



# Traveling Canine

## Half Moon Bay

### Fall 2010 Issue

By Whitney Wilde



“This trip feeds my soul” my friend Marilyn commented as we drove up Highway One to Half Moon Bay. Time zips by on the 50-mile drive north from Santa Cruz. On our right are rolling hills, redwood groves, marsh lands, brussel sprouts, berries and farm stands (delicious pie at Swanton Berry Farm!). To the left are beautiful beaches, rocky cliffs, windsurfers and whales if we are lucky.

Today, eighteen dogs and 14 humans from Woofers & Walkers are taking a day trip to Half Moon Bay. Come along with us on our one-day vacation.

World famous surf spot, Maverick’s, is my favorite place to walk. One winter, the roar of 40-foot waves vibrated my whole body. Starting in a small parking lot, walk along the Pillar Point Marsh (keep your eye out for the fallen tree carved with whales, dolphins, and fish), past the mouth of the harbor (and the memorial to surfers who have died here), to the beach. There are sooooo many seashells here! Opalescent Turban snails, cowries and rare sea urchin shells! This is an on-leash beach, but don’t be surprised to see dogs running free.

After a day at the beach, there is no better place than Moss Beach Distillery to watch the sunset and get some good grub. Originally a speakeasy during Prohibition, the dog-friendly patio has fabulous fireplaces overlooking the ocean (but be sure to go inside and check out the beautiful stained glass windows). They have a dog menu, priced in bones - burger patties (5 bones) were a huge hit with all our pups.



The crab & avocado quesadilla was heavenly and made me want to go back again and again. No complaints from any humans or dogs. As the sun set over the ocean, we sat around the many fireplaces, wrapped in warm wool blankets (provided by the restaurant). The dogs settled all around us, tired from a day of running the beach. A perfect end to a perfect day – our bellies and our souls were full.

This was just a day trip and a small sample of what Half Moon Bay offers dogs and their people. Spend the weekend at one of the dog-friendly hotels and take advantage of all the many restaurants with your pooch in Half Moon Bay.

My favorite place to stay is the Half Moon Bay Inn, owned by two poodles, Colette and Oliver, and their person Jamie Barber. GiGi and I feel like renaissance royalty in this elegant, old world boutique hotel in downtown Half Moon Bay. Each room is unique, but all have marble bathrooms, lovely linens, down comforters, and some have their own private courtyard. Their “Dog Gone Good Package” includes a dog bath, brush and blow dry! The on-site restaurant, It’s Italia, has a beautiful courtyard that will make you think you are in another world.

In the morning, head over to the Half Moon Bay Airport to the 3-Zero Café. They have the best brunch with generous portions. I am addicted to the Brioche French Toast covered in a cinnamon vanilla kahlua batter with fresh strawberries and blueberries. Yum!

After brunch, take a hike along the Waterfront Coastside Trail, a 4-mile multi-use trail running from Poplar Avenue to Pillar Point Harbor. Meandering along, you pass beaches with tide pools, meadows of wild flowers, and marshlands. There are so many places to stop and enjoy the view and many people bring binoculars to bird watch the many kinds of hawks and sea birds.

Or you could wander the quaint historic downtown area. At one time called Spanishtown, starting in the 1840s it was home to a diverse ethnic community and they all left their mark on the town. Most of the bookstores, antique shops, boutiques and art galleries welcome you and your pooch. I can spend hours in Ink Spell Books, an independent bookstore with new and used books. It is one of five independent bookstores – my version of heaven. We stop at Chez Shea for a late lunch from their diverse menu. Their menu features dishes from around the world and it is all organic.

Not a shopper? Another fun outing is Farmer John’s Pumpkin Farm. Who knew there were so many varieties of pumpkins and gourds? This dog-friendly nursery grows veggies and flowers with a pumpkin farm that opens in mid-September thru November. Every October they host Bernese Mountain Dog Day with over 80 dogs!

