

Trip 2 – Episode #34 – Back to the Coast & A Delightful Detour

After our tour through various desert territories, we got back to the coast around Ventura, a beach called Rincon. It's a state beach and you can book a spot right on the ocean. They had a kind of weird booking system, but we managed to get a spot on this great beach – for Valentine's Day! And when we say right on the beach, we mean right on the beach!



We had lots of neighbours, this way



And that way...



And we got a beautiful Valentine Sunset.



It was a great stopover – another night of “boondocking”, but this time, we heard the ocean pounding all night long. Perfect.

The next day we continued north. Our good friend Esther Pifko had told us about a town called Lompoc, just north of Santa Barbara, and since she was also the person who told us about Marfa, Texas, we decided we’d better go.

Of course, we had to drive through Santa Barbara along the way. It would’ve been nice to stay there and give it the attention it deserves, but even though our drive-through was brief, it lived up to all the hype we’d heard about it. It really is a lovely town.

First, we drove along its great Shoreline Drive, which shows off its beautiful coast.



Then we started making our way toward the centre of town, enjoying the colourful sights along the way.





When we turned toward downtown, we were surprised at how hilly it was.



There was a big, bright pedestrian area right downtown.

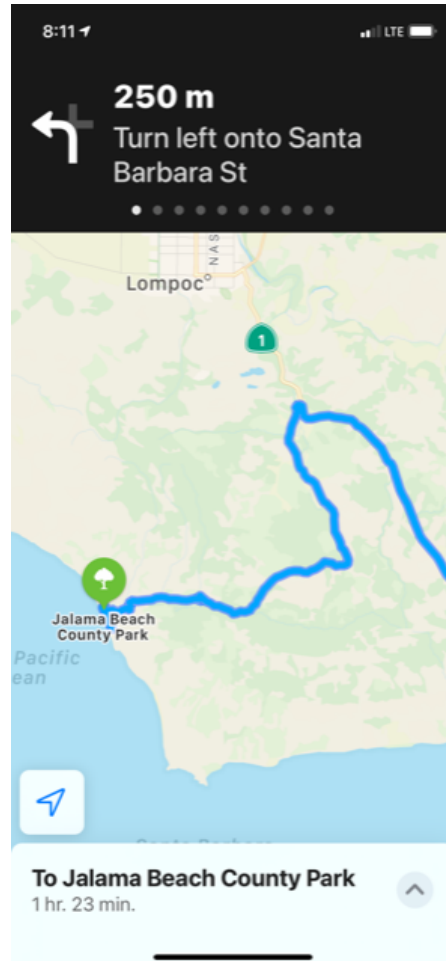


And you couldn't miss the Granada Tower which does indeed tower over all of downtown Santa Barbara. Apparently after it was built, there was much furor over its audaciousness, and soon after it went up, the city set a maximum height of 60 ft for buildings in the city.



After our min-tour of Santa Barbara, it was getting late and we hadn't found a place to stay for the night. We spotted a campground on one of our RV apps that was right on the water. Perfect. We were able to get a site and decided we would go there and put Lompoc off to the next day.

It looked like a relatively short drive on the map.



And the entrance to the state park looked welcoming.



But the road turned out to be full of twists and turns and incredible vistas. And everything was so green – we felt we could've been in Ireland, not southern California.





There were LOTS of these.



After almost an hour of driving, with a few stops for photos when the road full of “esses” would allow, we finally caught a glimpse of the ocean.



And then we got an overhead shot of where we'd be staying for the night.

Okay!

This looked like it would work for us.



It was still about another ten minutes of driving to get to the entrance.



We checked in and we told that if we were willing to stay in a site without hookups, we could be right on the beach and we said ...

SURE!!



So, for the first time in our Rving experience, we boondocked two nights in a row. The beach was amazing.



It was also amazingly windy. If you look at this shot, you can see the sand blowing across the beach. It was actually too windy to walk out there – for us. The Canadian Wimps.



But it was not too windy for one lone kitesurfer who must have had arms of steel. If you check the video below, you'll see how his sail was being buffeted around by the wind.

Despite the winds, we loved the beach. And as the sun went down, the colours were gorgeous.





The next morning, the wind had settled down and I was able to take a nice long walk on the beach.



I had great fun taking video and trying to keep up with this flock of birds that blew past one way and then the next. The video of them is below too. I don't know who decides it's time to turn and fly in the next direction, but their synchronicity would make every Rockette envious.



Sadly, it was time to go. We still had Lompoc on our itinerary! So we took our last look at Jalama Beach and headed back along that long and winding road.



It was just as breathtaking and lush on the way back. But a little less nerve-wracking because we'd done it before.





And then we headed toward our original destination, before we took this delightful detour. Lompoc.



But it deserves its own episode.