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WOODSIDE

Premiere Issue | 2012-13

The Magazine of Woodside Hotels



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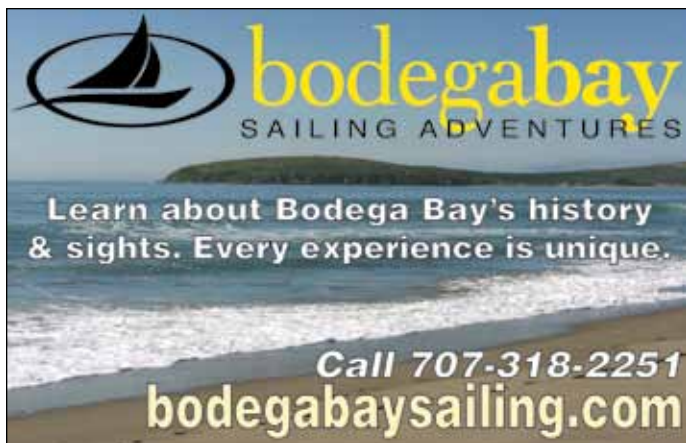
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***Silicon Valley,
We Have Liftoff***

Space 2.0 is underway. And this time, NASA is in the figurative backseat of a cockpit filled by some of the Valley's biggest captains of high-tech innovation. Can space be the new frontier for big ideas and bigger profits? Is there room in the stratosphere for this many movers and shakers?

By Sanjiv Bhattacharya

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***The "Doc"
of the Bay***

A Midwestern drifter showed up in Monterey in 1923, set up a marine biology lab, befriended John Steinbeck, became a fictional character, evolved into a cult figure, and was the inspiration behind one of the world's greatest aquariums. People remember him as Doc Ricketts, but that's a story of two men, not one.

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***Walking Up
an Appetite***

Going on walkabout through Yountville's streets is the equivalent of eating your way through a Michelin star-studded menu. With Wine Country legend and chef Bob Hurley as your guide, every step will satisfy.

By Kristen Jones Neff

DEBORAH JONES



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The Magazine of Woodside Hotels

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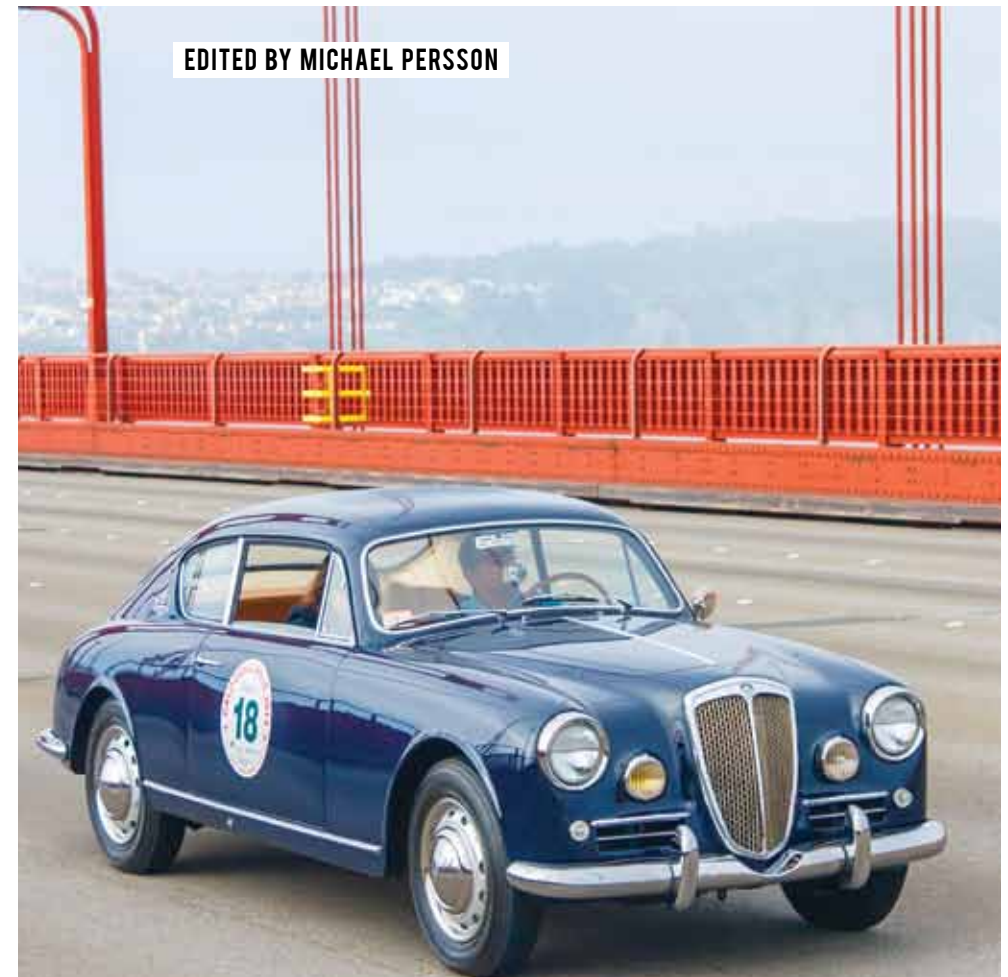
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CURRENTS

The Pull of the Bay Area and Beyond

EDITED BY MICHAEL PERSSON



LIFESTYLE ENVY

Road to Ride

The annual California Mille is an elegant example of how Northern California took an established event and turned it into the best of its kind. Patterned on the Italian *Mille Miglia* – dubbed “the world’s greatest road race” by Enzo Ferrari and runs 1,000 miles from Brescia to Rome and back – the California Mille has its own set of attractions. Some 60 cars take to the tarmac each spring on this four-day tour through Wine Country and the state’s northern coast on traffic-free roads, where the S-bend is a free-flowing feature. The only requirement for entry? A manufacture date before 1958. In the 22 years since the Mille made Northern California its New World home, the list of participating cars has read like an automotive who’s who: Alfa Romeo Giuliettas and 1900s, Porsche 356s and Jaguar

XK-120s have turned heads, along with the American contingent of Chrysler 300s, Carrera Panamericana Lincolns, and Hudsons.

Starting each year in Nob Hill, the cars are lined up and presented to the public for a quick meet and greet. The next morning, owners turn their attention

to the road, switching on their engines and reveling in the cacophony of throaty responses before engaging the gears to begin this hallowed parade.

See many of the Mille cars at the annual Palo Alto *Concours d’Elegance* (June 23, 2013, paconcours.com).

A Lancia Aurelia B20GT crosses the Golden Gate Bridge during the 2012 Mille.

SHOP TALK

Pacific Heights

Pacific Heights is San Francisco's debonair hood. Its swishy tree-lined streets where mansions decorate the high ground and the impeccable stores purveying the latest, the finest, and the tastiest make this a place to go spend a little time and a lot of money. To get a better understanding of this walkable locale, we asked four store owners one revealing question: **What's the one item a customer cannot leave your shop without?**

1 "It has to be Mabel Chong's Cinque Terre Necklace. Made of 14-karat gold-filled chain and wire and faceted sapphires, it shimmers like the Italian Riviera for which it is named."
-Meg Moir of Mabel Chong
3242 Sacramento Street, mabelchong.com, 415-885-0198

2 "I'd have to say the pappardelle with braised duck. In 11 years, it's been one of the items that has never come off the menu and is ordered for both lunch and dinner. It's a great San Francisco dish - very comforting and rich for those cold, foggy days."
-David Nichol of Sociale
3665 Sacramento Street, sfsociale.com, 415-921-3200

3 "All of our Shaker-style furniture is handmade, using 100-year-old American black cherry and walnut wood. What you are getting is a one-of-a-kind design made from the only groves in the country where these woods grow. You are buying the unique."
-Natutu Siregar of Thos. Moser Cabinetmakers
3395 Sacramento Street, thosmoser.com, 415-931-8131

4 "A made-in-America marble whacker. It's perfect for ages 3 to 103. It's a classic heirloom game. During the holidays, we can't keep them in stock. People come in here and say, 'I haven't seen one of these since I was a kid.'"
-Justine Kessler of The Ark
3325 Sacramento Street, thearktoys.com, 415-440-8697



AN UNCOMMON AGENDA {2013}

- Santa Cruz Fungus Fair {January 11-13}
- SF Beer Week {February 8-17}
- San Francisco International Asian American Film Festival {March 14-24}
- Bodega Bay Fisherman's Festival {April 27-28}
- Carmel Art Festival {May 16-19}
- North Beach Festival {June 15-16}

(NECKLACE) MABEL CHONG; (CHAIR) THOS. MOSER FINE FURNITURE MAKERS; (GAME) MIKE SPIKES
 (ACTORS) KEVIN BERNE



From Noel Coward's hauntingly funny *Blithe Spirit* - part of a series of four plays making up the company's season.

EYE ON

Cal Shakes Rocks

"Is this a dagger which I see before me?" Only if you miss California Shakespeare Theater ("Cal Shakes") Summer Shakespeare Conservatories performances. Founded in 1974, Cal Shakes, the award-winning, nationally recognized regional theater, located in the East Bay city of Orinda, emphasizes arts education as much as it prides itself on its performances. Its annual program is a blend of the Great Bard's work and other playbill masterpieces.

