---	-------------------

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## Overview of Visitor Centers in Sonoma County

---

2	Visitor Centers in Sonoma County - Map
3	Visitor Centers in Sonoma County - Combined impact

---

## Locally operated Visitor Centers

---

4	Cloverdale Chamber of Commerce & Information Center
5	Cotati Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center
6	Healdsburg Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau
7	Petaluma Visitors Program
8	Redwood Coast Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center
10	Russian River Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center
12	Santa Rosa Convention & Visitors Bureau / California Welcome Center
14	Sebastopol Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center
15	Sonoma Coast Visitors Center
16	Sonoma Valley Visitors Bureau
18	Windsor Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Center

---

## State-affiliated Visitor Centers

---

20	Fort Ross State Historic Park & Fort Ross Conservancy Visitor Center
22	Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods Visitors Centers

---

## Partner Organizations

---

24	Sonoma County Tourism
----	-----------------------

---

25	Acknowledgements and Methodology
----	----------------------------------

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# Sonoma County Visitor Center Report

June 2014

The Sonoma County Economic Development Board (EDB), in partnership with Visitor Centers throughout the county, is pleased to present the first-of-its-kind *Sonoma County Visitor Center Report*.

This report gives an overview of what the Visitor Centers achieved during calendar year 2013 and introduces various Centers all over the county.

Highlights from this report include:

- Visitor Centers all over Sonoma County welcomed **more than 340,000 walk-in visitors**, handled **over 56,600 inquiries** by phone, mail, or e-mail, and **distributed almost 380,000 guide books and maps**.
- More than **120 volunteers** all over our county have **invested over 9,000 hours** of their time to help at the Visitor Centers and to assist visitors during their stay in Sonoma County.
- Many Visitor Centers are using new media channels - including Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, and LinkedIn - to promote their particular region and Sonoma County in general. The aggregate **Facebook post reach** for 2013, which measures how many times the various posts by the Visitor Centers are seen, is at **over 197,000**.

The Centers inform visitors to Sonoma County about attractions, events, hotels, restaurants, wineries, and many other things, and thus help strengthen local businesses. By providing personalized information on-site, the Visitor Centers' services ideally complement Sonoma County Tourism's work and help ensure that visitors get the best experience possible.

The EDB highly appreciates the active role that the Visitor Centers take in developing the local economy and we are looking forward to hearing more success stories in the years to come.

Thank you for your interest in the Economic Development Board's research. For additional information, questions, comments, or suggestions please contact us at (707) 565-7170 or visit [www.sonomaedb.org](http://www.sonomaedb.org).

Sincerely,



Pamela Chanter  
Chair  
Economic Development Board



Ben Stone  
Executive Director  
Economic Development Board

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# Visitor Centers in Sonoma County - Map

Visitor Centers play a vital role in the local tourism industry by welcoming travelers, providing information about local attractions, and organizing events for the community and tourists.

There are currently 19 active, walk-in, “meet and greet” Visitor Centers in Sonoma County. Many of them are run by local Chambers of Commerce. Some, however, are affiliated with the State Parks located in Sonoma County or are organized otherwise. Despite the differences in how they are organized and funded, they all have a common goal and purpose: to inform visitors about local attractions, help them find their way around, and make their stay as pleasant and enjoyable as possible. Considering the importance of tourism for Sonoma County’s economy, the services that the Visitor Centers provide contribute considerably to the economic progress and well-being of our community.

The map shows where the Visitor Centers - or Visitor Bureaus and Information Centers, as they are also called - are located. The aggregate numbers on the following page are based on 12 Visitor Centers that provided data for their 15 locations. Specific information and an introduction of each participating Visitor Center is presented on the following pages.

- ★ Locally operated, with County funding - main location
- ★ Locally operated, with County funding - satellite location
- ★ Locally operated, without County funding
- ★ State-affiliated
- ★ Affiliated with federal government (Lake Sonoma - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers)



Map design: Sonoma County ISD-GIS; Sonoma County Registrar of Voters; Sonoma County Public Safety Consortium; Sonoma County EDB. This map is for illustrative purposes only.

# Visitor Centers in Sonoma County - Combined impact

## Highly frequented Visitor Centers

Throughout calendar year 2013, the Visitor Centers in Sonoma County welcomed **more than 340,000 walk-in visitors** at their locations. The peak was in July, when more than 45,000 people frequented one of the Centers, while the least busy month was January with slightly more than 15,000 visitors.

Depending on the month, the portion of international visitors varied between 2% and 10%.

## Assistance by phone, mail, and e-mail

In addition to the walk-in visitors, the Centers received well **over 56,600 inquiries**, mainly by phone (45%) and electronically (39%), but also by mail (16%). Most inquiries were received in July (over 6,400), and the least number received was in February (slightly more than 3,500).

In total, the combined hours of operation of all Visitor Centers **exceeded 23,000 hours**.

## Distribution of promotional materials

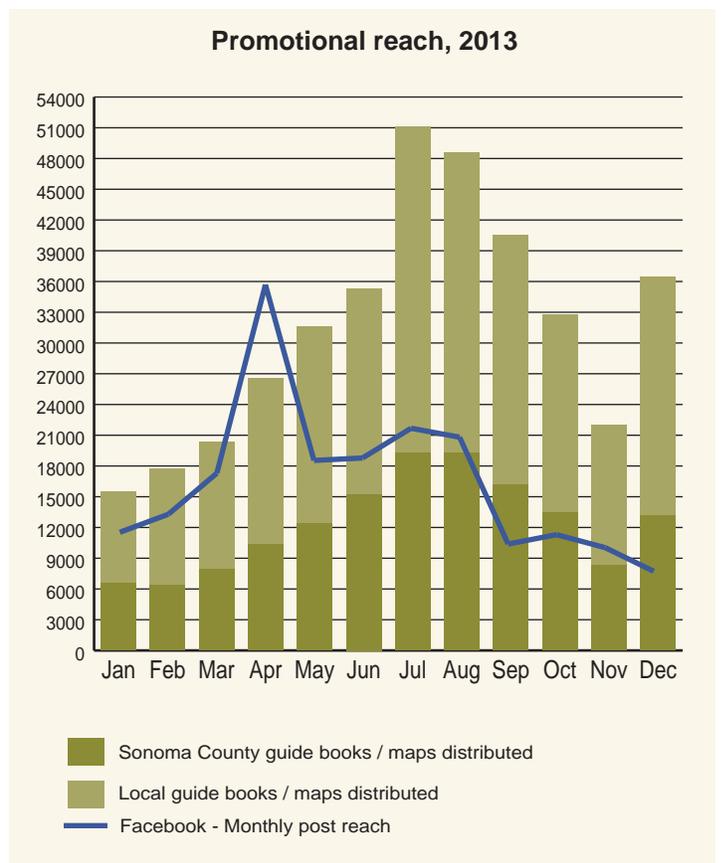
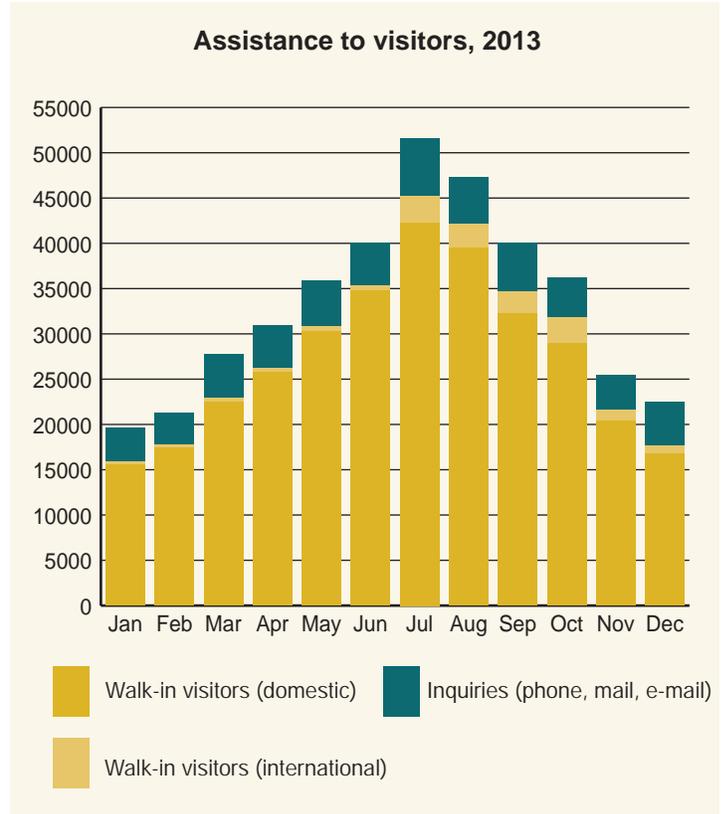
In 2013, Visitor Centers distributed almost **380,000 guide books and maps** to interested parties. 39% of this material was related to Sonoma County as a whole, while the remaining 61% was promoting specific regions within Sonoma County.

