



# HEARST CASTLE SPECIAL EVENT INFORMATION

Thank you for considering Hearst Castle for your special event. Inside you will find information on permitting, regulations, fees and scheduling considerations. For questions please contact the event coordinator, Aja Milne at [aja.milne@parks.ca.gov](mailto:aja.milne@parks.ca.gov)



## ***General Information And Scheduling Considerations***

**INTRODUCTION:** Once an estate for a newspaper magnate, Hearst Castle is now a historic house museum and California State Park. Nestled in the hills above the village of San Simeon, the Castle sits halfway between San Francisco and Los Angeles along Highway 1 on California's Central Coast. The interpretation of Hearst Castle to the public through public tours is one of the most important aspects of our role as stewards of this cultural resource. Hearst Castle is open to the public for tours year round with the exception of Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

When the Castle was donated to the State of California, it was accompanied by a gift deed that restricts its use to educational, interpretive, and philanthropic purposes that benefit Hearst Castle directly. The majority of the events held here are fundraisers for the benefit of the Castle and are hosted by our cooperating association or other fundraising organizations. Private events like weddings, birthday parties, anniversaries or retirement celebrations are allowed as long as they meet specific requirements and do not conflict with our regularly scheduled tour program.

**ADDITIONAL SCHEDULING CONSIDERATIONS:** Events must be scheduled at least 16 weeks in advance. Holiday and holiday periods (summer, spring break, 3 day weekends) are generally off limits to events due to expected increases in visitation. Staffing constraints and protection of the monument necessitate allowing a break to recover between events therefore events are generally not scheduled within close proximity to one another. We allow for up to one major event per week. Event permits do not come with exclusive access to the Castle for the entire period of the event. Please expect that the Castle will remain open to the public during regular business hours and this may have an effect on the time it takes to set up or strike an event.

## **SPECIAL EVENTS**

Special Events include all activities beyond the normal scope of a park visitor use such as reservation of areas or facilities, conducting business both for profit and non-profit on park property, activities that could impact public access or enjoyment and requests for exemption from general park rules and regulations. Permit applications may be submitted no sooner than one calendar year from the date of the event; however for scheduling purposes all events need to be requested at least 16 weeks in advance. Photography/film permits are coordinated under a separate process but may be required as part of a special event permit.

## **INITIAL SITE VISIT**

Site visits and informal meetings with the on-site event coordinator are available within certain parameters. For initial site visits, you are welcome to purchase a ticket to any of our daytime tours (ticket prices start at \$25/adult). The event coordinator will arrange to meet you at the end of your tour to walk you around the outdoor terrace areas and discuss event logistics and considerations to help you make the most informed decision possible for the location of your event. It is preferable that these visits take place Monday through Friday, however, weekend dates may be possible if the event coordinator is available. You may reach the on-site coordinator at 805-927-2070 or [aja.milne@parks.ca.gov](mailto:aja.milne@parks.ca.gov)

## **SITE FEES**

### **1 – 50 PEOPLE**

\$40,000, plus a \$1,000 non-refundable deposit, plus a \$100 non-refundable fee to schedule the event, use of one outdoor location for event

### **51 – 150 PEOPLE**

\$80,000, plus a \$2,000 non-refundable deposit, plus a \$100 non-refundable fee to schedule the event, and/or use of up to 2 outdoor locations for event

### **151 – 250 PEOPLE**

\$120,000, plus a \$3,000 non-refundable deposit, plus a \$100 non-refundable fee to schedule the event, and/or use of up to 3 outdoor locations for event

In addition to the non-refundable site fee, non-refundable deposit and non-refundable scheduling fees, there are also staff cost reimbursements for buses, guides, security (hilltop and gate), curatorial and maintenance or any other personnel that are required to successfully accomplish your event. You will also need proof of insurance for up to one million dollars per occurrence.

If your event time overlaps with the public tour program, in some cases, it may be possible to buy out an agreed upon amount of tour tickets in order to minimize public impact. The public cannot be completely displaced, therefore buying out an entire tour day is not an option.

Payments can be made using check, credit card, cash, cashier's check or money order. Due dates for fees will be discussed during the permitting process. Your event is not cleared until all payments are made, all supporting documents are turned in and the permit has been signed off by park personnel.