DISH LOCATION

Un"fu"getable Pho

It is no accident that you can find some 15 pho soup shops within Santa Clara's 18 square miles. The reason is because Santa Clara County is home to the second largest Vietnamese population in the country. In large part, the 120,000-strong inhabitants immigrated in two waves in the '70s. And with them, came their cuisine, in particular, pho.

Pronounced "fuh," the soup consists of ruler-length rice noodles and mixed cuts of thinly sliced beef, tendon, and tripe, augmented with a

side dish of uncooked bean sprouts, sliced green chili peppers, Thai basil, mint, and quarters of fresh lime. "Traditionally," says Nuh Bu, who works at the family-owned Pho Khang in Santa Clara, "pho was a breakfast dish." Much has changed. Now, in the South Bay, pho is eaten day and night, and according to Bu, "the broth is much lighter and contains less fat and no MSG. It gives the broth a cleaner taste." What constitutes good pho comes down to just that. Variations to the soup are mainly found in the width of the noodles. Pho served

from a kitchen cooking in a northern Vietnamese style contains wider noodles, which also denote that they've been homemade. As for its popularity, Bu concludes that "these pho shops all cook with their family recipes. More than being cheap and filling your belly, I think it has because the soup tastes like home."

Pho Khang
2207 Tasman Drive
phokang.com
408-988-6688

Pho Thanh Long Restaurant
2450 El Camino Real
408-983-0888



- The Gilroy Garlic Festival {July 26-28}
- Russian River Valley Grape to Glass Weekend {August 17}
- Monterey Jazz Festival {September 20-22}
- Sonoma County Harvest Fair {October 4-6}
- Yountville Festival of Lights {November 29-January 31, 2014}
- Calistoga Lighted Tractor Parade {December 7}

ON FOOT

The Monterey Peninsula

Get familiar with this stretch of coast the way nature intended, all within a half-hour drive of Cannery Row.

JACKS PEAK COUNTY PARK

Complete with vistas of Monterey Bay and Carmel Valley, as well as one of the only remaining natural stands of Monterey pine in the United States, the park offers 11 trails that cover eight and a half miles full of easy strolls and picturesque picnic spots. It also boasts the highest point in the Monterey Peninsula.

FYI The self-guided Skyline Nature Trail leads to the best views and fossil sites from the Miocene epoch.

co.monterey.ca.us/parks/jackspeak.html, 888-588-2267

GARLAND RANCH REGIONAL PARK

From the willow-covered banks of the Carmel River to the insanely steep Snively's Ridge Trail and its rewards of spectacular views of Monterey Bay and the Santa Lucia Mountains, the park gives visitors the chance to experience the Carmel Valley as it once was.

FYI The 4,462 acres are sprinkled with everything from Rumsien Indian habit sites to homesteader and logging-site remains.

mprpd.org, 831-372-3196



Pinnacle Point sits at the northernmost tip of Point Lobos State Reserve; (below) Big Sur, where the Santa Lucia Mountains rise abruptly from the Pacific.

POINT LOBOS STATE NATURAL RESERVE

Often called "the crown jewel of California's State Park System," Point Lobos gives hikers the choice of both short scenic walks or longer rambles within its 30 acres of four major networks. Atop many of the cliffs, you'll find great views of the Carmel coastline and Pebble Beach.

FYI The Bird Island Trail around China Cove and Gibson Beach has great views of a Brandt's Cormorant nesting area.

parks.ca.gov, 831-624-4909

MONTEREY BAY COASTAL RECREATION TRAIL

This paved, waterfront path stretches 18 miles from Castroville to Pacific Grove, following the same route as the old Southern Pacific Railway, including right by all the attractions of Cannery Row.

FYI Need a pick-me-up? Stop in at Cafe La Strada on Cannery Row for some fresh baked pastries and Northern California's very own Peet's Coffee.

monterey.org, 831-646-3866



(OLD COMPUTER) MARK RICHARDS

DOUBLE TAKE

To Save and Protect

Taking action to preserve and safeguard what we hold dear motivates certain people in extraordinary ways. For award-winning chef James Waller of Schooners Coastal Kitchen in Monterey, his decade-long partnership with the influential Seafood Watch program, which produces sustainable seafood advisory lists for U.S. waters, comes down to educating consumers on what fish to eat and when. In the case of Stuart and Barbara Homer, founders of Golden State Greyhound Adoption in Walnut Creek, saving these four-legged track stars from a poisoned syringe has meant leading the innocents of a dying industry toward humane retirement and along the way creating a community of like-minded guardians.



California's Pacific kelp forests; (bottom) the iconic Apple model, a mite heavier than your MacBook Air.

CHEF JAMES WALLER

Schooners Coastal Kitchen

Q. A MOVEMENT LIKE THIS BEGINS WITH WHAT?

A. We started asking hard questions. Where was our fish coming from? Until 1999, when Seafood Watch was launched, chefs were bringing in what was cool, like white sea bass. They were also ordering what was cheap, like Asian shrimp. In a sense, we were moving the problem further afield instead of tackling what was in front of us.

Q. SO, THE FUTURE OF THE WORLD'S BIOMASS IS IN THE HANDS OF RESTAURANT PATRONS?

A. Through this program, we educate patrons on the kinds of fish that are available, how they are caught, and where. And they've responded. It's a fact that chefs have more influence on local markets by our buying practices than supermarkets do, and that is influenced more and more by our diners' tastes and beliefs.

Q. TO YOUR MIND, WHAT HAS BEEN ITS BIGGEST SUCCESS?

A. When my customers walk in and order black cod, which has traditionally been considered "bycatch" (incidentally caught) and is an incredibly delicious fish, I know that the North Atlantic swordfish is getting a rest and replenishing itself.

schoonersmonterey.com

STUART HOMER

Golden State Greyhound Adoption

Q. WHY GREYHOUNDS?

A. Back in 2002, when we took in our first greyhound, we had no expectations. We just wanted to make it happy. When you think about the fact that these animals have never mixed with any other breeds, that's remarkable. And to be so friendly and affectionate really endears them to you.

Q. IS IT CRUELTY OR EXPEDIENCY THAT DICTATES THE RACING INDUSTRY'S METHODS TOWARD THE DOGS?

A. It happens as soon as they're born. Wrong shape – gone. Not fast enough – gone. Or when they've raced and start slowing down – gone. These dogs are gladiators. If they don't win, they die.

Q. IN THE PROGRAM'S 10-YEAR EXISTENCE, YOU'VE RESCUED SOME 1,100 GREYHOUNDS. WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED ALONG THE WAY?

A. I wouldn't call it "rescuing"; we've given them homes with people who love them. Our involvement transcends dogs. It is about the lives of the people that have changed by coming into contact with a greyhound.

goldengreyhounds.com

THREE EASY BITES

Info Aged

Intel and Hewlett-Packard, like Silicon Valley's other high-tech companies, weren't always the industry titans they are today. At Mountain View's Computer History Museum, see their first tentative tottering steps on display and get the lowdown on computer lore. We give you three quick bites.

- A year after Hewlett-Packard's founding, Walt Disney Pictures used eight of HP's computers for the sound effects in the 1940 movie *Fantasia*.

- On September 9, 1945, the very first computer bug was documented: A moth flew into the Harvard Mark II and temporarily interrupted operation of the massive computer.

- Founded by Stanford graduate students Jerry Yang and David Filo in Stanford in 1994, Yahoo started out as "Jerry's Guide to the World Wide Web" before being renamed.

1401 North Shoreline Boulevard, Mountain View, computerhistory.org, 650-810-1010



HAUTE HIGH-TECH

For lovers of the latest and seekers of the sleek.

BY KRISTIN BURGESS



ROMANTIC LENS

Ilott Vintage refurbished range finder cameras are the Chevy "woodies" of the photographic world. The leather camera bodies were replaced with a premium wood veneer, a vintage touch that makes them less of a tool and more of an accessory.

Ilott, starting at \$1,725, ilottvintage.com

COVERT CASE

Talking in the shower? Texting in a rainstorm? Fear not; this award-winning coating that is completely undetectable to the eye waterproofs your entire mobile device, no matter which brand.

Liquipel, starting at \$59, liquipel.com



CRAFTY COFFEE

Powered by a butane burner, the Yama Tabletop Coffee Siphon employs the basic principles of vacuum force and vapor pressure to extract maximum flavor from the grounds, resulting in a rich, sublimely smooth cup of joe.

Northwest Glass Designs, \$65, northwestglass.com



IN THE BAG

Thin, laser-cut fabrics and a high-efficiency solar panel in the front flap make the Solar Messenger from O-Range the ultimate briefcase. Look stylish and charge your electronics while you walk.

O-Range, \$260, o-range.com



GET WINE INFORMED

The free VintageChart+ app by Wine Spectator knows that Monterey's pinot noirs were particularly complex in 2007 and that Sonoma chardonnay had a higher acidity in '05. More interested in wine-and-food pairings? Download Natalie MacLean's Wine Picks & Pairings app.

iTunes, free, itunes.apple.com



(WET) IPHOND; SETH TAYLOR; (COFFEE) NORTHWEST GLASS DESIGNS, INC.; (IPHONE APP) WINE SPECTATOR; (VINTAGE CHART APP) (BAG) O-RANGE S.R.L.

POINT TO POINT

SAN FRANCISCO TO BODEGA BAY

Cut a track that hugs the coast along shoreline highway to places Jack London roamed and where the destination is as good as the journey.