## New media

When looking at new media, the numbers are equally impressive: during 2013, the combined **post reach on Facebook amounted to more than 197,000**. Interestingly, the reach on social media fluctuates considerably and does not necessarily peak in summer, when all the other indicators do. The reason for the peak in April was a post by the Sonoma Valley Visitors Bureau that went viral - it was an April Fools post showing a snow-laden vineyard.

Based on the data at hand, monthly unique visitors to the Visitor Centers' websites can vary between 40,000 in February, and more than 145,000 in July. Since not all the data is available for this indicator, this has to be seen as an estimate, with actual numbers that are probably slightly higher.

In conclusion and not surprisingly, the busiest months are during summer time, while during winter, the numbers of walk-in visitors and inquiries decrease.



# Cloverdale Chamber of Commerce and Information Center

The Cloverdale Chamber of Commerce has been operating an Information Center for over 35 years.

Our Information Center is identified by the “i” information sign on the Business Route 101/128. A number of our volunteers have completed the Certified Tourism Ambassador program, which allows them to serve our visitors with the highest quality.

We are the first Sonoma County stop for all visitors arriving from the north on Highway 101 or 128. We provide significant services to the unincorporated area of Sonoma County by providing tourism information about Sonoma County as a whole, as well as information specific to the North County.

Wineries, redwoods, beaches and things to do interacting with nature are our primary information request categories.



The Car & Motorcycle Show in September is always a well-attended and colorful event.



## Cloverdale Chamber of Commerce and Information Center

126 North Cloverdale Boulevard  
Cloverdale, CA 95425

Open hours:

Monday-Friday, 12:00pm - 4:00pm  
Saturday, 10:00am - 4:00pm  
Sunday, 11:00am - 3:00pm



The Cloverdale Chamber of Commerce and Information Center is suitably decorated for the annual Citrus Fair.

# Cotati Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center

The Cotati Chamber of Commerce is a volunteer member organization of business people and individuals that promote the economic well being of the City of Cotati and adjacent lands. The Chamber fosters and promotes actions that enhance the local economy; provides employment, cultural, and recreational opportunities; and protects and preserves the environment. We will continue to work together to ensure Cotati is an economically viable and desirable community in which to live, work, and visit.

The Visitor Center opened its doors at the current location in 2002. Various publications about Cotati and Sonoma County are available all week long in the racks outside of the Center. Some of the main events and attractions in the region that attract many tourists include the Cotati Historical Museum, the Chimera Albino Redwood, Sonoma State University and Green Music Center, Graton Casino, La Plaza Park, the annual Accordion Festival, Jazz Festival, Kids Day Festival & Parade, Oktoberfest, and the Farmers Market.

More than  
**1,200 walk-in visitors**  
 were helped

More than  
**400 maps and guides**  
 were distributed

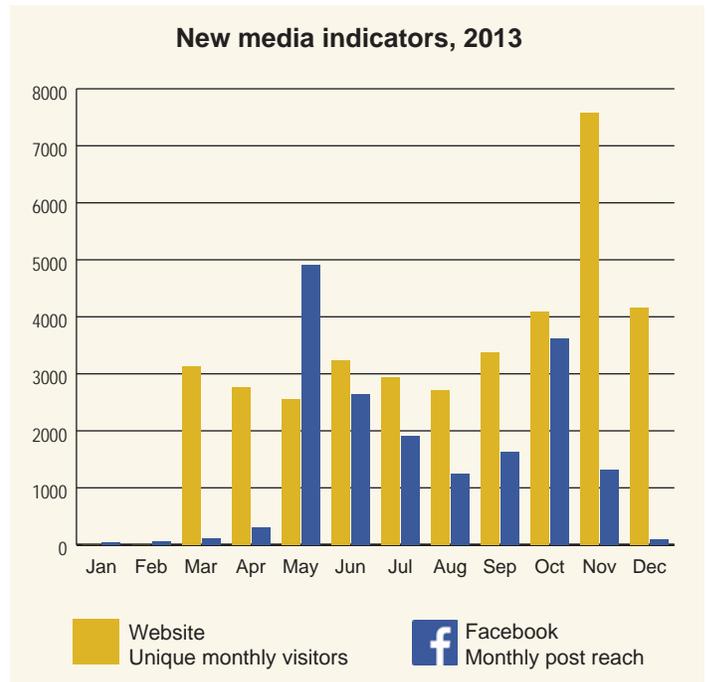
More than  
**100 Followers**  
 on Twitter



**Cotati  
 Chamber of Commerce  
 and Visitor Center**  
 216 East School Street  
 Cotati, CA 94931

Cotati Chamber of Commerce

Open hours:  
 Tuesday-Thursday, 1:00pm - 5:00pm



The center supplies interested people with information, brochures, and maps of the region.



Suzanne Whipple is managing the Center on behalf of the Cotati Chamber of Commerce.

# Healdsburg Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau

The Healdsburg Visitors Bureau has been operating in this location since 1937, sharing this space with the Healdsburg Chamber of Commerce until 2010 when the Chamber moved into new offices adjacent to the Visitors Bureau.

The building was built as part of the Works Project Administration (WPA) projects and is a dedicated historical building.



## Healdsburg Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau

217 Healdsburg Avenue  
Healdsburg, CA 95448

Open hours:

Monday-Friday, 10:00am - 4:00pm  
Saturday-Sunday, 10:00am - 3:00pm

More than

**16,000 walk-in visitors**  
were helped

More than

**5,000 maps and guides**  
were distributed

More than

**4,000 inquiries**  
by phone, mail, and e-mail  
were answered

More than

**195,000 unique visitors**  
to the website



The Visitors Bureau is on Healdsburg Avenue, close to the Healdsburg Town Square.



The Visitors Bureau in Healdsburg is well marked with the international sign for tourist information centers and offers useful advice to visitors.



Three dedicated volunteers (L-R): Dorothy, Laney and Denise.

# Petaluma Visitors Program

The Historic Depot Building continues to be a visitor hub. The Visitor Center serves on average almost 750 visitors a month, helping them with directions, maps, and points of interest in and surrounding Petaluma. Statistics are collected on every visitor to the Visitors Center such as where the visitors are from and the reason for their visit.

In 2012, the Petaluma Visitors Program instituted a system to gather data on visitors to gain a better understanding of where our visitors come from and to help us better target our future marketing efforts.

In Fiscal Year 2012-13, 26% of the people making use of the services of the Visitors Center are from Petaluma. They are often gathering information for visitors who will be coming into town, or are curious about the inside of the restored depot building, or want to use the restroom. Our visitors from California came in at 29%, while our visitors nationwide came in at 25% of our total. Our international visitors tally was at 20%.

## Petaluma Visitors Program

210 Lakeville Street  
Petaluma, CA 94952

Open hours:

Monday-Sunday, 10:00am - 4:00pm

More than  
**8,300 walk-in visitors**  
were helped

More than  
**72,000 people reached**  
on Facebook



The Petaluma Visitors Program is located in the Historic Depot Building.



The annual Butter & Eggs Festival attracts tourists from all over the region.

