

Concorso Italiano

Marina, California

Each August, the Monterey Peninsula attracts 40,000 automotive enthusiasts to celebrate their passion for vintage, classic and exotic automobiles. At the start of the weekend is Concorso Italiano—a true Celebration of Italian Style. Founded in 1985, Concorso Italiano is a gathering of all things Italian, especially cars.

Concorso Italiano features music, cuisine, fashion, and travel. The event is centered around some 1,000 collectible Italian automobiles, motorcycles, and boats. Non-Italian exotic and classic automobiles also represent a significant contingency. The Concorso emphasizes display and appreciation over competition, and although the cars are truly magnificent, the event is not just about cars: it's about people, too. Indeed, we found the event to be full of people-watching opportunities. Even Arizona's own Bob Bondurant was there, to sign autographs, tell tales and take it all in, himself.

Concorso Italiano relocated this year, after construction at its longstanding site, Bayonet Black Horse, would have restricted space and forced guests to park off-site. They have moved to the Marina Airport, 10 miles north of Monterey. Our inland drive from Monterey to Marina was an adventure. Terrain to the south of the event comprises the site of decommissioned Fort Ord, now making way for subdivisions, colleges and some serious real estate speculation. Much of the old Fort remains, with windows knocked out, grass growing in the concrete, and the general look and feel of Chernobyl. But since it's not Chernobyl, it's actually a pretty cool tour.

The new venue is a large, high-level, wind-swept airfield that appears to have fallen into disuse after the military left (leaving behind a café and bar reminiscent of *The Right Stuff*). It's also becoming home to tech companies and such, happy to have enormous hangars for company facilities. The site allowed for vintage aircraft displays and flybys. More of this is anticipated in future years. This year included professionally-catered food and beverage for the first time. In coming years, they will be adding shaded seating areas to just relax and view the beautiful cars and the mountain backdrop of the Coastal Range.

If you're headed to Monterey next summer, be sure to include the Concorso. For information, visit www.concorso.com. ■



Photos: Joe Sage