BY MICHAEL PERSSON

Road trips are made of two things: what you pack and the split-second moxie to deviate from your chosen course. So grab a pair of binoculars, a copy of *My California: Journeys* by Great Writers to spit some keenly written observations to whomever has the wheel, and fix some black tape over the rearview mirror. Because looking back on this 70-mile journey filled with dramatic beaches, groves of giant redwoods, and exceptional local food is not an option.

San Francisco to Sausalito

Setting out rested from a splendid night at the Hotel Drisco (hoteldrisco.com, 800-634-7277) and passing through the Arguello Gate in Presidio Heights, catch the fragrance coming from the grove of eucalyptus trees lining both sides of the road. Farther on, it's time to cross that modern wonder of the world that just turned 75: the Golden Gate Bridge. Entering Marin County, the Waldo Tunnel lies agape with its distinctive rainbows painted on the archways at the ends of the bores by Caltrans employee Robert Halligan – a properly quirky send-off from the City by the Bay. Peel off the highway here to take the helter-skelter road down to Sausalito. Since the '60s, Sausalito and surrounding

OFFSHOOT For the Stephen King-phile, stop at the **pet cemetery** at McDowell Avenue and Crissy Field Avenue in San Francisco. Best headstone? "Here lies Trouble. He was no trouble."

area have been the domain of the region's most colorful (Jerry Garcia), as well as its most new agey (nutritionist Dean Ornish). There's a stroll to be had where the ferry from San Francisco docks. Amble through the tiny Vina del Mar park, named



Sausalito to Stinson Beach

Leaving Sausalito via Route 1, you won't encounter another traffic light until Fort Bragg, 160 miles up the coast. But don't think that means you'll be off the brake pedal either. The road performs an endless pattern of soft-scoop swirls that dips into lush canyons, then climbs to wind-beaten bluffs, where, on a clear day, you might spot the Farallon Islands out over the Pacific, home to one of the largest seabird nesting areas – and great white shark breeding grounds – in American waters. The road straightens coming into Stinson Beach. But straight, nay conventional, is an

OFFSHOOT You'll feel like you've landed somewhere mythological when pulling in to the 240 acres of old growth redwood forest in **Muir Woods** (nps.gov/muwo/index.htm). John Muir, the patron saint of American preservation, would have agreed. He even said it himself when he wrote, "The clearest way into the universe is through a forest wilderness."

adjective least befitting of this summering community – where else can you find a bookstore that sells linens? Beyond Stinson Beach Books (415-868-0700), the 3.5-mile beach is wildly popular among city escapist for the finest stretch of sand along this rocky coast.



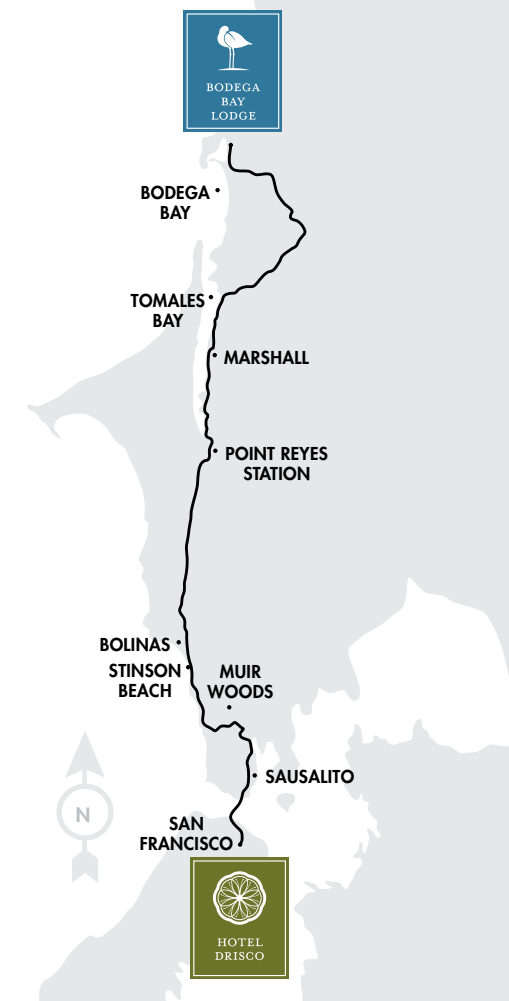
(Clockwise from this picture) The rugged coastline of Point Reyes was as much of a graveyard in the days of sail as it is a scenic stretch of wonder; Muir Woods's big lumber; the sentinel of the Golden Gate strait.



App over Map

Trapster (trapster.com) boasts a community of more than 16 million users who have reported a total of more than 5.8 million speed traps across the world.

With **Roadside America** (roadsideamerica.com), your kitsch isn't limited to Route 66. Exhibit A on this stretch of Highway 1: the Taj Mahal houseboat in Sausalito.



Point Reyes Station to Bodega Bay

Flanked on the right by hills of grazing dairy cows and on the left by a sweeping view of a virtually uninhabited Tomales

OFFSHOOT **Freestone Vineyards** (12747 El Camino Bodega, Freestone, freestonevineyards.com, 707-874-1010) is the place to pick up some pinot. This young vineyard, once the domain of grazing dairy cows, has found a perfect climate that stresses the grape to yield a formidable flavor. Try their 2009 vintage, which "could easily develop over the next six years, but it's pretty compelling now," says *Wine Enthusiast*.

Bay, there is a sense that perhaps the date of your arrival, here, could be off by 200 or 300 years. Sir Francis Drake is believed to have stopped just over the Point Reyes headland for repairs amid his explorations in 1579 (hence, that other bay's name, Drakes Bay), but the only stopping to be done on this stretch of road is 15 minutes away

Stinson Beach to Point Reyes Station

From this point, the journey changes. Instead of riding above the ruggedness, you are now deep in it, whirring along the wetlands and tidal planes of Bolinas Lagoon. You are also driving right over the San Andreas Fault. The town of Olema was thought to be the epicenter of the 1906 San Francisco earthquake.

OFFSHOOT The headlands and beaches of the **Point Reyes National Seashore** (nps.gov/pore/index.htm, 415-464-5100) offer excellent viewing of all creatures, marine or terrestrial. Catch elk in their natural state at the **Tule Elk Reserve** on Tomales Point. Rutting season begins at the end of July through the middle of October. From the shore, observe the telltale blows of gray whales during their annual migration – best between mid-January and mid-March.

Now, culinary shock waves are emitting two-and-a-half miles away in Point Reyes Station. Bovine Bakery (thebovinebakery.com, 415-663-9420), with its noteworthy apricot sourdough with pecans, and Café Reyes (415-663-9493) are just some of the celebrity

in the town of Marshall. The Marshall Store (themarshallstore.com, 415-663-1339) is the northernmost and latest of the three celebrated oyster shacks perched on pylons above the shore. Inside, you'll find the bay's beloved bivalve served up any which way you like, as long as it's fresh. The highway then cuts a semi-circuitous route inland through the town of Tomales (population 250) and doesn't side up to the water again until Bodega Bay. The day should be drawing to a close and a celebratory drink beside the outdoor fire pit at the quintessential coastal retreat of the Bodega Bay Lodge (bodegabaylodge.com, 707-875-3525), followed by dinner built from the plate up by area ingredients and artisans at its Duck Club Restaurant, might just be the final touch to the California dream for your day on the road. **W**

AN OAKY FINISH

When is a wine barrel not a wine barrel? Pull up a chair and see for yourself.

BY RONI REINO

Made in the style of a steamer deck chair, this folding barrel stave chair is a handsome testament to salvaged repurposing.



Sure, taking home a case of Wine Country's finest cabernet or pinot

grigio from your vineyard vacay is as easy as popping a cork; however, when it's gone, it's gone. So, why not return with something the wine was aged in, like a handcrafted table or chair made with the same barrels in which your Corison Kronos cabernet matured? Northern California furniture maker Whit McLeod's signature pieces, made from salvaged 70-gallon oak wine barrels,

are the gifts of wine that keep on giving.

McLeod began dismantling casks for the purpose of repurposing in 1991 in northern Sonoma County. Today, he gathers his barrels from six local wineries, including Fetzer in Mendocino County and the Rubicon Estate Winery in Rutherford, among other sources. You can discover the others by looking on the underside of, say, his end table for the

name and brand of wine stamped on each one. All pieces are made to order and go through an 8- to 16-week production process, during which McLeod and his two craftsmen attend to every stage through to completion.

McLeod's award-winning designs are also more than just a nod to the grape; they're an attractive way to promote sustainable living. "I try to preserve the wood's second life as a barrel, and its first life as a tree," he

says. The 54-year-old, who before furniture making was a wildlife biologist, found he could create contemporary pieces without dwindling natural resources: "I feel we capture the heart of the Arts and Crafts movement while preserving the provenance of the wood in a piece of furniture to be cherished for generations."

whitmcleod.com, 707-822-7307

SILICON VALLEY, WE HAVE LIFTOFF

The latest "Great Race" has the titans of technology picking up where NASA grounded to a halt. With mission control in the hands of those who made high-tech a part of our every minute, is the final frontier the next dot-com boom?