Service-related indicators, 2013



New media indicators, 2013



# Redwood Coast Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center

As the "Gateway" to Sonoma County on Redwood Coast Hwy. 1, traveling from north to south, Gualala's Visitor Center also functions as the headquarters for the local Chamber of Commerce.

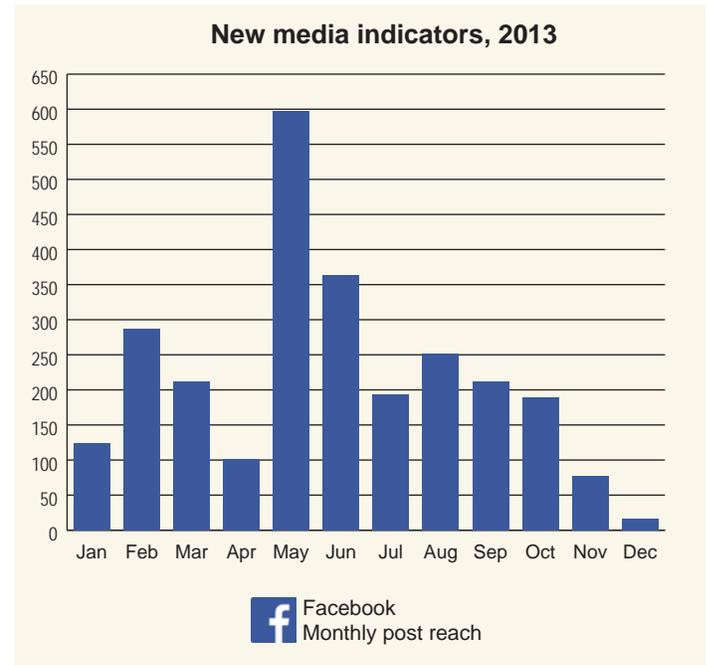
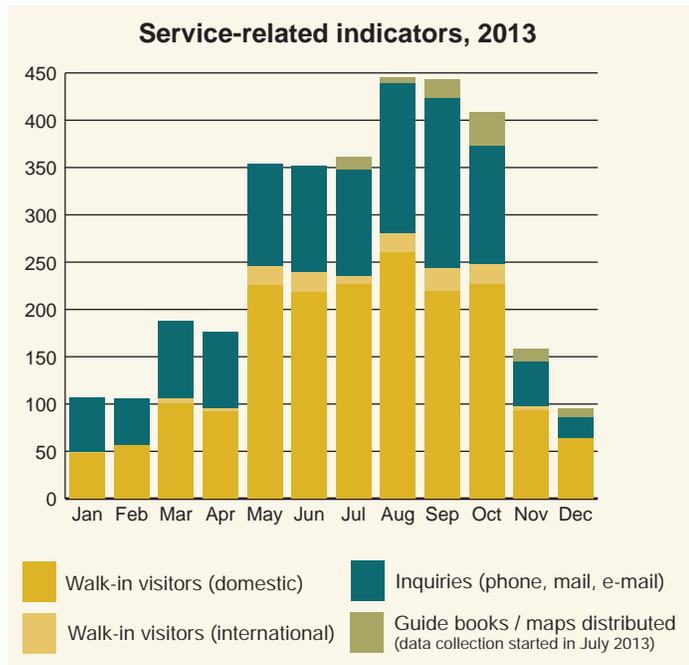
Here on the California Redwood Coast you will find sandy beaches and coastal access for many recreational activities such as fishing, diving, surfing, kayaking or tide pooling. Walking, cycling or driving along Route 1, or simply meditating near the ocean and redwoods in the fresh air is enough. History tells us, the greater Gualala area was originally settled by Pomo Indians. The term that the natives used - qh awa'la li - means "water coming down place".

The Visitor Center for this unique 60 mile stretch of coastline is well marked and can be found in the Forte Gualala building, located between the Surf Motel and the Seacliff Center, on the oceanside of Coastal Highway 1.

Being located so close to the Sonoma/Mendocino County line (the middle of the Gualala River), the Center carries a substantial amount of promotional materials about both Sonoma and Mendocino Counties, including the communities of Fort Ross, Timber Cove, Ocean Cove, Salt Point, Stewarts Point, The Sea Ranch and Annapolis. A stop at Gualala's "I-sign" & "Information" Center is well worth the visit!

More than  
**1,900 walk-in visitors**  
were helped

More than  
**1,100 inquiries**  
were answered



### International visitors at the Visitor Center in Gualala



# Redwood Coast Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center

## Redwood Coast Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center

39150 State Highway 1  
Gualala, CA 95445

Open hours:

Thursday-Saturday, 11:00am - 5:00pm  
Sunday, 11:00am - 2:00pm



*“Where the Redwoods, River and Pacific Ocean meet.”*



The Visitor Center is well marked and can be found in the Forte Gualala building.



Robert Juengling is the Executive Director of the Chamber and the Visitor Center.



The Gualala Bluff Trail invites visitors to enjoy the beauty of the Northern California coastline.



A look south down Gualala's Main Street, towards the historic 1903 Gualala Hotel.

# Russian River Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center

The Chamber is a nonprofit organization with approximately 270 member businesses. Ranging in size from the smaller micro-business to mid-size firms to large international companies, they represent every industry sector and all areas of Western Sonoma County.

While the reasons for becoming a member of the Russian River Chamber of Commerce vary widely from member to member, two main interest groups are most common.

The first features business builders who join the chamber for direct business referrals, networking opportunities, greater visibility for their business, professional development, and business opportunities.

The second includes public policy advocates who value joining with others to affect public policy and taking initiative to solve problems to create a healthy environment for business and economic growth.

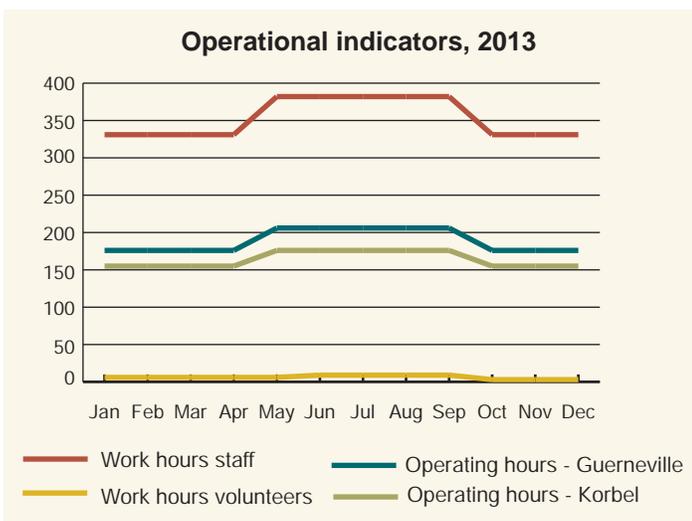
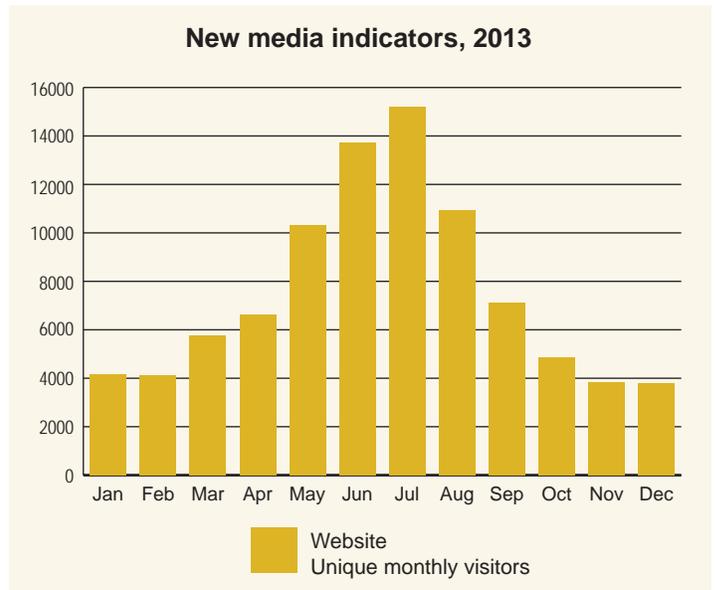
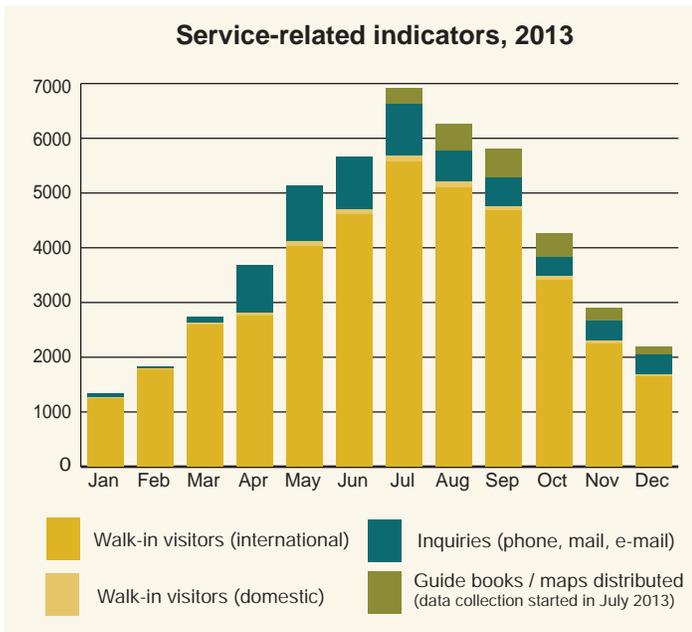
In addition to the aspects mentioned above, the Chamber is running two Visitor Centers in the Russian River area: the main location is at the historical bridge in Guerneville, the satellite location is at Korbelt in the old train depot.

