



PACIFI

A Little Known Beach Getaway Gem

Imagine you have out-of-state houseguests asking where they can go to experience a small ocean beach town here in Northern California. It has happened to us, and our current recommendation of Pacifica may surprise some. You might expect us to mention Santa Cruz or Half Moon Bay, and both are great choices and probably better known. But Pacifica is actually the easiest and fastest beach town to reach from the San Joaquin Valley, and it's just a few miles south of San Francisco on Highway One. You'll love their seven miles of sandy beaches and scenic coastal foothills setting.



PHOTO: FISHERMEN PACIFICAPIER SUNSET

CA:

Rather significant is the fact that Pacifica means “peace” in Spanish, and the peaceful feeling of serenity that defines the area makes it the perfect moniker and an ideal escape for a little R&R. Over 1400 acres of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area surround the town, which assures the area will remain a largely undeveloped coastal area perfect for outdoor enthusiasts’ getaways. And, according to the National Marine Sanctuaries of the West Coast, Pacifica is known to be the fourth richest area in the world for marine mammal life. Now, here’s more of our positive take on Pacifica.

WHAT TO SEE AND DO:

Are you a surfing, scuba diving or spearfishing aficionado? The top surfing beaches are Linda Mar (*best for beginners*), Rockaway and Sharp Park (*better for the more experienced surfer*). Scuba divers will enjoy exploring two underwater wrecks at Pedro Point in approximately 30 to 40 feet of water, and spearfishing is especially popular in May and June when the delectable and prized halibut enter Linda Mar Bay. Surf and scuba shops offering lessons and gear rentals are available in town. Into biking, hiking and walks? Casual bikers will love the paved coastal trail. Mountain bikers will be ecstatic over the labyrinth of winding

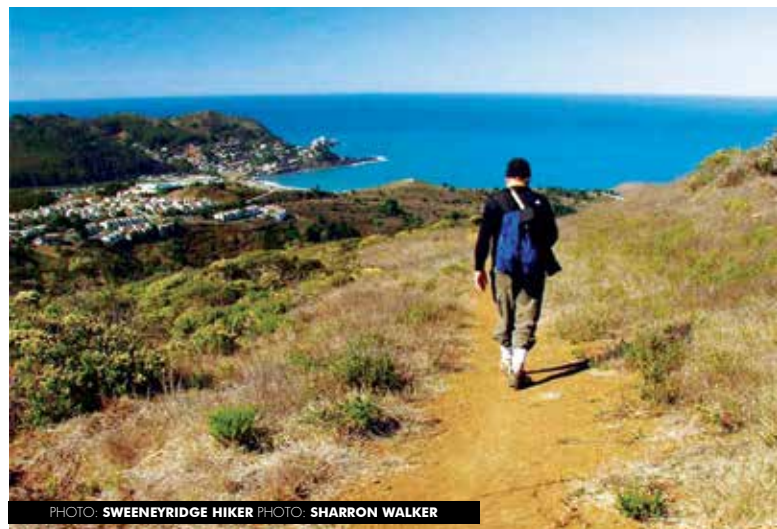


PHOTO: SWEENEYRIDGE HIKER PHOTO: SHARRON WALKER



LOCATION: MORIS POINT RUNNER PHOTO: CAROL CAMACHO



LOCATION: SHARP PARK FROM MORISPOINT PHOTO: CAROL CAMACHO

trails overlooking the ocean, especially the ascent up the sides of Montara Mountain to 2,000 feet above town. We've done numerous hikes in the town and strongly recommend the quite easy Mori Point coastal walk. We loved the more strenuous trek on the trail up to Sweeney Ridge for stunning panoramic vistas. But keep in mind, there are many more hiking trails, and the locals, hotel employees or the Visitor Center will fill you in on others. And all those wonderful beaches mentioned earlier provide romantic surfside sandy beach strolls.