BY SANJIV BHATTACHARYA



PETER CANCLINI

CHRIS THOMPSON/SPACE



(Clockwise from right) SpaceX became the first commercial company to safely send a ship into orbit and back in 2010; Tesla Motors and Paypal founder Elon Musk heads the list of NewSpace heavies; a mock-up of a rover concept vying for \$30 million in Google Lunar X Prize money.



year at Stanford Graduate School of Business, Silicon Valley Space Center served as an industry consultant that brought together businesses that are presently operating in four separate economic development zones in space – suborbital (50 miles above sea level), orbital (300 miles), geostationary (25,000 miles), and lunar (250,000 miles).

“It’s not that Elon Musk is spending his own money,” says Casey. “He has investors.” Musk says he put in \$100 million from his own checkbook to start SpaceX, raising a further \$100 million from investors – because, as it turns out, space is a growing, multi-faceted market with an array of untapped resources and profits. Even before the historic launch of *Falcon 9*, SpaceX had signed contracts worth \$4 billion for conducting future missions

The Google Lunar X Prize offers \$20 million to the first team who can land a robot on the moon, drive it 500 yards, and send video and data back to Earth.

into space on behalf of private and government organizations. One lucrative arena is space tourism. Of the 500 tickets on sale for the Virgin Galactic suborbital flights, unofficial sources estimate that almost all have sold out, at \$200,000 a shot – passengers are said to include Angelina Jolie, Stephen Hawking, and Paris Hilton.

But it is equally popular to send non-human payloads into microgravity environments, anything from small scientific experiments (space as a laboratory) to whole satellites. A Houston-based company called NanoRacks charges \$25,000 to put a cubic payload of 10cm X 10cm X 10cm on the International Space Station for 30 days.

“The killer products that will come out of microgravity are yet to be discovered,” says Casey. “But this industry is like the early ‘90s with the Internet. Back then, we were still building the infrastructure. No one knew what the applications would be. No one imagined that Facebook and Twitter would be so huge.”

A NEW NASA?

For those who shed a tear when the shuttle was retired, there is much to lift the spirits about the NewSpace era. The commercial sector stands to serve as a shot in the arm for NASA. Rather than shrink the agency, it frees it up. Following SpaceX’s triumphant launch, NASA Administrator Charles Bolden declared that it would “revolutionize the way we carry out space exploration, with the private sector taking over responsibility for transportation to the International Space Station (ISS) – and this will free NASA up to focus on the really hard stuff, like sending astronauts to an asteroid. And eventually on to Mars.”

In other words, private industry would, among other things, step into the “space taxi” role and release NASA to do what it does best: to boldly go where no man has gone before.

Ultimately, the NewSpace revolution won’t be technological, but economic. Between private firms and NASA, there is a symbiotic relationship that intertwines in all sorts of ways. On the one hand, NASA is often a customer, helping to support these businesses through commerce. It has a cargo delivery contract with Musk’s SpaceX worth \$1.6 billion, for instance, whereby it pays SpaceX, as it did with its May 22nd launch, to deliver payloads to the ISS. On the other hand, NASA provides incentives for research. In this capacity it becomes a buyer, as in the case of the Innovative Lunar Demonstration Data program, a NASA-funded initiative that

One could quibble about when it happened, the exact date when the world changed, but few would dispute that when it comes to space, we have indeed entered a new era altogether. For 50 years, spaceflight was the preserve of governments and state agencies, but now, for the first time, it is the domain of private enterprise, individual entrepreneurs, and the wild dogs of the free market.

This new era is known as the NewSpace era, a term coined in the late ‘90s when the private sector made its first inroads into the space industry. But it was spring 2012 that things really took off – literally.

On May 22, 2012, Elon Musk, one of the founders of Paypal and Tesla Motors, a Silicon Valley-based electric car company, successfully launched the first commercial spacecraft in history. *Falcon 9*, an unmanned rocket built by Musk’s company, SpaceX, lifted off from Cape Canaveral the way Apollo and Shuttle missions had done so many times before. John P. Holdren, chief science advisor for President Barack Obama, said of the launch carrying some 1,000 pounds of food, clothing, and water to the International Space Station: “Every launch into space is a thrilling event, but this one is especially exciting because it represents the potential of a new era in American spaceflight.”

But Musk isn’t the only high-tech space adventurer with his eye on the skies. Last year, Jeff Bezos, Amazon’s CEO, ran tests

on his own suborbital spacecraft, *New Shepherd*. And, meanwhile, Microsoft cofounder Paul Allen is busy working with Stratolaunch Systems on a giant airplane with a wingspan of 380 feet (longer than a football field) that needs a 12,000-foot-long runway to launch into space. And then there are Google’s founders, Larry Page and Sergey Brin, who have teamed up with the X Prize Foundation (a nonprofit that creates competitions which incentivizes innovation) to create the Google Lunar X Prize, worth \$30 million in prize money, for which some 25 teams are presently competing from all around the world.

Intrepid ambition aside, what these endeavors have in common is money, the kind of sums only the tech billionaires and piggybacking venture capitalists could cough up. The vision from these people who have created the technology that defines our present is a future, they believe, that is as much in their hands as it is out of this world. But can Silicon Valley manufacture another bubble that has as much sway outside of our orbit as it has within?

HIGH-ROLLER TOURISM AND TRUCKING

Part of the paradigm shift is that private spaceflight is an attractive investment now,” says Sean Casey, one of the founders of the Silicon Valley Space Center, a “business accelerator” group that connects investors to entrepreneurs. Last

Seats on Virgin Galactic’s suborbital flights cost \$200,000 a pop. Passengers are said to include Angelina Jolie and Stephen Hawking.



SPACEX

offers up to \$30 million in contracts for research – NASA as a buyer of ideas, technology, and data.

The traffic, though, goes both ways. NASA also acts as a partner for private industry, available for hire by NewSpace companies who want to access the agency's expertise. Moon Express is one such company, a private concern that's competing for the Google Lunar X Prize.

"We're turning the business equation upside down," says Bob Richards, CEO of Moon Express. "Rather than a large government entity putting out a requirement document that the private sector responds to, we are able to define our own business case and pick and choose the best that NASA has to offer and fits with our needs."

Part of the challenge for NewSpace companies is bridging the cultural gap between private and state business. While private enterprise is profit driven and beholden to investors – and, potentially, the wild ambitions of a single billionaire – NASA's objectives are lofty and concerned with furthering knowledge and the national good. And yet the commercial sector has the advantage of being smaller, nimbler, and more autonomous, where NASA can be a groaning government bureaucracy, subject to the whims of Congress.

The most telling distinction between the two cultures, how-

"Rather than [the private sector responding to] government [requests], we're defining our own business case and choosing the best that NASA has to offer that fits our needs." –Bob Richards, Moon Express CEO

ever, is their appetite for risk. "The way NASA works is to reduce the risk even by infinitesimally smaller increments," says Alexandra Hall, the senior director of the Google Lunar X

Prize. "If it's going to cost them twice as much to reduce the risk by even a tiny amount, they can make that call, because they don't have the same cost pressures. For the entrepreneurial side, the equation is different. I'm not suggesting that we're going to see lots of deaths and things, but I do think that the culture of Silicon Valley is that you learn from your mistakes, and great innovation can come from that."

ONLY BIG PLAYERS CAN PLAY

Hall is a prominent and high-profile voice for the NewSpace community. She helms the biggest X Prize to date, and the X Prize carries huge significance in this world. No single event paved the way for the NewSpace era more than Burt Rutan's 2004 flight in SpaceShipOne, the first ever suborbital flight by a private individual, which won the \$5 million Ansari X Prize (an award specifically for spaceflight). The cost of funding the project, however, came in at two-and-a-half times that.

The Google Lunar X Prize was announced three years later in 2007 and stands as the largest incentive prize of all time. It offers



\$20 million to the first team who can send an unmanned flight to the moon, land a robot, drive it 500 yards, and send video and data back to the Earth. There's another \$10 million for coming in second and achieving other mission objectives. But in order to win big, you have to spend big.

As expected, the X Prize has generated tremendous excitement. Anticipating a stampede, NASA even issued guidelines in May to protect "heritage sites" on the moon from the impending cavalry of landers and robot buggies (specifically the landing sites for the Apollo 11 and Apollo 17 missions).

"We've got teams from all over the world," says Hall. "And one of these countries, like Malaysia, has no regulatory structure for space exploration at all. So they're really at the cutting edge. In America, it's like pushing an open door, but these guys have to develop the infrastructure for being a private or commercial space entity from scratch. And that was always one of the main goals of the prize: It's not just about landing on the moon; it's about creating this sea change in the space economy."

Newt Gingrich became a laughing stock when he promised moon bases if he were elected president. But on the Google Lunar X Prize website, a (somewhat cheesy) video has the clear and rousing message: Let's build bases on the moon, mine it for silicon, build giant solar panels in space, and solve our energy crisis on Earth; the moon as our savior, our very own lifebuoy. "It's not fantasy," says Hall. "NASA has people looking at in-situ resource utilization, which describes the proposed use of resources found or manufactured on other astronomical objects (the moon, Mars, asteroids, etc.) to further the goals of a space mission. There are conferences about it. Mining companies are looking at rover designs, drilling designs. You see the phrase 'from dust to thrust' a lot: How can we use the moon's resources and use it to propel rockets to send stuff back to Earth? Because we're going to reach a population when we outrun the resources of Earth."

This is what ultimately drives the space community: the conviction that mankind will be a multi-planet, inter-stellar species. The Silicon Valley Space Center's Sean Casey believes it's inevitable.

