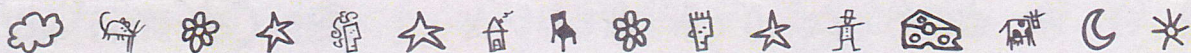


California Kids!



Half Moon Bay, A Perfect Coastal Family Getaway

By Carmel L. Mooney

Looking for the perfect coastal getaway that's not too far, not too costly, has friendly locals, rich history, sumptuous dining, world class wine tasting, award winning breweries, majestic beaches, outdoor adventure, world re-known goat farms, luxurious lodging, small town feel, big city amenities, golfing, cycling, pumpkins, shopping...an impossible bill to fill, you might say??? Think again; less than two hours from your back porch awaits the perfect summer getaway destination for Sacramento area and foothill residents--Half Moon Bay, California. www.halfmoonbaychamber.org

This summer while the majority of Northern California rides out triple digit forecasts, Half Moon Bay sits in a perfect temperate climate just waiting to call outdoor enthusiasts to horseback riding on the beach, sipping fine wines while over looking breathtaking vistas, and frolicking in the waves on some of the state's best beaches.

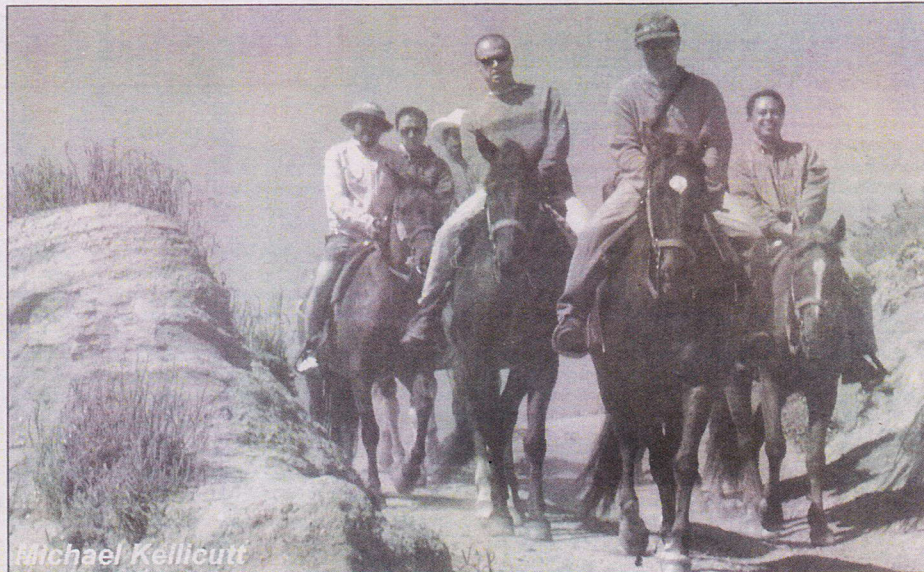
Perhaps a coastal bicycling ride along estuaries and inlets filled with herons and geese and other coastal wildlife might whet your clan's appetite. You can explore gorgeous vibrant coastal tide pools and marshes while stopping along the way to savor local organic fruits and snacks as your knowledgeable guides educate you and inspire you about the ins and outs of local flora and fauna. It's all part of the spectacular package with Coastal Elegance Tours. www.coastalelegancetours.com

Maybe the kids (and parents) would rather tour a beautiful award-winning goat farm in the hills where guests can enjoy fascinating, fun, and educational tours to learn about the goats, dairy, and cheese making. Spectacular monthly dinners are also offered in a monumental, historic hay loft overlooking the pasture, while a meal made with locally farmed ingredients is savored by all. www.harleyfarms.com

The kids would surely enjoy an all inclusive day program for youngsters at the Ritz-Carlton with swimming, arts and crafts, and nature exploration while mom and dad savor the award-winning brew at Half Moon Bay Brewing Company. Of course, any stay at Half Moon Bay without eating at this establishment, would be nothing less than a felony as the food is bar-none the best beach side dining in the area.

This remarkable casual coastal venue has pleased tourists and locals alike for over a decade with its outstanding combination of fresh, sustainable seafood and home brewed beers, all in a family friendly, dog friendly atmosphere.

Chef Gaston Alfaro's beautifully presented culinary delights blend the best of Yucatan, Asian, and American influences and flavors with spicy mango salsas, sesame dressings and sauces, and garlic, fennel and cilantro. The Portuguese Fisherman's Stew, a recipe of historic origin, is nothing



less than unforgettable. It is---quite simply---the bomb.

Brewmaster Kirk Hillyard produces an outstanding array of ales, stouts, and numerous other varieties named after local landmarks and historical figures. www.hmbbrewingco.com

A quick jaunt down the highway to the historic nearby villages of Pescadero and San Gregorio with their charming little bakeries and eateries and shops are well worth a few minutes diversion.

While Half Moon Bay offers more than a dozen eclectic types and styles of accommodations ranging from intimate coastal inns, B & B's, hotels, luxury resorts and spas, and even motels, visitors would be remiss without considering a stay at The Half Moon Bay Inn. Thankfully it's situated right above *It's Italia*, one of the finest dining experiences in San Mateo County. Every attention to detail is commanded at this Italian-style inn where the best of culinary delight and accommodations are all under one roof.

Outstanding pastas, seafood dishes, salads, wines and desserts make this restaurant a true joy to savor. Excellent hospitality and delightful fare make this inn and eating establishment the perfect hub from which to enjoy your adventures. It's even dog friendly. www.halfmoonbayinn.com

If a coast side view is in order, The Inn at Maverick's offers truly magical oceanfront accommodations with unsurpassed views. A sensory experience of smells, sounds and utter tranquility, it will quiet the soul and revive the spirit. The only downside is that you will be tempted to forgo all your previous agenda to simply soak in the experience and the amenities of such a magical place on earth. www.innatmavericks.com



Photos courtesy of Half Moon Bay Coastside Chamber of Commerce

If a casual seafood meal is on the menu after a long relaxing day of cycling, kayaking, or hiking, you'll want to unwind and refresh at Sam's Chowder House where every sauce, and salad and entrée is exceptional, bursting with freshness and deliciously and painstakingly homemade. They are even world-famous for making lobster rolls better than in Maine. Nothing will be a disappointment. There are small bonfire pits on the deck---the perfect place to sit and have a cocktail or even to sample their delectable desserts while listening to the gulls and harbor seals below. www.samschowderhouse.com

With its white sand beaches, dramatic cliffs, redwoods, spectacular mountain backdrops, and abundant wildlife, Half Moon Bay is truly the outdoor-enthusiast family's paradise.

Carmel L. Mooney is a 4th generation California who grew up on the coast in Carmel, California where her family settled the area generations before. She loves to share her passion for west coast gems and family friendly destinations. You can hear her talk about these and other world class travel spots on her radio show each Sunday afternoon on KJAT 1430 AM in Sacramento.