## Chamber Mission:

The catalyst to vitalize and promote a thriving business community in concert with our natural environment.

More than  
**40,400 walk-in visitors**  
were helped

More than  
**6,100 inquiries**  
were answered



### International visitors at the Visitor Centers in Guerneville and at Korbelt



# Russian River Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center

## Guerneville Visitor Center

16209 First Street  
PO Box 331  
Guerneville, CA 95446

Open hours:

### May 1st - October 31st

Monday-Saturday, 10:00am - 4:45pm  
Sunday, 10:00am - 3:00pm

### November 1st - April 30th

Monday-Saturday, 10:00am - 4:45pm

## Korbel Visitor Center

13250 River Road  
Guerneville, CA 95446

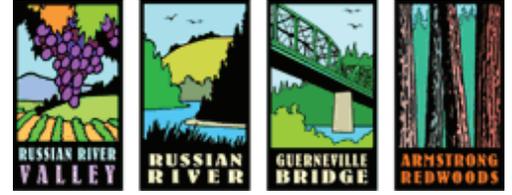
Open hours:

### May 1st - October 31st

Monday-Sunday, 10:00am - 4:00pm

### November 1st - April 30th

Monday-Sunday, 10:00am - 3:15pm



Main location at the Historical Bridge.



Satellite location in the Old Train Depot.



Luana Gerhardt is the office manager of the Russian River Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center.



Lisa Gerhardt is a greeter at the main location.

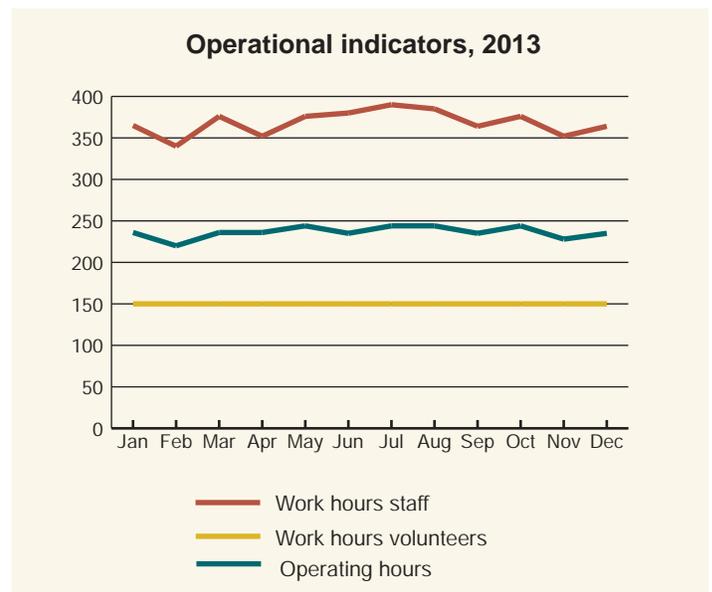
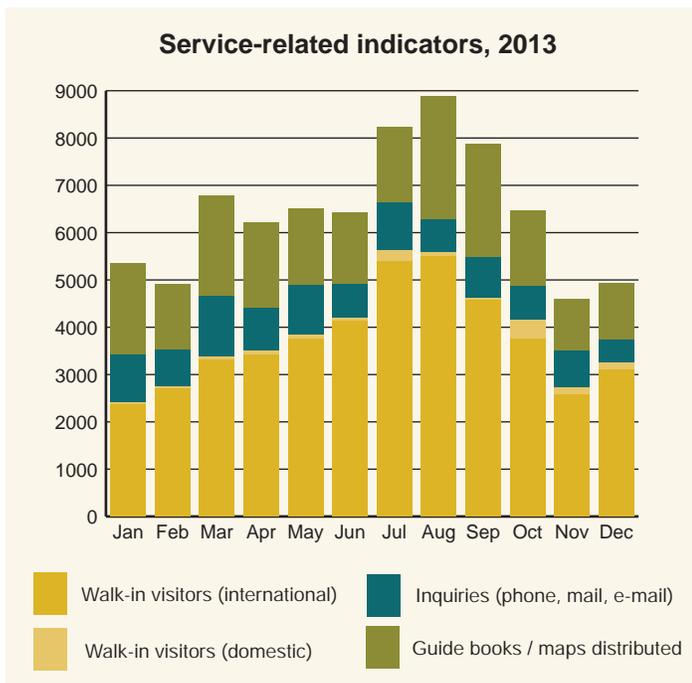
# Santa Rosa Convention & Visitors Bureau / California Welcome Center

The California Welcome Center in Santa Rosa is operated by the Santa Rosa Convention & Visitors Bureau and the Santa Rosa Chamber of Commerce in partnership with Visit California Tourism. Originally opened in 1997 as the Santa Rosa Visitors Center, in 2004 it was one of the first officially recognized California Welcome Centers by Visit California. Today there are over 20 welcome centers in the state.

The Welcome Center is housed in the old train depot in the heart of Historic Railroad Square. The building was built in 1904 and was one of the few structures to survive the 1906 earthquake. The depot is also home to the Northwest Pacific Railroad Museum and hosts rotating Sonoma County themed artwork presented by the Sonoma County Photography Group. The depot was made famous when it appeared in Alfred Hitchcock's movie "Shadow of a Doubt" in 1943.

In the most recent survey by Visit California, the Santa Rosa Welcome Center was consistently rated as one of the top centers for providing information, brochures and a great retail experience. The Center is one of the few in Sonoma County to be open 365 days providing a year round experience to our visitors.

The Welcome Center and Visit Santa Rosa partner with multiple organizations in Sonoma County, including Sonoma County Tourism, the City of Santa Rosa, the Santa Rosa Chamber of Commerce, the Sonoma County Economic Development Board, the Historic Railroad Square Association and Sonoma County BEST along with our museums, attractions, wineries, hotels, restaurants and retail establishments.



International visitors at the Convention & Visitors Bureau and the California Welcome Center in Santa Rosa



More than

**46,000 walk-in visitors**  
were helped

More than

**105,000 unique visitors**  
to the website

More than

**28,000 Likes**  
on Facebook

More than

**2,600 Followers**  
on Twitter 

# Santa Rosa Convention & Visitors Bureau / California Welcome Center

**Santa Rosa Convention & Visitors Bureau /  
California Welcome Center**  
9 Fourth Street  
Santa Rosa, CA 95401



Open hours:

Monday-Saturday, 9:00am - 5:00pm  
Sunday, 10:00am - 5:00pm



The location can be found at the Railroad Square in the old Train Depot building.