"Homo sapiens migrated out of Africa, and now we're going to migrate out of this planet," he says. "It's part of who we are. In fact, we're already multi-planet. We've sent rovers to Mars!"

So when will moon-mining become a reality? Casey won't say. But it's telling that he quotes researcher and scientist Roy Amara.

"Predictions about the future are always wrong," he says. "But when it comes to space, it's worth remembering what [Roy] Amara said: 'We tend to overestimate the effect of technology in the short run and underestimate the effort in the long run.'" *W*

What ultimately drives the NewSpace community? The conviction that mankind will be a multi-planet, inter-stellar species.

(Clockwise from opposite, top) Dragon awaits its opportunity to roar in SpaceX's hangar; a private craft connects to the International Space Station; Moon Express CEO Bob Richards; celebrating liftoff.



Looking for a Silicon Valley getaway? Found adjacent to Stanford University and Palo Alto, the Stanford Park Hotel has 163 deluxe rooms, and a lively bar and dining scene at the Menlo Grill Bistro & Bar that all go to making this swanky retreat a bona fide discovery. stanfordparkhotel.com, 650-322-1234



the
“**Doc**”
of the **Bay**

One man came to emblemize the Cannery Row of John Steinbeck’s writings; another provided the vision for the internationally acclaimed aquarium that sits at the end of the same street. One man was fictional; the other real. Both, however, were one and the same.

BY MICHAEL CHATFIELD

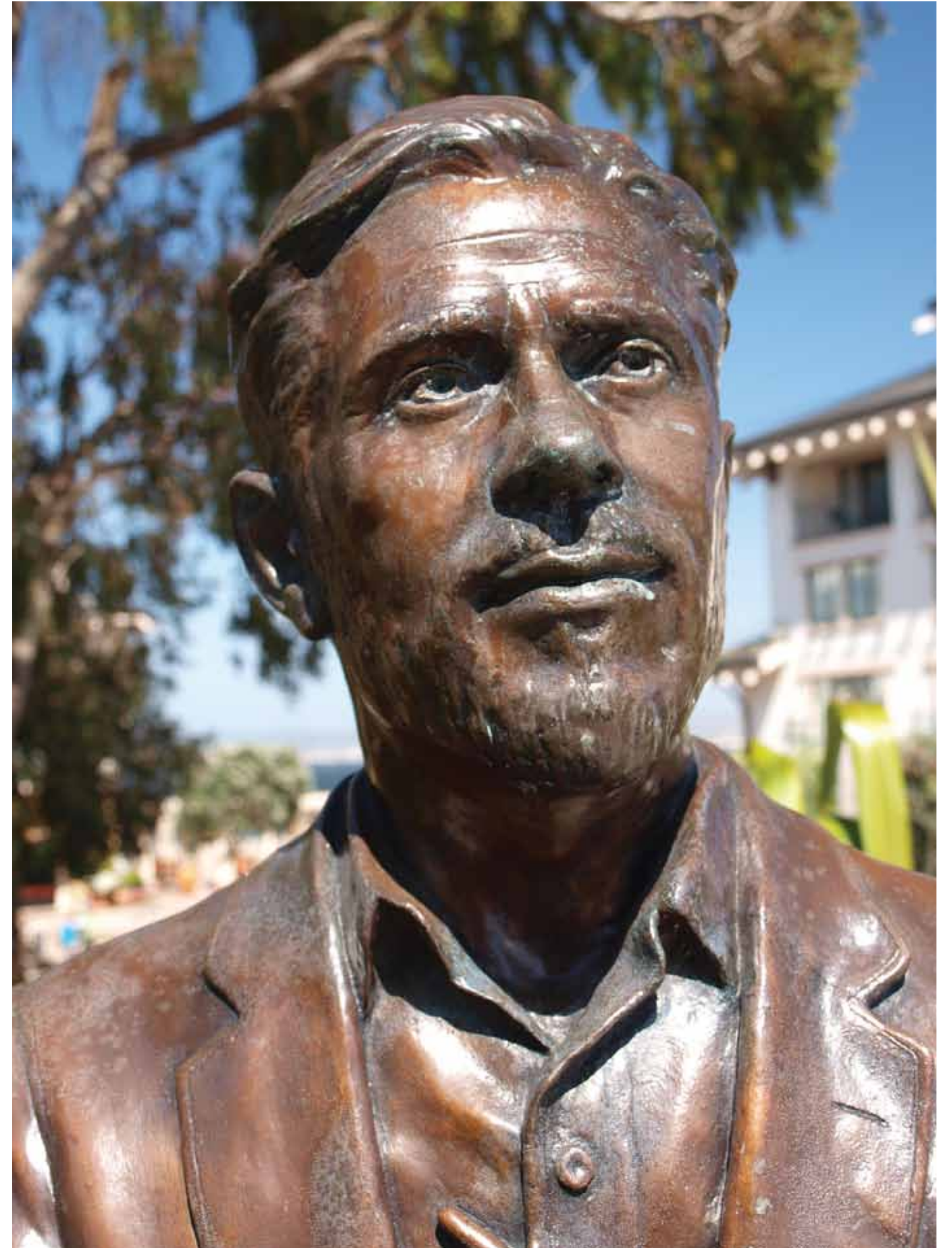
A life-sized bust of a man stands at the intersection of Drake Avenue and Wave Street in the neighborhood known as “New Monterey.” It’s away from the tourist mecca of today’s Cannery Row, in sight of the fertile Pacific waters, along the Monterey Bay Recreational Coastal Trail where the South Pacific Railroad trains used to clack. More often than not, a spray of flowers has been stuck next to the sea star in the sculpture’s left hand, placed there by locals who know the subject’s story – or think they do.

His name was Edward Flanders Robb Ricketts. Quite a handle. By all accounts, he was quite a guy. Businessman, scholar, music lover, author, handsome womanizer, philosopher, romantic, forward-thinking and essentially self-taught scientist. The man was all that – and more. He counted among his circle at least two wildly successful authors, John

Monterey’s
memorial bust
of Ricketts by
sculptor Jesse
Corsaut was
funded by the
Monterey Plaza
Hotel & Spa
in 1997.

ERIC ENNO TAMM

LEIGH SUSAN FITZ



The Intrepid Biologist

Ricketts's pioneering efforts in marine biology included the discovery of several new species. (Check out the binomial names, many of which gave clear nods to either himself or his favorite writer friend.)



{*Pycnogonum Rickettsi*, Sea Spider, 1925}



{*Hypsoblenniops Rickettsi*, Blenny, 1940}



{*Phialoba Steinbecki*, Sea Anemone, 1940}

Steinbeck and Henry Miller, and the noted mythologist Joseph Campbell, in addition to artists and other intellectual illuminati who were – and still are – attracted to the Bohemian vibe of the Monterey Peninsula. Ricketts also counted as friends the flotsam and jetsam of Cannery Row, those souls famously described by Steinbeck in his novel of that name: “[the] inhabitants are, as the man once said, ‘whores, pimps, gamblers, and sons of bitches,’ by which he meant everybody. Had the man looked through another peephole, he might have said, ‘saints and angels and martyrs and holy men,’ and he would have meant the same thing.”

Known as “Ed,” Ricketts ran a modest but grandly named company, Pacific Biological Laboratories. Smack on the water at 740 Ocean View Avenue (now 800 Cannery Row), the firm was in the business of collecting and preserving animal specimens for sale to museums and learning institutions. While engaged in this humble, workaday pursuit, Ricketts – always a thinking man – grew curious about the interaction of species in the marine environment. “Ed was a master at observation,” says Cannery Row historian and author Michael Hemp. “He was capable of seeing all the diversity of life in a tide pool – or in a human community.” Although he didn’t use the term himself until the mid-1940s, Ricketts is considered by the scientific community to be a pioneer in the field of ecology.

He had little formal training. His early life was somewhat knock-about. Born in Chicago in 1897, he studied zoology at the University of Chicago (but didn’t earn a degree), served in the Army Medical Corps, and spent several months walking around the American south from Indiana to Florida, an experience he chronicled in a 1925 *Travel* magazine article “Vagabonding through Dixie.” He came to the Monterey Peninsula in 1923 with his then-wife, Ann, settling initially in Pacific Grove, raising a son and two daughters.

“There was an incredible magnetism to the man,” says Eric Enno Tamm, author of *Beyond the Outer Shores: The Untold Story of Ed Ricketts, the Pioneering Ecologist Who Inspired John Steinbeck and Joseph Campbell*, “evident by the type of people attracted to him. Considering the type of place Cannery Row was back then – dirty, smelly, industrial – it was an unusual place to find artists and philosophers. The fact that people clustered around the lab speaks volumes about the kind of person Ed was.”

A FITTING LEGACY

With infinite care Doc scrubbed out a big aquarium, carpeted it with sea sand, and laid in stones populated with sponges and hydroids and anemones. He planted seaweeds and caught little crabs and eels and tide pool Johnnys. He carried buckets of sea water from the beach and set up a pump to circulate the water from tank to aquarium and back. He considered every factor within his knowledge – relations of plant and animal life, food, filtering, oxygenation. –John Steinbeck, Sweet Thursday (1954)

Nearly 30 years after *Sweet Thursday* was published, and albeit on a much larger scale, a group of four marine biologists followed Doc’s methods, as described above, nearly to a tee when they created the Monterey Bay Aquarium at the end of Cannery Row. The character of Doc is based – not at all loosely – on the author’s close friend, Ed Ricketts, a keen observer who brought a philosophical bent to the study of ocean organisms. So how did a fictional character become the inspiration for a world-renowned public aquarium and research facility?

