

Is The Dreamy California Town In *Ratched* A Real Place?

The show filmed in several coastal locations in California.

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Netflix's *Ratched* is not exactly what you'd call escapist viewing. Chronicling the rise of *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest*'s sadistic villain Nurse Ratched (Sarah Paulson), the show is both psychologically violent and viscerally gory, with most of its characters falling somewhere on the spectrum of evil. But this being a Ryan Murphy show, everything is also cranked up to 11—most notably the costumes and the overall aesthetic.

In addition to the weirdly luxurious interiors of the Lucia State Hospital, the show takes place against a stunning backdrop of ocean views thanks to its setting in the coastal California town of Lucia. So is this a real place? Can you plan your own *Ratched* self-guided tour? Read on for all the details.



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Lucia is a real town in California; technically, it's an unincorporated part of Monterey County, named after the Santa Lucia Mountains that surround it. It's a tiny place, set along a winding road that hugs the cliffs high above the Pacific Ocean, with a population of just over 1300. That's just slightly bigger than its fictional depiction in the show, where its population is 985. Though the show takes place in the 1940s, it sounds as though Lucia hasn't changed much today—you'll find a hotel, a restaurant and a gas station and not much else. Cell service is apparently scarce, but there's a public pay phone to use instead. Honestly, it sounds like a dream destination for a digital detox.

In the first episode of the show, *Ratched* checks into the Sealight Inn, a cliffside motel with stunning views over the Pacific. The on-screen Sealight Inn is actually Lucia Lodge, a historic family-run hotel where you can stay in real life. The hotel was built in the 1930s, which explains why it fit so naturally into the show. A room will run you between \$225 and \$375 a night—and while *Ratched* vibes are guaranteed, a sexy PI who looks like Corey Stoll in the next room over is not.

There is no psychiatric hospital in Lucia (and there never has been), so those exteriors are filmed elsewhere. The Lucia State Hospital is actually the King Gillette Ranch in Calabasas, California, at the base of the Santa Monica Mountains.



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As for the interiors of the hospital, it will *shock* you to discover that those plush velvet couches and lavish, colorful offices are not taken from a real psychiatric ward. The hospital was built on a soundstage at 20th Century Fox Studios in L.A., but based heavily on the Arrowhead Springs Hotel in San Bernardino, California, which *Architectural Digest* describes as "a grand Georgian-style resort and spa designed by famed Hollywood architect Paul Williams and decorated by the legendary Dorothy Draper." The show's filming locations also include Santa Monica, a beachfront city just to the west of L.A.

In conclusion, if you're looking for a *Ratched*-inspired getaway, start at Santa Monica and drive north up Highway 1. It's a beautiful trip, even without the pop culture significance, and you'll hit most of the key locations between Malibu, San Bernadino, and Monterey.