The team at the Santa Rosa Convention & Visitors Bureau!

# Sebastopol Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center

The Sebastopol Chamber of Commerce is the business membership organization that takes a serious role in networking, economic vitality, local promotion and advocacy.

Sebastopol is located 55 miles north of San Francisco in beautiful Sonoma County, California. Serving as the hub of Western Sonoma County Wine Country, Sebastopol is surrounded by majestic rolling hills in the diverse landscape of a rich agricultural heritage. Gateway to the breathtaking Sonoma Coastline and Russian River Redwood Corridor, Sebastopol is bordered on the East by the Laguna de Santa Rosa Wetlands Preserve. Sebastopol offers the charm of a small town community with the cultural and recreational activities of big city sophistication.

More than  
**1,200 walk-in visitors**  
were helped

More than  
**600 maps and guides**  
were distributed

More than  
**400 inquiries**  
by phone, mail, and e-mail  
were answered

More than  
**600,000 views**  
of the website



The annual Apple Blossom Festival, organized by the Chamber of Commerce, is a highlight in Sebastopol.



**SEBASTOPOL**  
Chamber of Commerce  
& Visitor Center

Local Flavor. Global Vision.

**Sebastopol Chamber of Commerce  
and Visitor Center**  
265 South Main Street  
Sebastopol, CA 95472

Open hours:

Monday-Friday, 10:00am - 5:00pm  
Saturday, 10:00am-3:00pm  
24-hour walk-up visitor information



The Center in Sebastopol is well-marked and frequently visited by tourists.



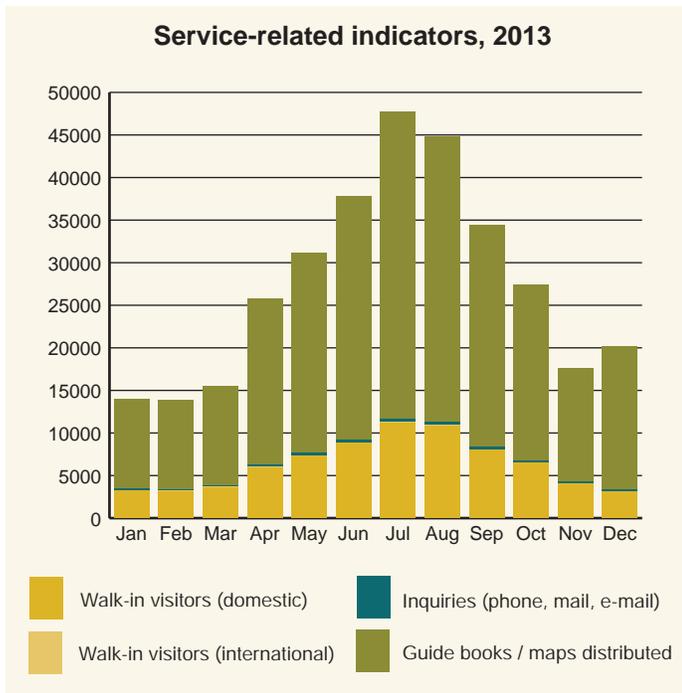
The Chamber members, a friendly crowd, standing in front of the Visitor Center in Sebastopol.

# Sonoma Coast Visitors Center

The Sonoma Coast Visitors Center in Bodega Bay provides friendly, quick answers to your questions about the more than 50 miles of beautiful Sonoma Coastline.

From details on where to eat, places to stay, beaches to visit and even maps for an Alfred Hitchcock tour of where "The Birds" was filmed, the staff is ready to answer your questions.

More than  
**76,000 walk-in visitors**  
were helped



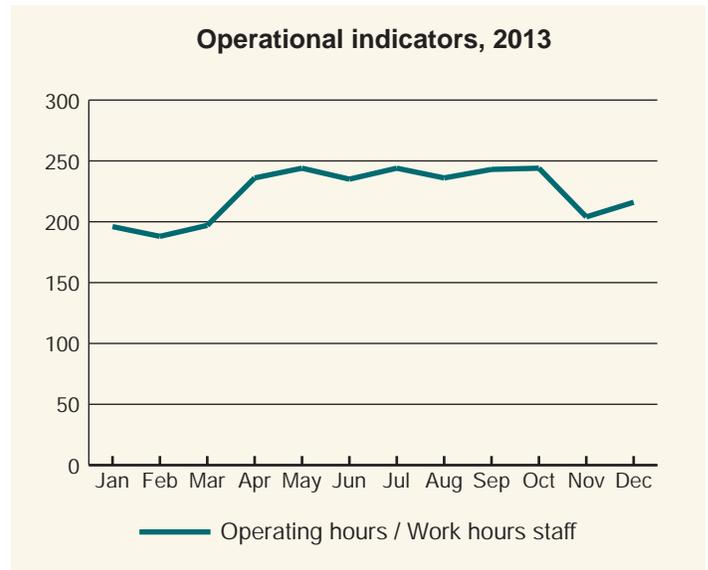
## Sonoma Coast Visitors Center

850 Highway 1  
Bodega Bay, CA 94923

Open hours:

Monday-Tuesday, 9:00am - 5:00pm  
Thursday-Saturday, 9:00am - 5:00pm  
Sunday, 10:00am - 5:00pm

More than  
**70,000 maps and guides**  
were distributed



## International visitors at the Visitor Center in Bodega Bay



The Sonoma Coast Visitors Center in Bodega Bay.

# Sonoma Valley Visitors Bureau

The Bureau was established in 1984 for the purpose of providing information to visitors and vacationers and to promote the hospitality industry in the Valley. The SVVB is governed by a Board of Directors elected from and by the membership of over 350 member businesses. The 11-member Board includes a 5-member Executive Committee. The programs and policies of the SVVB are approved by the Board of Directors and carried out by a fulltime professional staff reporting to the Bureau's Executive Director.

We at the Sonoma Valley Visitors Bureau are proud to serve as the premier advocate for our beloved Sonoma Valley! We aim to delight, because delighted visitors and locals fuel our local economy. They become repeat tourists and ardent proponents of Sonoma as a world-class destination. Guided by unparalleled customer service and the passionate expertise of 50+ local volunteers, the Sonoma Valley Visitors Bureau operates two comprehensive, knowledgeable Visitor Centers seven days a week. Outfitted with the most up to date information, resources and maps, we steer visitors toward the essential landmarks, events, tours, products, accommodations and establishments that define our Sonoma culture.

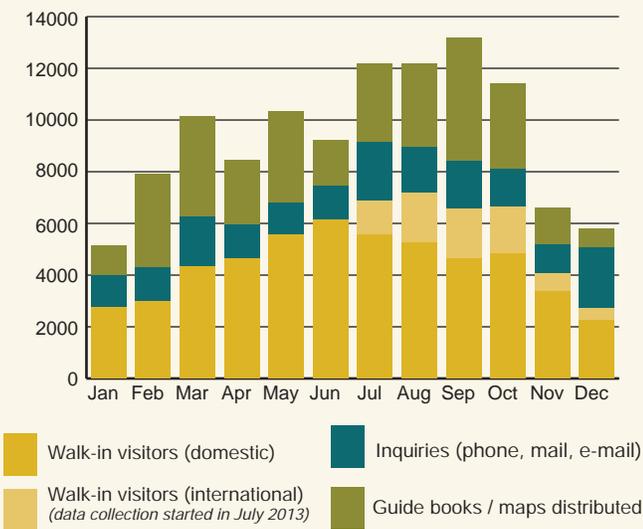
More than  
**60,000 walk-in visitors**  
were helped