Ever wonder about the odd white house on the hill? That is the James Johnston House, built in 1853 in the Yankee style of saltbox architecture. James Johnston made his fortune as a San Francisco saloon owner. Though dogs are not allowed in the home, the grounds are open to wander and have a great view. Back at the hotel, the restaurant downstairs, It’s Italia, has a wonderful courtyard patio with fireplaces and a fountain. Their food is creative, using local, sustainably grown, organic ingredients. Gorgonzola arugula sirloin burger with herbs and onions! Pumpkin Festival Salad with roasted red apple blossom, pumpkin,

gouda cheese, baby mixed organic greens and nutmeg vinaigrette! Lots of seafood entrees and a large wine list.

At the end of the day, GiGi and I are ready to go settle into a comfy, cushy bed. The Half Moon Bay Inn spoils us with treats and our dreams are sweet – we are in an Italian villa enjoying the countryside and GiGi’s twitching feet tell me she is chasing squirrels up olive trees. When our stay is over, we feel refreshed, relaxed, renewed, and we both hate to go home but we take with us memories of our adventures. "Once you have traveled, the voyage never ends, but is played out over and over again in the quietest chambers. The mind can never break off from the journey." — Pat Conroy

Though there are many places to eat and sleep with your pooch, here is my “pick of the pack”!

## **EATS**

### [Moss Beach Distillery](#)

140 Beach Way, Moss Beach, CA  
650.728.5595

See above for review.

3-Zero Café  
9850 N. Cabrillo Highway  
Half Moon Bay  
650.728.1411

Located at the Half Moon Bay Airport with a dog-friendly patio, this is the greatest place for brunch! Generous portions and the food is amazing. I am addicted to the Brioche French Toast covered in a cinnamon vanilla kahlua batter with fresh strawberries and blueberries.

### [Half Moon Bay Brewing Company](#)

390 Capistrano Road  
Half Moon Bay (in the Harbor)  
650.728.2739

The popular patio overlooks the harbor and marsh. They offer an ever-changing selection of custom brews and tasty seafood. The garlic prawns are to die for.

### [Sam’s Chowder House](#)

4210 North Cabrillo Highway  
Half Moon Bay  
650.712.0245

Looking for the perfect bowl of clam chowder and the best seafood menu in town? This is one of the few places that does lobster to perfection. My pooch likes the polenta fries. You both can spend hours on the patio overlooking the harbor, in a cozy chair in front of a warm fire pit.

### [Cameron’s Pub Inn](#)

1410 S. Cabrillo Highway  
Half Moon Bay  
650.726.5705

I love this British Pub with a menu of bangers & mash, fish & chips, Scottish beef pie, pasty & chips, and award winning hamburgers. Cameron and his pups, Ozzie and Buddy, welcome you to their “dine with your dog” patio offering dog water bowls and complimentary biscuits. Need more room? The “outback” is a large grassy area you can take food “to go”. Over the pub, Cameron’s has three Bed & Beverage rooms

where you and your pooch are welcome to spend the night. Coming soon: a campground next door that is dog-friendly!

On Highway One, look for the red double-decker buses. Just up the street is the Half Moon Bay Dog Park.

#### [It's Italia](#)

401 Main Street  
Half Moon Bay  
650.726.4444

Beautiful courtyard with fireplaces and a fountain, their food is creative, using local, sustainably grown, organic ingredients. Gorgonzola arugula sirloin burger with herbs and onions! The Pumpkin Festival Salad with roasted red apple blossom, pumpkin, gouda cheese, baby mixed organic greens and nutmeg vinaigrette! Lots of seafood entrees and a large wine list.

#### [Chez Shea](#)

408 Main Street  
Half Moon Bay  
650.560.9234

Can't decide what kind of food you want? This place has it all: tapas, moussakaa, hummus, enchiladas, paella, curry, Cajun, Thai, and more. Plus it is all organic! My favorite is the fajitas with ahi tuna or maybe the Gibraltar Mezza Platter that puts a twist on a Middle Eastern variety plate.