Well, the real-life character wrote a book. Ricketts’s *Between Pacific Tides* was published in 1939 and after five editions remains relevant. “If you are a marine biologist, absolutely, you own a copy,” insists



Steve Webster, one of the four founders of the Monterey Bay Aquarium, where he served as senior marine biologist until his retirement in 2004. “Ricketts was way ahead of his time.”

William Gilly, professor of biology at Stanford University, agrees. “His biggest influence on the field was the development of a holistic vision that was not en vogue at the time,” he says. “Rather than merely cataloging species, he was interested in how they formed communities, how organisms form associations.” In fact, Stanford University declined to publish Ricketts’s work because it didn’t align with then-current scientific thinking. “Ricketts believed that a complex system wasn’t best studied by merely breaking it down and looking at the separate parts,” adds Gilly, contrasting the formal methods of the day.

But it was published, and the influence it had on the aquarium was profound. “From day one, when we were planning this aquarium, the arrangement of the displays was directly related to the way that book was organized,” Webster says. “There was never another approach discussed.” The book is arranged by habitats: Protected Outer Coast, Open Coast, Bay and Estuary, and Between and Beyond the Tides. “Although the habitats chosen are different,” Webster adds, “the aquarium experience is structured in the same manner.”

“Ricketts left a legacy for today’s marine biologists,” adds Hemp, the Cannery Row historian. “In *Between Pacific Tides* and *The Log from the Sea of Cortez* (originally coauthored with Steinbeck), he created a baseline that current biologists use to determine how the environment has changed.” Hemp conducted scores of interviews while researching his book, *Cannery Row: the History of John Steinbeck’s Old Ocean View Avenue*. “Almost every marine biologist I spoke with told me they were driven to their interest in the discipline by Ed Ricketts and *Between Pacific Tides*,” he says. “It’s a universal truth.”

“DOC” RICKETTS: MAN OR FICTION?

Steinbeck describing Ed Ricketts in “About Ed Ricketts,” the title to the appendix of *Log from the Sea of Cortez*: “He was half Christ and half goat.”

Steinbeck describing “Doc” in *Cannery Row*: “He wears a beard and his face is half Christ and half satyr and his face tells the truth.”

Steinbeck on Ed: “He was a great teacher and a great lecher – an immortal

(Above, left to right) Ricketts’s Pacific Biological Laboratories, where he set up shop in 1923; a school of anchovies sets the mood above the heads of those visiting the Monterey Bay Aquarium.

(ILLUSTRATIONS) ERIC ENNO TAMM

(BUILDING EXTERIOR) LEIGH SUSAN FITZ; (AQUARIUM) MONTEREY BAY AQUARIUM/RANDY WILDER



LEIGH SUSAN FITZ

(BREAKING THROUGH) UC PRESS; (SWEET THURSDAY) PENGUIN BOOKS LIMITED; (BEYOND THE OUTER SHORES) ERIC ENNO TAMM; (CANNERY ROW) PENGUIN BOOKS

The scientist's former lab is now a gentlemen's club, perhaps fitting that where his fictional counterpart, Doc, drank his "Old Tennis Shoes" whiskey, people still enjoy a similar nip.

who loved women."

Steinbeck on Doc: "It is said that [Doc] has helped many a girl out of one trouble and into another."

Steinbeck on Ed: "He unequivocally hated to get his head wet... In the shower he wore an oilskin sou'wester – a ridiculous sight."

Steinbeck on Doc: "He has one great fear – that of getting his head wet, so that summer or winter he ordinarily wears a rain hat."

There are dozens of such parallels between Ed Ricketts and Doc in Steinbeck's oeuvre. Obviously, Steinbeck borrowed heavily from his buddy's personality in crafting the character. And, in at least one way, it's a stroke of luck that Steinbeck did write about his friend; Ricketts's groundbreaking work in marine biology might have been lost to the tides of time had the spotlight not shone on Doc.

"It gets hard sometimes to separate the literary Ricketts from the real one," says Webster, the aquarium cofounder. Steinbeck freely described himself as a "shameless magpie," referring to his habit of mimicking people's speech patterns and glomming onto pieces of their stories and personalities. His use of Ricketts as the model for "Doc" in *Cannery Row* and *Sweet Thursday* is the perfect example of his literary aping.

There are a few souls alive who knew Ricketts. One is Carmel retiree – and former part-owner of the building that housed the lab – Frank Wright, now 93, who palled around with him in the mid-1940s. "Ed was flattered about being famous as a fictional character," he says. "People knocked on his door all the time: 'Are you Doc?' 'No, I'm Ed Ricketts.'" Wright says that he was unfailingly polite. "When people came by, he talked to them," he adds. "If they were interesting enough, he asked them in."

"In an odd twist of fate," writes Ricketts biographer Tamm, "there's probably more of Ed Ricketts in John Steinbeck's canon than all the scientific journals of the twentieth century. A man who dedicated his life to collecting facts about the natural world has become, himself, a fiction."

That bronze likeness denotes the spot where the flesh-and-blood Ed Ricketts met his demise. Details are unclear, but we do know that on May 8, 1948, his 1938 Buick sedan was struck by the Del Monte Express train's cowcatcher at Drake and Wave. Gravely injured, Ricketts lingered for three days before giving up the ghost. True to his altruistic nature, when pulled from his mutilated automobile, his first words were "don't blame the engineer."

Would the Monterey community have bothered to erect a metal memorial to Ricketts if John Steinbeck had not based a classic American literary character on his buddy? Would Ricketts's contributions to marine biology have justified his immortality? Probably not. So just who are those love offerings for, anyway: Ed or Doc? Romantic hearts would love to think that the flowers in that cold hand commemorate the life of a compassionate and gentle soul – a universally loved man with a kind word, a sympathetic ear and a cold beer for all who crossed his path.

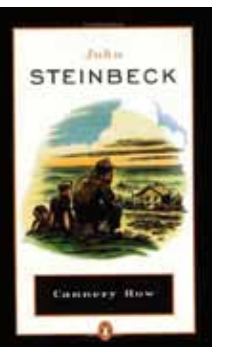
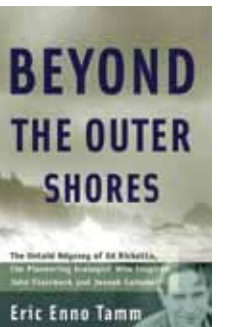
No doubt that's how Ricketts – and Doc – would choose to see it. *W*



Seeking ocean-side comfort? Monterey Plaza Hotel & Spa combines elegant European architecture with sweeping coastal views found in this stylish ocean resort retreat, located on Cannery Row just three blocks away from the world-renowned Monterey Bay Aquarium and Doc Ricketts's lab. montereyplazahotel.com, 831-646-1700

Author, Subject, Character

For evidence of Ricketts's life well lived, you only have to look as far as the books that were written by, about, and inspired by him.



Walking Up an Appetite

The opportunity to sally about one of Wine Country's most food-filled towns is a rare treat. The chance to have one of Yountville's culinary cornerstones act as guide? Well, now you've fallen into wonderland.

BY KIRSTEN JONES NEFF

It is a sparkling Thursday afternoon in May, and I have tumbled down a rabbit hole. Like Alice before me, I have arrived in an alternative reality, but – lucky for me! – this rabbit hole led to a truly lovely wonderland, a thumbnail of a village in the center of Wine Country, populated by people whose life work revolves around making or providing some of the most delicious food and wine on the planet. Not a bad adventure for a Thursday afternoon.

I've landed in Yountville, a small town made famous for and by a concentrated population of superstar chefs. Chef Bob Hurley, whose namesake restaurant, Hurley's, anchors a pearl necklace of restaurants and tasting rooms that make up the one-and-a-half square miles of this Napa Valley hamlet, has kindly agreed to show me around. A longtime resident and local hero, Hurley greets me warmly when I arrive at his place. Ten years ago, Hurley built his



A big night at Chef Michael Chiarello's Bottega, a restaurant the proprietor calls an "artist's workshop."

FRANKIE FRANKENY



(Left to right) Yountville's culinary historian Chef Bob Hurley; inside Kollar Chocolates; haute pizza at Redd Wood; the bountiful valley of Yountville; coffee and doughnuts, French Laundry style.



dream restaurant in a former bus stop in the center of town, a building now marked by ivy-trimmed pillars and a large European-style patio. When he opened his doors, he hoped to create a notably relaxed and "fanatically local" restaurant. Now, he says, his business is "almost exactly what I wanted it to be," a place where

customers feel at home as they are wowed by delicacies, such as braised wild boar with truffle-scented polenta, and black bucatini with exotic mushrooms, pan-seared sea scallops, and shrimp in a soy-yuzu chardonnay sauce. I notice a bevy of "homey"

touches near the maître d's station – extra shawls and reading glasses for moments when customers find themselves chilly or visually challenged. As we head toward the dining room, servers stride past in the opposite direction, carrying gorgeous grilled fish (today it is a Spanish mackerel) and Black Angus burgers. They are on their way to the plein-air patio where diners soak up the view of vine-striped hills rolling toward a flawless blue sky.