More than  
**32,900 maps and guides**  
were distributed

More than  
**119,000 people reached**  
on Facebook

More than  
**200,000 visitors**  
to the website

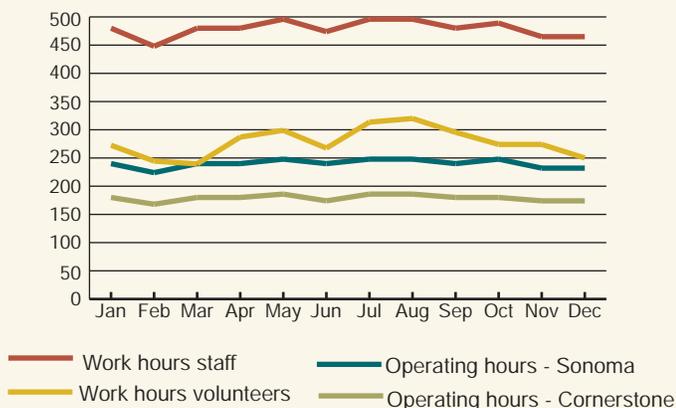
Service-related indicators, 2013



New media indicators, 2013



Operational indicators, 2013



International visitors at the Visitor Centers in Sonoma



# Sonoma Valley Visitors Bureau

**Sonoma Valley Visitors Bureau  
Historic Plaza**  
453 First Street East  
Sonoma, CA 95476

Open hours:

Monday-Saturday, 9:00am - 5:00pm  
Sunday, 10:00am - 5:00pm

**Sonoma Valley Visitors Bureau  
Cornerstone Sonoma**  
23570 Arnold Drive  
Sonoma, CA 95476

Open hours:

Monday-Sunday, 10:00am - 4:00pm



The Sonoma Valley Visitors Bureau's main location on the Historic Sonoma Plaza.



The satellite location can be found at Cornerstone Sonoma on Arnold Drive (Hwy 121), at the south entrance to Sonoma Valley.

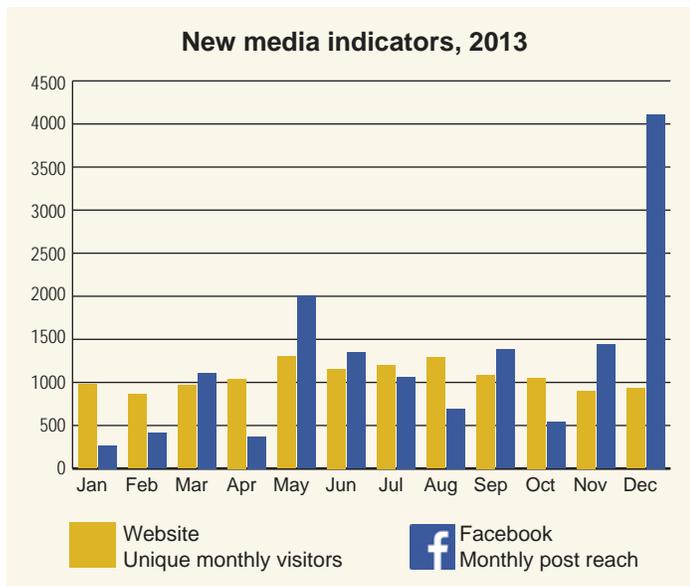
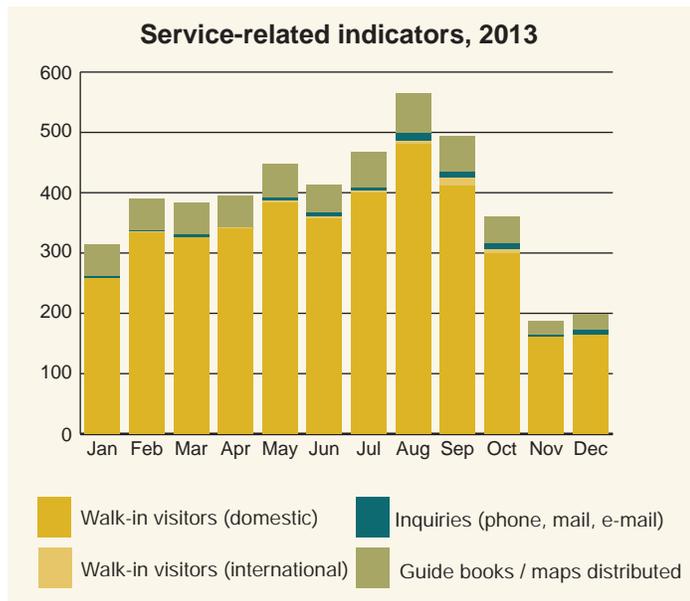


The Sonoma Valley Visitors Bureau Team!

# Windsor Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center

The Windsor Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center is located at the corner of Windsor River Road and Windsor Road in the Depot building in the heart of downtown Windsor and Sonoma County's famous Wine Country. Windsor's location at the center of it all together with its characterization as a relaxing, welcoming, friendly, family-oriented destination make it an ideal place to visit or make your home. Windsor offers a wide variety of services, parks and recreational amenities, wineries and breweries, restaurants and a popular Farmers Market, ease of access to the Charles M. Schulz Sonoma County Airport and Highway 101, and a well-planned, picturesque Old Downtown.

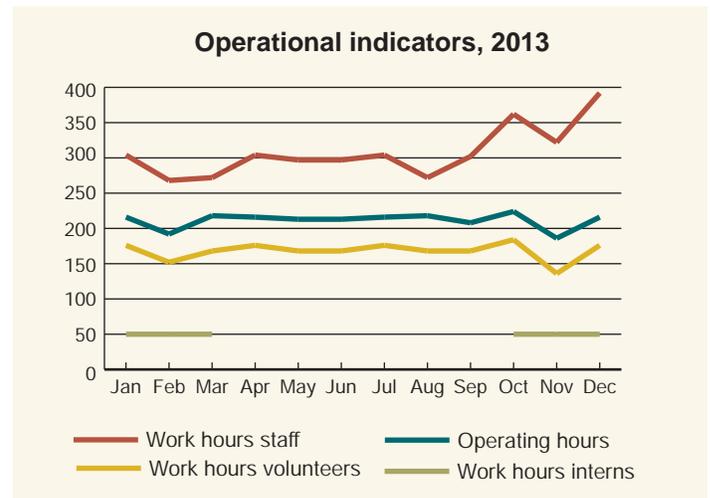
More than  
**3,900 walk-in visitors**  
were helped



We provide many resources for business owners, tourists, locals, and those who are looking to relocate their residence and/or their business to Windsor. The Town of Windsor and the Sonoma County Transit Authority are huge supporters of the Visitors Center. We give back by selling bus passes and keeping transit riders informed of the many schedules, both local and regional. We are open seven days a week to meet the needs of everyone: 8:30am to 4:30pm on weekdays and 10:00am to 3:00pm on the weekends.

Windsor is home to numerous events including the incredibly popular Summer Nights on the Green Concert Series held June through August on the Town Green, the Sonoma County Hot Air Balloon Classic, the Windsor Day Parade, and the annual Charlie Brown Christmas Tree Grove. In addition, Windsor hosts the Windsor Half Marathon as well as the Vine-man 70.3 and Ironman Triathlon, which attract visitors from all over the world.

More than  
**14,000 people reached**  
on Facebook



## International visitors at the Visitor Center in Windsor



# Windsor Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center

## Windsor Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center

9001 Windsor Road  
Windsor, CA 95492

Open hours:

Monday-Friday, 8:30am - 4:30pm  
Saturday-Sunday, 10:00am - 3:00pm



The team at the Center in Windsor (L-R):  
Rene'e Marshall, Edna Honsa, Christine Tevini  
(President/CEO), Beth Henry (not in the picture is Gay  
Salisbury).



The Visitor Center is located in the Depot building in the  
heart of downtown Windsor.

# Fort Ross State Historic Park and Fort Ross Conservancy Visitor Center

The Visitor Center was built in 1985 by California State Parks and is operated by the cooperating association, the Fort Ross Conservancy. The Conservancy maintains a fully stocked book and gift shop with the largest selection of Russian American History north of San Francisco, and also maintains the library, and the auditorium. The Visitor Center, the gateway to the park, is tucked inside a grove of trees alongside the main parking lot. It provides a comfortable place to begin your park visit by helping you get oriented to the park's cultural, natural, and recreational resources and by providing a gathering place for groups and interpretive programs. The State Park staff and Conservancy staff also have offices located here.