#### [La Nebbia Winery](#)

12341 San Mateo Road (Highway 92)  
Half Moon Bay  
650.726.7074

La Nebbia is like going to visit your favorite uncle that has a huge backyard and patio for family get-togethers. A dog-friendly winery that offers wine tasting, bocce ball, and bottle-your-own days. Check their website for bottling schedule.

### **SLEEPS**

#### [Half Moon Bay Inn](#)

401 Main Street  
Half Moon Bay  
650.726.1177

Jamie Barber and her poodles, Colette and Oliver, made GiGi and I feel like renaissance royalty in this elegant, old world boutique hotel in downtown Half Moon Bay. Each room is unique, but all have marble bathrooms, lovely linens, down comforters, and some have their own private courtyard. My pooch loved the plush dog bed, dog dishes and special treats. Their "Dog Gone Good Package" includes a dog bath, brush and blow dry! The on-site restaurant, It's Italia, has a beautiful courtyard that will make you think you are in another world.

#### [The Inn at Mavericks](#)

346 Princeton Avenue  
Half Moon Bay  
650.728.1572

Awesome views overlooking Pillar Point Harbor, this hotel has three pet-friendly rooms, each with a fenced-in ocean view patio. The rooms are exceptionally large and spacious with modern décor.

[Landis Shores Oceanfront Inn](#)

211 Mirada Road  
Half Moon Bay  
650.726.6642

This elegant and luxurious bed & breakfast has only one pet-friendly room (the Champagne Room) but it has ocean views, a glassed-in deck, fireplace, whirlpool tub, fluffy robes, gourmet breakfast, afternoon wine and appetizers, plus much more. They provide your pooch with a basket filled with a comfy blanket, dog treats, trail guide, bags, and a towel for their feet.

[Cameron's Pub Inn](#)

1410 S. Cabrillo Highway  
Half Moon Bay  
650.726.5705

Three "bed & beverage" rooms and soon a dog-friendly campground.

[Harbor View Inn](#)

51 Avenue Alhambra  
Half Moon Bay  
650.726.2329

Nice, clean, moderately priced hotel with free continental breakfast provided and a short walk to the Waterfront Coastsides Trail.

**WALKS**

[Pillar Point Marsh](#)

From Hwy. 1, take Capistrano Road to Pillar Point Harbor. Go through the harbor entrance to Prospect Way and turn left on to Broadway. Take the immediate left on Harvard and go to the end of road. Turn right on West Point Avenue and continue to the Pillar Point Marsh parking lot.

Waterfront Coastsides Trail  
HMB Park & Rec  
650.726.8297

Off Highway One from Mirada Road to Pillar Point Marsh. Park at Miramar, Roosevelt Beach, Dunes Beach, Venice Beach, Francis Beach, or Poplar Beach.

Another favorite walk is the Waterfront Coastsides Trail, a 4-mile multi-use trail running from Poplar Avenue to Pillar Point harbor. Meandering along, you pass beaches with tide pools, meadows of wild flowers, and marshlands. Bring a picnic lunch, there are so many places to stop and enjoy the view.

[Half Moon Bay Dog Park](#)

Open sunrise to sunset  
At the end of Wavecrest Avenue off Highway One

Though these beaches and trails in Half Moon Bay are on-leash, the Half Moon Bay Dog Park is a small fenced-in off-leash park at the end of Wavecrest Avenue. Local dog owners fought hard for this small dog park that is supposed to be temporary until a permanent site can be found.

WARNING: Many of the San Mateo County parks, beaches and trails do NOT allow dogs. Please check the rules before you go to any not listed here.

**OTHER**

[Farmer John's Pumpkin Farm](#)

850 North Cabrillo Highway

Half Moon Bay

650.726.4980

Who knew there were so many varieties of pumpkins and gourds? This dog-friendly nursery grows veggies and flowers with a pumpkin farm opens in mid-September thru November. Every October they host Bernese Mountain Dog Day with over 80 dogs!

[James Johnston House](#)

Higgins Purrisma Road

Half Moon Bay

650.726.0329

This oddly shaped house on the hill is a historic site that has a great view.