## **VENDOR INFORMATION**

Hearst Castle provides the event space and security for the event. All other items are the responsibility of the permit holder. Outside vendors are needed for catering, tables, chairs, dishes, linens, décor, music, audio/visual, lighting, heating, restrooms, dumpsters, flowers, photographer, etc. A preferred vendor list is available upon request. This list includes vendors we have hosted regularly that are familiar with our security and delivery processes. Each permit holder is free to select any vendor they wish. All vendor leads are expected to attend a formal site visit with the on-site coordinator. If you select a vendor that has never worked at this location then we would expect to hold additional scoping visits to ensure they understand the site and the challenges it poses.

Due to the remote nature of the location, our robust tour program and the limited ingress and egress, event set-up and take down can take longer and be more complicated than at other locations that are specifically used for events. This additional labor can result in additional costs to the permittee.

## **INSURANCE**

For events with greater potential hazard of liability to the State or for events meeting certain special requirements, permittee will be required to provide the State Park with a Certificate of Insurance as proof of liability insurance coverage. This policy will cover the period of the permit that will be in an amount no less than the following as determined by the District Superintendent:

Combined single limit (CSL) \$1,000,000 per occurrence Insurance policies shall be underwritten to the satisfaction of the State and shall contain the following special endorsement: *State of California, its officers, employees and servants are included as additional insured with respect to liability arising out of the operations related to the event on California state owned or operated property; The insurer will not cancel or reduce the insured's coverage during the period that this permit is in effect or without 30 days prior written notice, whichever is shorter, to the State.*

Outside vendors may also be asked to carry liability insurance in order to operate at the park.

## **PERMIT PROCESS**

1. Review this booklet and speak with the on-site event coordinator
2. Check venue availability
3. Informal site/scoping visit to discuss general ideas and feasibility
4. Submit formal event proposal to coordinator
5. Review period for event proposals is 30 days—within 30 days the coordinator will let you know of the decision to accept, amend or deny your event proposal.
6. If accepted, move forward with permitting process.

The South Terrace offers some of the most fantastic views of the Pacific Ocean from Hearst Castle. This terrace is located on the south side of the estate and is situated near the largest guest cottage. The south terrace also offers a fantastic side view of Casa Grande.

This area is great for a cocktail reception or small seated event.

There is space nearby for a small catering set-up that has plenty of access to electrical power.

Easy access for rental equipment to be dropped off and carted up.

The terrace is not ADA accessible. Prior arrangements must be made with regard to guests with mobility issues.



## **SOUTH TERRACE**

### **CAPACITY:**

**SEATED DINNER—50**

**DANCING—150**

**COCKTAIL RECEPTION—150**

**No ADA accessibility**





The Neptune Terrace sits between two guest cottages and overlooks the iconic Neptune Pool.

Depending upon your set-up this space can accommodate up to 100 guests.

The Neptune Terrace is a high traffic area for our public tours. It is not easily closed down for exclusive access. Event set-up of this area may need to adjust to accommodate the tours.

This terrace is not ADA accessible. Prior accommodations must be made for event guests with mobility issues.

Event guests will be able to view the Neptune Pool from this location however, unless the permit specifies, the guests will be required to stay in this location and not wander down to view the pool from below.



## **NEPTUNE TERRACE**

CAPACITY: up to 100

SEATED DINNER—50

DANCING—100

COCKTAIL RECEPTION—100





## NEPTUNE POOL-DECK ONLY

CAPACITY: 250

SEATED DINNER— NOT AVAILABLE

DANCING—250

COCKTAIL RECEPTION—250

GLASSWARE NOT PERMITTED

SWIMMING NOT PERMITTED

The Neptune Pool is not available for swimming. However, the decks around the pool may be used for cocktail receptions. As this is perhaps the most iconic part of Hearst Castle we strive to keep this area of the hilltop open to tours whenever possible. Delivery and event set-up may occur while the public is present therefore each vendor must be prepared to share the space.

Glassware is not permitted around the Neptune Pool. Please select a rental company or caterer that understands and will abide by this restriction.