The Visitor Center accommodates special events, guided tours, and educational seminars, and it provides a valuable resource to the Fort Ross community. It is available for rent for special events after hours; contact [info@fortross.org](mailto:info@fortross.org) for more information. The center contains several rooms with different functions.

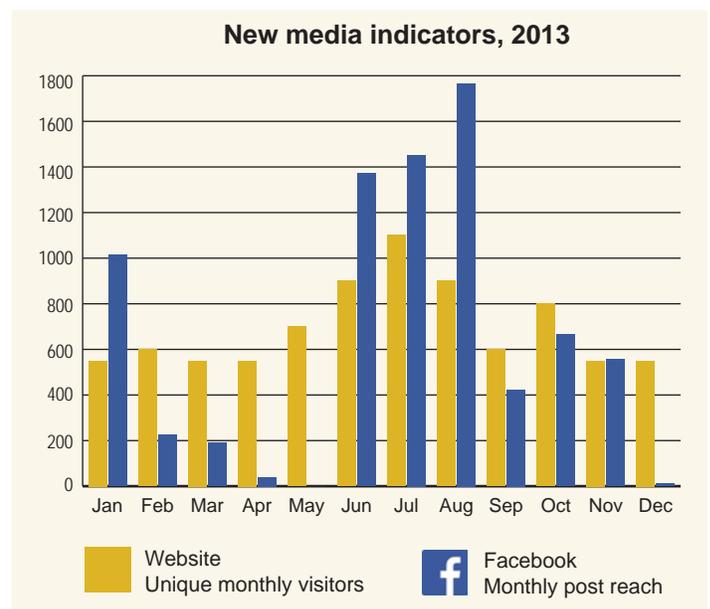
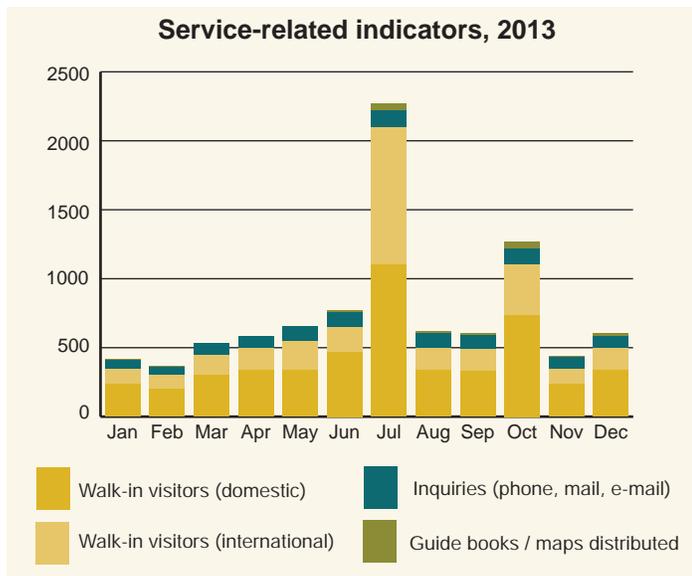
The Fort Ross Conservancy gift shop sells books, memorabilia, jewelry, and childrens items related to Fort Ross' natural and cultural history. We also carry a nice selection of Russian chocolate and Russian snack foods. We carry a wonderful selection of natural history guides, historical books related to the breadth of Fort Ross history, and hard-to-find books on Russian America.

For FRC members and visiting scholars, FRC provides access to an extensive research library of Fort Ross-related documents. This library contains 30 albums of archival-preserved historic photographs and 3,000 titles in the reference and circulating library. Many of these manuscripts are rare and all are relevant to the region's cultural and natural history.

The auditorium, with its large fireplace and expansive picture windows, provides comfortable seating for up to 70 people. During park hours you can watch the 18-minute Fort Ross documentary that introduces the park's history with stunning visuals. And on windy days it is the perfect place to come in from the cold!

More than **7,800 walk-in visitors** were helped

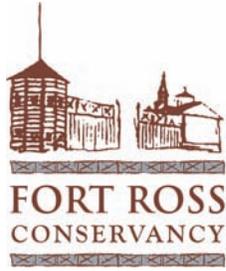
More than **1,000 Likes** on Facebook



## International visitors at the Center in Fort Ross



# Fort Ross State Historic Park and Fort Ross Conservancy Visitor Center

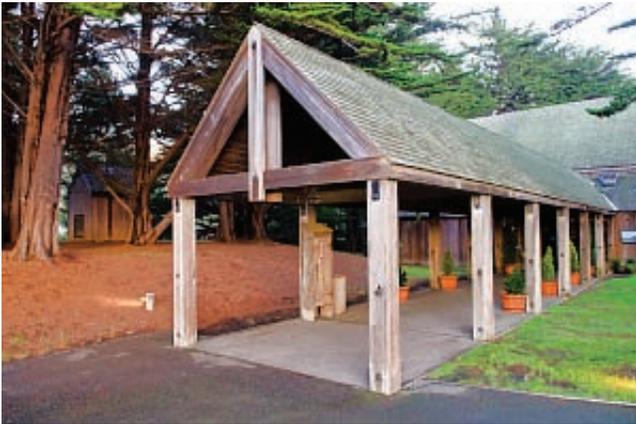


## Fort Ross State Historic Park and Fort Ross Conservancy

19005 Coast Highway One  
Jenner, CA 95450

Open hours:

Thursday-Monday, 10:00am - 4:30pm



The Fort Ross Visitor Center serves as the gateway to the State Park.



A wide variety of books and memorabilia are offered at the gift shop.

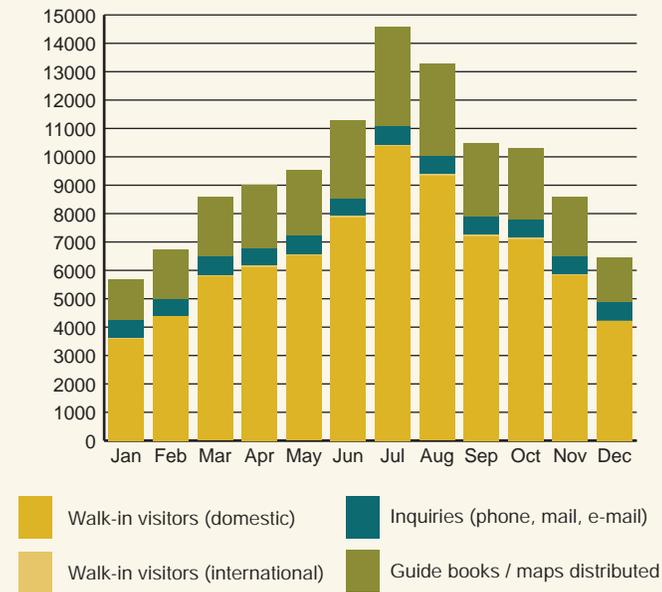
# Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods Visitor Centers

Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods is a non-profit organization that partners with the Russian River Sector of California State Parks. The sector includes Armstrong Redwoods State Natural Reserve (outside Guerneville), Austin Creek State Recreation Area (a park Stewards is now operating), Sonoma Coast State Park (from Bodega Bay to Jenner) and includes the Willow Creek watershed. State Parks depends on Stewards to provide funding for the "Volunteers in Parks" program, educational and interpretive activities, for resource management and stewardship projects, and to assist in the development of interpretive facilities and displays.

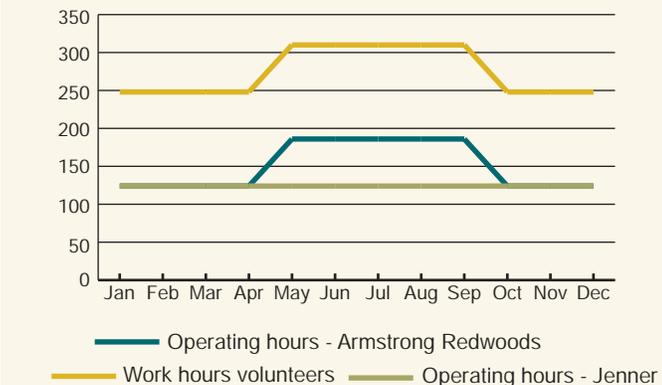
The State Parks of Sonoma County's coast and Russian River valley are rich in natural and cultural history, biological diversity and distinctive geology.

