

Why We Travel: Authentic Experiences

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While there is no shortage of tourists who are eager to frequent California's diverse attractions and destinations, more and more travelers today are looking to get to the root of a destination through authentic adventures.

Whether creating carefully curated recommendations or specially packaged excursions, many DMOs are recognizing the need to shift their strategies to market insider-focused, unique travel experiences.

Travel Paso, the DMO for Paso Robles in San Luis Obispo County, decided to highlight various points of interest in their region by enlisting [10 "Mavericks"](#) – local trailblazers with distinct personalities and preferences – to curate their own itineraries for the area.

The destinations Mavericks include The Distiller, The Chef, The Paso Pup, The Thesplan, The Guide, The Cider Maker, The Farmers, The Cyclist, The Wellness Coach, and The Mom.

According to Lauren Tognazzini, destination manager for Travel Paso, the DMO worked with each of these locals to craft niche itineraries centered around their interests, including personal tips, photos, videos and social media takeovers.

"The finished product has been very well received by our visitors," Tognazzini says.

Further north, Visit Stockton has created a platform in which visitors literally have their own [personal concierge](#) at their fingertips. The destination is the first in California to activate a toll-free number for visitors to text any questions, concerns or tip requests while visiting.

Those looking for ideas on dining, shopping, and things to do can simply reach out directly to the Visit Stockton team for a personalized recommendation.

"Not everyone wants to download an app, and there isn't always service available to access a website on a mobile device when someone has questions," says Visit Stockton CEO Wes Rhea.

Many DMOs like the San Francisco Travel Association have also recognized the importance of personalized recommendations.

To cater to the variety of travelers who are interested in visiting San Francisco, SF Travel has curated specialized itineraries like ["The Classicist"](#) to kick-start a visit and inspire travelers to create their own adventures.

The team from Visit Santa Monica has recognized that its tourists, like its residents, are often health-conscious travelers. To cater to these visitors, they've created a special [health and wellness page](#) on their site to help highlight authentic, local wellness experiences in the area.

As travelers continue to seek out ways to experience cities like a local would, it's likely that more and more destinations will continue to offer ways to connect with their visitors on an authentic level and this trend is here to stay.

How does your destination cater to visitors looking for a local experience? Share your insights with us below!