Like crabbing and fishing? Don't miss a walk out onto Pacifica Pier, the only place in the Bay Area where the public can crab for free, and anglers are welcome. If you love to watch whales but get seasick going out in a boat, you may, at certain times of the year, see migrating whales from the Pier. Hooked on golf? Sharp Park Golf Course is a reasonably priced links-inspired course designed by famed golf course architect Alister Mackenzie, who also designed Augusta National, home of the Masters Golf Tournament. Ever tried a Segway ride? If not, this unique individual transporter is a real hoot, especially around this smashing (*not crashing*) seaside location. www.siliconsegway.com



LOCATION: ROCKAWAY BEACH PHOTO: CAROL CAMACHO

WHERE TO STAY:

Although there are no really upscale 4 or 5 star lodging options in Pacifica we found the newly remodeled Holiday Inn Express and Suites quite charming with a very friendly staff and offering an exceptional complimentary buffet breakfast, plus free Wi-Fi and parking. Just steps from Rockaway Beach, this boutique-style property provides refrigerators, microwaves and 40" flat panel HD televisions in all their delightfully decorated rooms. Some rooms offer Jacuzzi tubs, electric fireplaces and ocean views. www.hiexpresspacific.com.

One major positive in Pacifica: you'll find none of those dreaded extra charge "resort fees" at any of their local hotels. Although we haven't personally

experienced any of the other lodging options in town, we encourage readers to check them all out on the Chamber of Commerce website listed later in this article. We're confident you'll find one that best fits your needs and budget.

WHERE TO DINE:

We've experienced a number of Pacifica's restaurants, and after a day of strenuous outdoor adventures, dining out is a definite must. Here are a few of our favorites: Puerto 27, located in the Pacifica Beach Hotel, is a relative new star on the local culinary scene featuring cuisine from Peru. It's very rare to find a Peruvian restaurant in Northern California, and the experience was exceptional. Be sure to try a Peruvian



LOCATION: SURF SPOT PATIO PHOTO: CAROL CAMACHO



LOCATION: PUERTO 27 CHEVICHE



LOCATION: MOONRAKER SEAFOOD PLATTER PHOTOS: SHAWN MCNAMARA



Pisco cocktail and their Ceviche appetizer. You could become hooked—on both! www.puerto27.com Moonraker, in our eyes, is the most upscale restaurant in the area with incredible oceanfront views from their second floor location in the Best Western Lighthouse Hotel. Hallmarks include classical seafood cuisine and live entertainment on Saturday nights. www.moonrakerpacifica.com Surf Spot has become, in a short time, a very popular local hangout providing creative dishes, comfort food and an impressive variety of outdoor stage entertainment. Be sure to check their website for coming events. www.surfspotseats.com Nick's Seashore Restaurant, overlooking Rockaway Beach, has been a landmark dining and entertainment hotspot for many years. Live, high-energy music and dancing are featured every Friday and Saturday night and more laid back jazz on Sundays. www.nicksrestaurant.net A Grape in the Fog is a charming wine bar also offering craft-style beers, a small plate menu and live music on weekends. www.agitf.com

Be sure to take enough time to really explore this unique "shore thing" destination as you may be pleasantly surprised at what you'll discover in the Pacifica Universe. One caveat: Pacifica has been known to be quite foggy, so we suggest checking their weather report closely before heading west. But keep in mind, if it's really hot in our Valley, a trip to Pacifica's natural air conditioning will cool you off very comfortably. And be sure to go to the informative website of the town's Chamber of Commerce to check out more lodging options, coming events and everything Pacifica. www.visitpacifica.com



Stockton Urgent Care Medical Clinic Inc.

Stockton Urgent Care Medical Clinic and Family Practice has had the proud honor of serving the Stockton community for over 27 years. In that time, Stockton Urgent Care has evolved in response to the requests of the community by incorporating Family Practice into its scope of care and has embraced advancing medical technology by implementing Electronic Medical Records and on site Digital X-Rays to further enhance the streamline medical care at Stockton Urgent Care. Along with numerous professional recognitions including Certification by the Urgent Care Association of America, the greatest accolades have been being named "Best of San Joaquin County" a record SEVEN times by the Greater Stockton Community. With heartfelt appreciation, it is hoped that Stockton Urgent Care Medical Clinic and Family Practice will be able to continue to participate in the Stockton Community's health care for many years to come.



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