When I ask Hurley to tell me about this town, where he and his wife, Cynthia, settled almost 25 years ago to raise their two children, he heads for the front door. "Yountville is a walking town," he tells me. "The best way to get to know it is on foot."

As we step on to the sidewalk on Washington, Yountville's main street, our fellow strollers sport business suits, baby prams, or tourist maps, but their pace is universally relaxed. People smile and wave. When a car drives by, it is slowly, and often the driver stops to say hello to a walker. Everyone seems to know Hurley, and in the first two blocks alone, three or four people greet him. We bump in to Matthew Bousquet, the young chef de cuisine at Bistro Jeanty, on his way into the restaurant to prepare for the evening meal. Homesick French nationals are said to travel great distances to eat at restaurateur Phillipe Jeanty's red-geranium-adorned café, and it is rumored that the coq au vin, perhaps with a side of their iconic pomme frites (served in a cone of white paper), will remedy the symptoms of this malady. Bousquet and Hurley agree that neighbor chefs in Yountville look out for each other. "We are a community," says Bousquet. "We want to see each other do well." Hurley adds that they will often "run next door" if they are short on, say, lemons or eggplant.

We bid Bousquet adieu and head farther south past Redd, famed chef Richard Reddington's eatery, known for what Hurley describes as "very creative" Wine Country cuisine and modern elegance. He mentions that Reddington has now opened a more casual Italian inspired pizzeria, Redd Wood, on the opposite northern side of town, jokingly known as

"NoYo" by locals.

Arriving at Veterans Memorial Park at the southern edge of the Yountville business district, we cross at a small vineyard and loop back north. When Hurley's mother lived in Yountville as a child, the town was a working-class enclave, known only for the large Veterans Home of Yountville established at the base of the hills in 1884. The tidy white-trimmed Whistlestop Shopping Center on our left was, at that time, a very popular dive bar.

"Now you are in for a treat," Hurley says, as we turn left down a cobblestone path toward a vine-covered brick building. This is V Marketplace, housed in the 142-year-old Groezinger Winery complex now known as Vintage Estate. We step in to V Wine Cellar, and meet bearded sommelier David Grega, who hands me a card explaining the ethos of the establishment. It reads, quite simply, "wine experience redefined." "But we are also known for our cigars," Grega mentions with obvious pride. He then hands me a shining silver sabre and produces a gorgeous bottle of chilled Sainsbury Blanc de Blanc. Grega explains that, in the spirit of Napoleon Bonaparte, I will now "sabre" the champagne. "The beverage must be in a high-quality bottle, and well-chilled," he says, as he demonstrates how I will find the spot where the bottle seams meet and expertly slash the blade upward along the neck to pop off the cork – and the top of the bottle, to boot. I am terrified,

but it works! We pour and toast to the perfection of sparkling wine on a warm afternoon. And to experiences redefined.

Hurley is exponentially more at ease than Alice's harried White Rabbit (he does not once check a pocket watch), but he does remind me that there is still much to see. Across the cool cobblestone interior hallway of V Marketplace, we duck in to Kollar Chocolates, where Artisan Chocolatier Chris Kollar has created a visual feast for the eyes: a case of jewel-like truffles in glossy colors and sculptural shapes and, to the right, a show kitchen allowing customers to watch the creation of these bite-sized masterpieces. I sample an emerald-hued fennel pollen truffle, then the rainbow passion fruit. This, of course, leads to the purchase of an entire box of assorted chocolate treasures, including lavender, cardamom, and a thrillingly dark espelette chili.

We circle through the back gardens of Vintage Estates, stop to chat with friends of Hurley's who are enjoying a late-afternoon lunch on the deck of celebrity chef Michael Chiarello's Bottega restaurant, then turn in to NapaStyle, Chiarello's boutique, and Paninoteca & Wine Bar. Hurley catches up with store staff, as I admire the exotic salt collection and sample spicy *calabrese salami*. Chiarello has found a gustatory and stylistic balance between hearty old-world Italian and relaxed, glamorous Napa Valley. As we leave, I ask Hurley if he thinks of Yountville as a melting pot. "Wine

1836

LOCAL LORE

George Calvert Yount plants Yountville's first vineyard.

1977

LOCAL LORE

The new Yountville dining era is born when Philippe Jeanty of Bistro Jeanty arrives to open the Domaine Chandon restaurant.

(CHEF) VICTORIA WILDER WILLIAMS 750 GROUP; (BAKERY, RESTAURANT) TUBAY YABUT PHOTOGRAPHY

(VINEYARD) PHOTO COURTESY OF NAPA VALLEY BIKE TOURS; (FOOD) DEBORAH JONES



(Clockwise from this photo) An edible Eden within The French Laundry's vegetable gardens; Hurley's restaurant; Bouchon Bakery, a Parisian-style boulangerie courtesy of Thomas Keller; down home dining at Ad Hoc.



Country cuisine is now its own entity," he responds. "I'd say we are Mediterranean influenced, but defined most by our incredible local ingredients."

Speaking of which, we have now sauntered another block north and are peering out over neat rows of early spring vegetables – kale, chard, spinach, and broccoli – shimmering in the

1999 LOCAL LORE
Based on its unique soil and climatological data, Yountville receives appellation status.

late-afternoon light. A fully realized example of the Yountville farm to table sensibility, Chef Thomas Keller's two-acre vegetable garden sits directly across from his three-Michelin-star-rated restaurant, The French Laundry. We notice a

young couple picnicking at a dreamy table tucked under an oak, just off the walking path along Washington adjacent to Keller's garden. Sigh.

The road crosses over a creek, and we arrive in buzzing NoYo. First, we turn in to Ma(i)sonry, an art gallery meets wine cellar housed in a restored century-old stone building. Proprietor Michael Polenske and furniture designer Richard Von Saal chat under statuesque olive trees in the sculpture garden in back. We take time to sample a Ma(i)sonry label Sauvignon Blanc and tour the upstairs gallery, an eclectic collection of local and international works, including the paper and oil creation of Ralph Lauren's nephew, Greg Lauren. Next, we stop next door to say hello to Hurley's friends in the Napa Valley Bike Tours, followed by quick visits to two elegant tasting rooms: first, Girard Winery, then Jessup Cellars, where Hurley's buddy wine connoisseur Christine Hale tells me how she came back to the area 15 years ago and could never find a good reason to leave.

I know the feeling. When we finally do leave Jessup, the sun is low in the sky, only accentuating the amber hues and elysian vistas. As we loop back south, Hurley waves to yet more friends

2011 LOCAL LORE
Yountville is recognized for having the highest concentration of Michelin stars (six per capita in the world).

and lists places we will visit next time I come to Yountville. In an era when much of the food world has moved online to quips and Tweets, the wonder of Yountville is decidedly gracious and personal.

I am planning to stop by Thomas Keller's Bouchon Bakery for a loaf of bread to go, when Hurley points out Pancha's of Yountville, a bar and pool hall. He explains that Pancha's is an institution and is now the only bona fide "dive bar" left in Yountville. I must at least peek in to this favorite off-the-radar watering hole for many of the Valley's celebrated chefs. Inside, I listen to a few good Yountville stories from owners and multi-generational residents Robert, Rose, and Jenny Solis. The Solises offer Hurley and I carne asada tacos straight from Tacos Garcia, a food truck in the neighborhood. The tacos, with a squeeze of lime, are the perfect parting gift, a divine way to complete a day of high-end ambling and sampling as I prepare to leave this dreamy little Michelin-star wonderland. **W**



Entertaining an epicurean escape? At the northern end of town, Napa Valley Lodge is nestled within walking distance of Ma(i)sonry, The French Laundry, and Yountville's dozens of other world-renowned restaurants, specialty shops, and wine tasting rooms. napavalleylodge.com, 888-944-3545

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oodside Hotels is an independent collection of distinguished California hotels, restaurants, and spas. We are a family-owned business comprised of dedicated and passionate associates who take great pride in

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President/CEO
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MONTEREY PLAZA HOTEL & SPA

Perched dramatically over the Monterey Bay and on historic Cannery Row, the Monterey Plaza Hotel & Spa is reminiscent of a grand Mediterranean seaside estate.

>> Relax and be pampered with *Forbes* Four Star service at TripAdvisor's top-rated hotel on the Monterey Peninsula.
>> Savor the fresh, sustainable seafood from the lively exhibition kitchen at Schooners Coastal Kitchen & Bar. >>

Gather for a cocktail on the patio of Schooners Coastal Kitchen & Bar, suspended out over the Monterey Bay.
>> Watch the waves crash beneath you from your private balcony. >> Start your day with a freshly brewed Peet's coffee

and house-baked pastries from the European-inspired Café La Strada. >> Enjoy a custom massage at the rooftop Vista Blue Spa, rated one of the "Top 50 Hotel Spas" by *Condé Nast Traveler* in 2012.

montereyplazahotel.com | 831-646-1700

>> CONCIERGE'S TIP <<

Hit the road and explore the remarkable 17-mile drive, Carmel-by-the-Sea, and the glorious Big Sur coast. While in Big Sur, enjoy a drink or bite to eat at Nepenthe Restaurant, overlooking the dramatic coastline.



STANFORD PARK HOTEL

Steps from Stanford University and the fashionable Stanford Shopping Center, the Stanford Park Hotel is renowned for its classic style, gracious service, and relaxed sophistication.