More than  
**78,700 walk-in visitors**  
were helped

Service-related indicators, 2013



Operational indicators, 2013

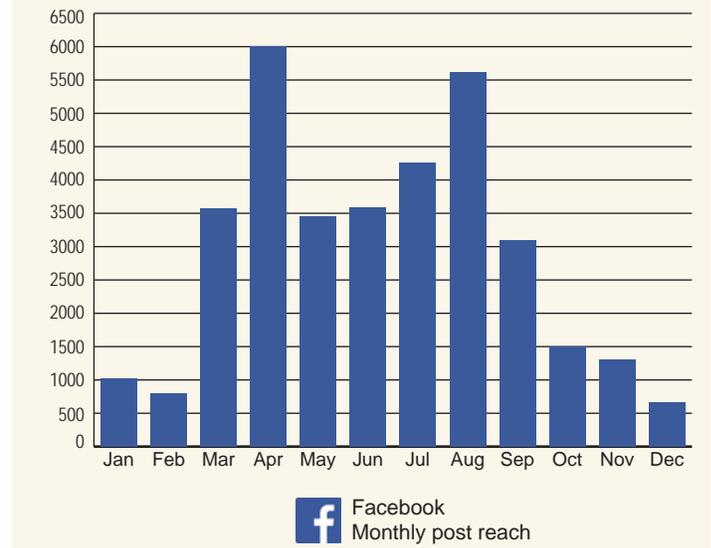


Our mission is to promote education, preservation and restoration of the natural and cultural resources of Russian River area State Parks through interpretation and public stewardship. We do this by providing park visitors of all ages with a variety of programs and opportunities to experience and explore these exceptional parks.

Stewards is protecting Austin Creek State Recreation Area with volunteer patrols and stewardship support. We have reopened Bullfrog Pond Campground and three backcountry campsites. We are providing public access and programs in closed areas on the Sonoma Coast, as well as continuing all our existing education and stewardship programs during these unprecedented times. Stewards is excited to launch our new Marine Education Program in 2014. The Nature Stores located inside our Visitor Centers help to provide funding for educational programs in our parks.

More than  
**34,000 people reached**  
on Facebook

New media indicators, 2013



International visitors at the Visitor Centers of Stewards



# Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods Visitor Centers

## Armstrong Redwoods Visitor Center

17000 Armstrong Woods Road  
Guerneville, CA 95446

Open hours:

Monday-Sunday, 11:00am - 3:00pm

## Jenner Visitor Center

10451 Highway 1  
Jenner, CA 95450

Open hours:

Monday-Friday, 11:00am - 3:00pm  
(open on most days)  
Saturday-Sunday, 11:00am - 3:00pm



The Center at Armstrong Redwoods.



The Center in Jenner, directly on the shore of the Russian River.



Visitors find useful information and unique souvenirs inside the Visitor Center in Jenner.



Stewards docent Linda Fisher (right) in a conversation with a park visitor.

# Sonoma County Tourism

Sonoma County Tourism (SCT) is the official destination marketing organization for California's Sonoma County. SCT is a private, non-profit marketing and sales organization dedicated to increasing overnight stays in Sonoma County, California.

Local businesses have great stories to tell. They work with their local chambers and visitors centers to get the word out. Those organizations share with SCT, which turns around and extends the reach of local businesses by broadcasting their stories and marketing messages to destination marketing partners — SF Travel, Visit California, and Brand USA.

Located 45 minutes from San Francisco, Sonoma County provides a genuine and adventurous wine country experience.

SCT offers a global outreach with a staff of sales, marketing, public relations, communications, and administrative professionals. SCT promotes Sonoma County as a desirable overnight destination to three main markets: leisure, meetings and groups (including weddings), and tour and travel to state, national, and international markets.

More than **350,000 maps and guides** were distributed

More than **1,600 inquiries** by phone, mail, and e-mail were answered



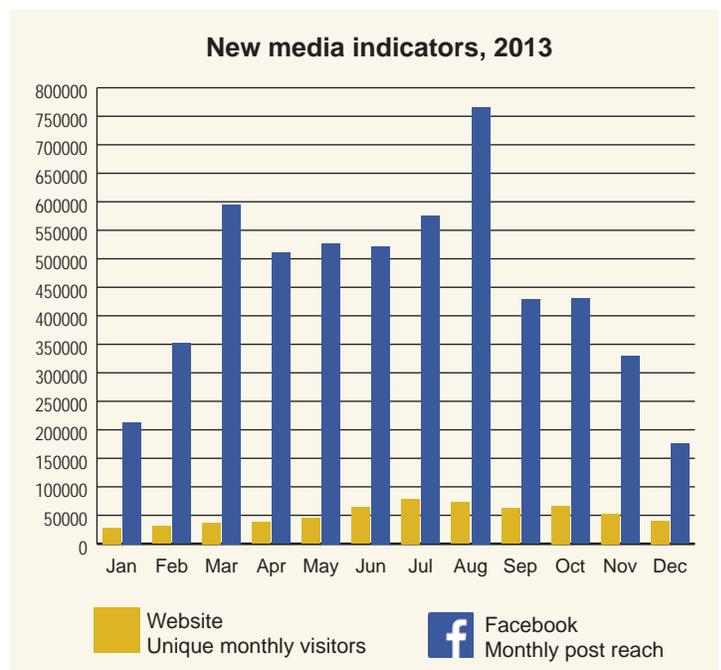
**Sonoma County Tourism**  
3637 Westwind Boulevard  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Open hours:

Monday-Friday, 9:00am - 5:00pm

More than **5,400,000 people reached** on Facebook

More than **600,000 visitors** to the website



## Acknowledgements

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The Sonoma County Economic Development Board would like to thank all the Visitor Centers for their extraordinary work and important contribution to the local tourism industry. A special thank you goes to all the Centers that contributed their information and input to this report!

Currently, we know of 19 walk-in Visitor Centers throughout the county, which are listed below in alphabetical order.

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Cloverdale Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Center  
Cotati Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center  
Fort Ross State Historic Park & Fort Ross Conservancy Visitor Center  
Geyserville Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center  
Healdsburg Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau  
Lake Sonoma Visitors Center - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Mark West Area Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Center  
Petaluma Visitors Program  
Redwood Coast Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center  
Russian River Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Centers - main location in Guerneville  
Russian River Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Centers - satellite location at Korbel  
Santa Rosa Convention & Visitors Bureau / California Welcome Center  
Sebastopol Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center  
Sonoma Coast Visitors Center  
Sonoma Valley Visitors Bureau - main location in Sonoma  
Sonoma Valley Visitors Bureau - satellite location at Cornerstone  
Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods - location at Armstrong Redwoods State Natural Reserve  
Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods - location in Jenner  
Windsor Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Center

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The Sonoma County Economic Development Board would also like to thank Tina Luster and Sonoma County Tourism, Wendy Peterson, and Don Bennett for their input on this report.

The Sonoma County Visitor Center Report was prepared by the Economic Development Board's project coordinator Michael Hausmann.

## Methodology

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The Sonoma County Economic Development Board collected data from the participating Visitor Centers through a standardized spreadsheet, which was structured in way that allowed the data to be as detailed as possible. 12 Visitor Centers returned the spreadsheet with their information for calendar year 2013. The numbers were then aggregated to reach an estimate of how many people demanded the Centers' services in the previous year.

Please note that exact counts were not always available. In these cases, we asked the Centers to provide realistic estimates of their numbers. Therefore, the numbers in this report might vary to a certain extent from the actual figures. However, the intent of this report is to provide the public with a general overview of how diverse our Visitor Centers are and how they serve visitors to Sonoma County.

In the years to come, we hope to extend the scope of the report as well as to improve the quality of the data to give the public an even more comprehensive overview of the Visitor Centers here in Sonoma County.

*With acknowledgement and appreciation to key local businesses that support economic development in Sonoma County*

**DIRECTOR**



**EXECUTIVE**



**SPONSOR**

