

Walking Big Sur

The single best thing we've done in Big Sur is to take a walking tour with **Big Sur Guides** (27 831-658-0199 or 831-594-1742; www.bigsurguides.com). Steve Copeland, who started his business decades ago, knows the secrets of the area, and his guides show you things that you're likely to miss if you head out on your own. You may even discover how to tame a banana slug — or at least develop some empathy for the ugly creatures. Rates for the two-and-a-half-hour walks are around \$50 per person and include a picnic lunch.

Big Sur Guides also runs a free, one-hour guided discovery walk that leaves from the Ventana Inn lobby daily at 10 a.m. The walk is open to anyone in the neighborhood — you don't have to be a guest at the hotel. You'll likely catch a look at the inn's overly friendly turkey and perhaps the deer that hang about; you'll certainly hear some extraordinary stories about the surroundings.