The rear or east courtyard is the space located at the back of Casa Grande. The rear of Casa Grande is mostly unfinished—the façade is missing its limestone facing and in some areas the windows have been sealed up without glass or frames.

This area offers plenty of space for your “back of the house” set-up. For our larger events this is where we stage the catering tent, floral tent, vendor break area, dumpsters and grey water container. There is plenty of access to electrical power and a usable restroom nearby for event staff.

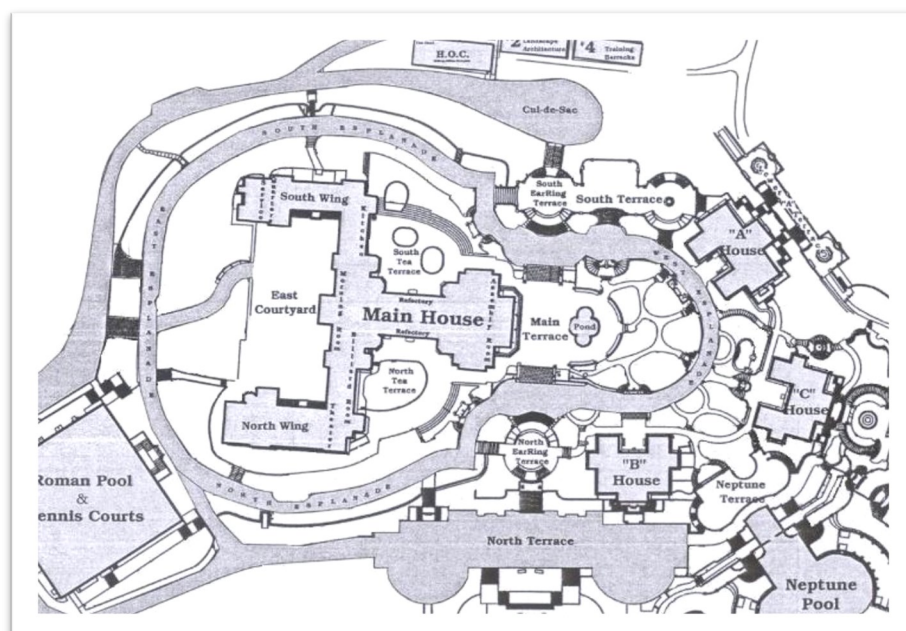
Smaller vehicles can gain access to this area for deliveries. Larger box trucks will have to drop their deliveries farther away and then cart them in.



## REAR COURTYARD

This area of the house is used by tour groups throughout the day. We cannot close it off for exclusive event access therefore any set-up in the rear courtyard must allow for tour group movement and emergency vehicle access.

CAPACITY: 200  
SEATED DINNER—200  
DANCING—200  
COCKTAIL RECEPTION—200







## WEST or "C" TERRACE

CAPACITY: 250

SEATED DINNER— 250

DANCING—250

COCKTAIL RECEPTION—250

The West Terrace (or "C" terrace) offers fantastic views of the Pacific Ocean, Neptune Pool and one guest cottage. It is a nice, flat space that offers lots of variety in terms of event set-up.

Deliveries to this location must off-load farther away and be trucked or walked in.

This area is accessed regularly by our Grand Rooms tour but can be closed off to public access if exclusive access is needed for events.

The terrace is very near the Neptune Pool. Generally, we will restrict event guests to the terrace and not allow the event to spread over to the pool area unless the pool decks are included in the event permit.





## NORTH UNFINISHED TERRACE

CAPACITY: 250

SEATED DINNER— 250

DANCING—250

COCKTAIL RECEPTION—250

The North Unfinished Terrace provides an incredible view of the Santa Lucia Mountain range as well as a side view of Casa Grande. It is our largest event area and offers enough space to host both front of the house and back of the house event set-up.

Deliveries to this terrace are quite easy with trucks and smaller vehicles able to access the terrace directly. There is easily accessible power for your event needs. This terrace even offers enough space to house additional portable restrooms you might need for your event.