>> Stroll through the serene garden courtyards and relax in the secluded pool and whirlpool spa. >> Relax in oversized guestrooms and luxurious suites, featuring nightly turndown service. >> Gather and meet in the private libraries and cozy seating areas. >> Dine

at the Menlo Grill Bistro & Bar, awarded "Best New Food and Drink Establishment" of 2012 by the readers of *The Almanac* newspaper. >> Work out in the state-of-the-art fitness center equipped with the latest Precor equipment and personal entertainment systems. >>

Admire the hotel's impressive collection of original art, such as life-sized sculptures of Ben Franklin and Thomas Jefferson. >> Unwind and enjoy a cocktail or conversation in one of the classic rocking chairs overlooking the gardens.

stanfordparkhotel.com | 650-322-1234

>> **CONCIERGE'S TIP** <<

Borrow one of the hotel's bicycles and enjoy a ride through downtown Palo Alto and the beautiful Stanford University campus.



LAFAYETTE PARK HOTEL & SPA

Adjacent to Walnut Creek and with easy access to the entire San Francisco and East Bay regions, the Lafayette Park Hotel & Spa greets you with European grandeur and service.

>> Escape to the charming French chateau-style courtyards with limestone fountains and mature rose gardens. >> Enjoy luxurious accommodations in the oversized, 450-square-foot guestrooms, featuring cozy beds with sumptuous down comforters. >> Relax with the custom blended aromatherapy

massage at the Spa at the Park, the full-service European-style spa. >> Experience the popular winemaker dinner series that features Napa and Sonoma's greatest wineries, including Silver Oak, Cakebread Cellars, and Duckhorn. >> Have a lively dinner at the popular Bistro at the Park. >> Enjoy poolside

service while relaxing by the heated swimming pool set in a lush garden-side setting. >> Host a meeting in any one of the distinctive meeting and boardrooms, such as the Diderot Library that features an antique marble fireplace and rich wood floors.

lafayetteparkhotel.com | 925-283-3700

>> **CONCIERGE'S TIP** <<

Have the hotel's free shuttle take you to downtown Walnut Creek's Broadway Plaza, a magnet for shoppers where picturesque city streets are filled with world-class shops, fountains, cafés, topiaries, and flowers.





HOTEL DRISCO

Located on Pacific Avenue in San Francisco's charming Pacific Heights neighborhood, Hotel Drisco has a commanding presence among the beautiful homes of this prestigious area.

>> Experience one of the top-rated hotels in all of San Francisco on every booking and review site, including TripAdvisor. >> Receive a warm welcome in the cozy lobby and Sitting Room with wood floors and paneling, traditional charm, and complimentary coffee,

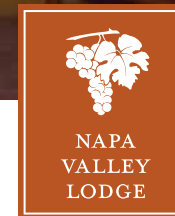
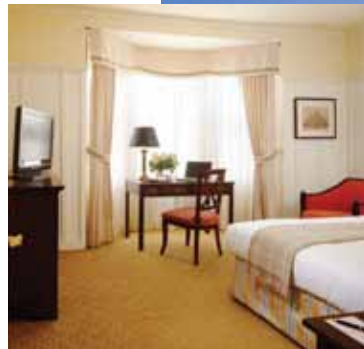
tea, and biscotti. >> Enjoy an unforgettable complimentary gourmet continental breakfast. >> Savor fine wine and cheese at the daily afternoon guest wine reception. >> Be pampered in the charming guestrooms that feature many thoughtful luxurious touches,

like amenities from San Francisco's Agraria, complimentary bottled water, and fine Egyptian cotton sheets. >> Work out in the state-of-the-art fitness center, or borrow a Globe bicycle and take a ride through the wondrous Presidio.

hoteldrisco.com | 415-346-2880

>> **CONCIERGE'S TIP** <<

Take a walk down the Lyon Street steps, where some of the city's most precious views of Alcatraz Island, the Palace of Fine Arts, and San Francisco Bay unfold below you. At the end, take a left and stroll through The Presidio's Letterman Digital Arts Center to the Marina District's shopping and neighborhood dining.



NAPA VALLEY LODGE

Set among picturesque cabernet sauvignon vineyards, Napa Valley Lodge is Tuscan charm in the heart of Yountville.

>> Take in memorable vineyard views and the setting sun over the western mountains from your private balcony. >> Relax among colorful, terra cotta courtyards with limestone fountains and abundant flowers. >> Unwind by the beautiful pool

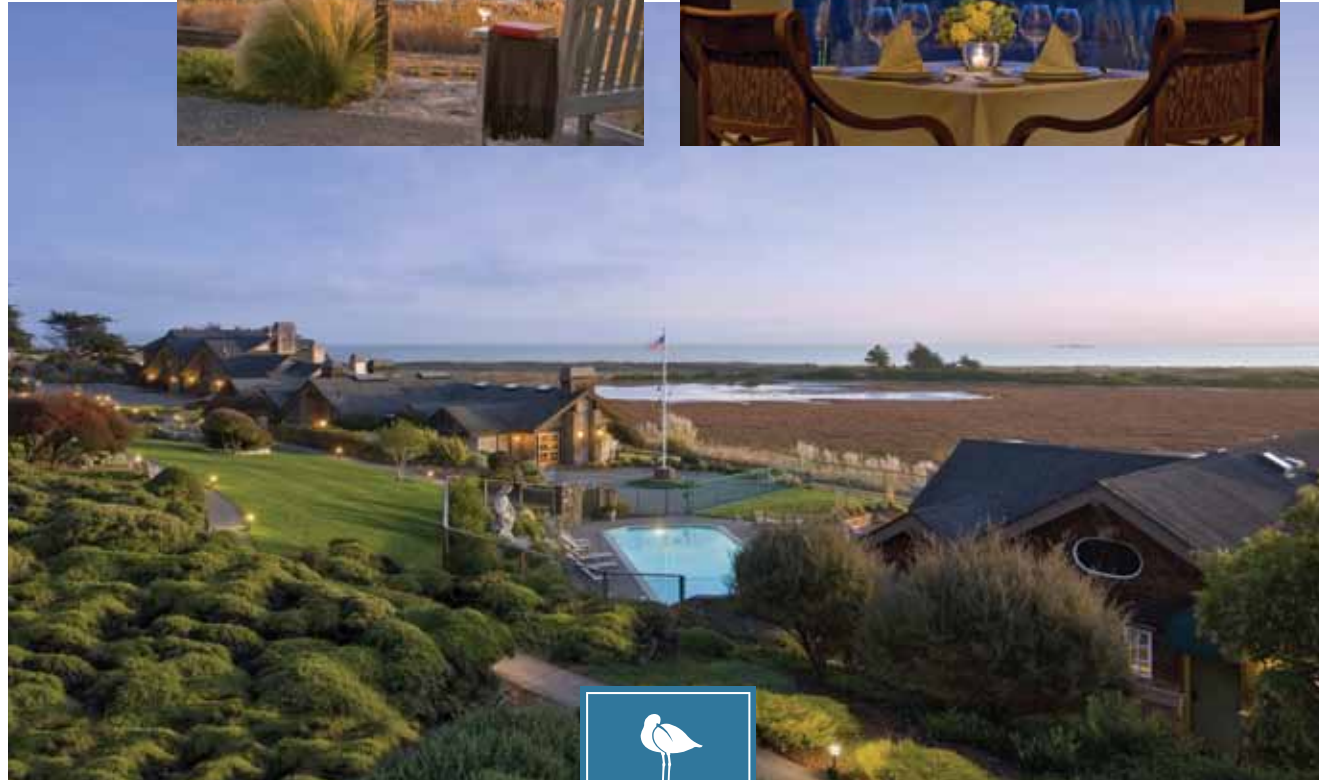
or play a game of bocce in the private courtyard. >> Complete your day with a well-earned glass of wine under the stars by the outdoor fire pit. >> Let the experienced team create a tailored itinerary for you highlighting the best that the Wine

Country has to offer. >> Enjoy a couple's massage in view of the vineyards from the spa treatment room. >> Feel pampered by the L'Occitane bath amenities, complimentary bottled water, fresh baked cookies, and nightly turndown service.

napavalleylodge.com | 707-944-2468

>> **CONCIERGE'S TIP** <<

Ask the concierge team to help plan a wine-tasting tour or gastronomic stroll through Yountville, as described in the feature story "Walking Up an Appetite."



BODEGA BAY LODGE

From its coastal bluff, the Bodega Bay Lodge commands sweeping views of the Pacific Ocean, Bodega Bay, and the rugged Sonoma Coast. It's the ideal setting for a relaxing getaway or a home base for coastal adventures.

>> Unwind at the only AAA Four Diamond-rated property on the Sonoma Coast and TripAdvisor's number-one-rated hotel in Bodega Bay. >> Get cozy in the comfortable rooms with private balconies, down

comforters, and real fireplaces. >> Indulge in an unforgettable spa treatment, such as the Warm Shell Massage in the comfort of your guestroom or in one of the spa treatment rooms. >> Savor fresh local

seafood, farm-fresh ingredients, and hard-to-find Sonoma County wines in the Duck Club Restaurant. >> Enjoy local oysters and great cocktails in front of the large fieldstone fireplace in Drake's.

bodegabaylodge.com | 707-875-3525

>> **CONCIERGE'S TIP** <<

For a little adventure and awe-inspiring grandeur, head out and be among the great redwoods of Armstrong Redwoods State Natural Reserve.

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