## **EVENT RULES AND REGULATIONS**

- Events must end by 11pm
- Smoking is not permitted in the park. Open flames are also not allowed as part of any décor for an event.
- The consumption or sale of alcohol at any event may necessitate the need for an Alcohol Beverage Control Board license.
- For events having greater potential hazard or liability to the State than is incurred through typical daily park activities, permittee will be required to provide the District Superintendent with a certificate of insurance with required endorsements as proof of liability insurance coverage.
- Permittee is required to reimburse the State of California for all State Park staff personnel costs. Parks event coordinator will provide an estimate of said costs up front. Permit holder will be invoiced for actual staff totals following the conclusion of the event.
- Permittee will complete a special event site plan outlining event and vendor areas. Site plan will be submitted to Park staff no less than 14 days in advance.
- Events occur on the grounds and terraces of Hearst Castle. The historic structures are not open to event guests, vendors or permit holders.
- A detailed load-in, load-out schedule must be provided 14 days in advance of the event. List must include names of all contracted vendors and number of vehicles. All personnel driving directly to the hilltop in private vehicles must be prepared to show photo identification upon passing through the security kiosk. Any person attempting to pass through the kiosk outside of the scheduled time may be detained until on-site personnel approves the timeline deviation.
- Permittee is welcome to contract with any vendor of their own choosing. We will provide a list of preferred vendors upon request. All vendors will be required to conduct a site visit and submit detailed plans to the Castle's event coordinator. If the vendor has never worked an event here before we may require additional walk-throughs with vendor personnel.
- All contracted vendors and staff must stay in their designated work areas as defined in the event site plan. Vendors and staff must refrain from consumption of alcohol while on site for event.
- If alcohol is served, the permittee will be responsible for assuring that no person attending the event drive under the influence when leaving the event. Permittee will provide care and oversight of event participants if impaired or demonstrating behavior not allowed as part of this event or unsafe behavior.
- Permit holder, guests, vendors and staff must respect the historic structures, art objects and grounds and refrain from touching, handling or otherwise disturbing items on the premises.
- All bars (last call) must close a minimum of fifteen (15) minutes prior to scheduled event end time.
- All music must end a minimum of ten (10) minutes prior to scheduled event end time.
- There is limited power at Hearst Castle. Permittee may be required to bring in an alternate power source.



### **EVENT RULES AND REGULATIONS cont'd**

- State Park Peace Officer supervision and security staff is required for all events. Larger more complex events may require the coverage of several peace officers in addition to security staff.
- No structures or sets are to be built, no trees or shrubbery are to be cut, trimmed or injured, and no disturbance is to be made of the ground surface
- Staking into the ground is not permitted. Tying onto plants, trees or structures is not permitted.
- Park staff will monitor sound levels for amplified music/sound. DJs, bands and others using amplification must follow their direction. Amplified music cannot be played when the public is present.
- Permittee is to furnish their own portable bathroom facilities; if event blocks public access to regular portable bathrooms then permittee is required to rent additional restrooms for the tour visitors to use.
- Permittee will furnish their own trash and recycle dumpsters. Permittee will remove all trash and debris from Castle property upon completion of the event.
- Garbage bags must be carried (not dragged) to trash receptacles to prevent damage to ground surfaces. Double bagging may be required to contain drips or spills from garbage bags.
- Rental items must be delivered and picked up on the day of the event unless special arrangements have been made as part of the special event permit. The bulk of the deliveries will be made between the hours of 7am-9am in order to avoid overlapping with tour bus traffic.
- Photography and videography of the event will require an additional permit. Commercial photography is not permitted. No special event held at the Castle shall be broadcast, televised or recorded for commercial purposes.
- Parking on the hilltop is limited. Whenever possible we will require vendors and staff to carpool to their work locations. Event guests will be brought up in Hearst Castle provided shuttle buses (bus costs charged to permittee) or the permit holder is welcome to use their own licensed transportation contractor. Parking at the Visitor Center is free and the lot will remain open for event guest departure at the end of the event.
- Equipment owned, leased or operated by the Department may not be operated by anyone who is not an employee of the Department.
- Permit holder, vendors and staff are responsible for clean up immediately following an event.
- The District Superintendent may terminate without prior notice any special event activity when it is necessary for the safety and enjoyment of the public for the protection of resources, or for violation of any rules or regulations of the Department of Parks and Recreation or conditions of the permit. In addition, any special event permit may be canceled without notice in the event of disaster or unforeseen emergency.