

HALF MOON BAY

COASTSIDE CALIFORNIA

FACT SHEET

Overview:

The Half Moon Bay Coastsides is a gorgeous region located approximately 45 minutes south of San Francisco that features the best of California all in one place. Renowned restaurants, fresh local produce, family-friendly farms, quaint shops, historical buildings, golf courses, art galleries, beaches, world famous surfing, horseback riding on the beach, nearby wineries and redwood forests are in abundance all along a unique rocky shoreline.

The Half Moon Bay Coastsides consists of four regions:

Region 1: The North Coast

The North Coast stretches from Montara to Pillar Point Harbor, a major commercial and recreational fishing harbor with restaurants serving freshly caught seafood and a boutique shopping village. Prominent seaside activities include fishing, kayaking, whale watching and observing harbor seals. Pristine beaches border the North Coast and provide visitors the opportunity to explore the coastal region by hiking along the coastal trail or by taking pleasure in an afternoon seaside picnic. Local businesses offer surf lessons, kayaking, scenic cruises, paddleboard rentals and the chance to ride horseback along the coastal trails. Point Montara Lighthouse, the gateway to the world-famous surf spot Mavericks, offers visitors a breathtaking panoramic view. Fed by a salt and fresh water estuary, Pillar Point Marsh is a paramount ecosystem and home to several hundred North American bird species that include Northern Harriers, Ferruginous Hawk, Snowy Plovers, Great Herons, Egrets and Red-Winged Blackbirds. A docent-led walking tour is available through the local Audubon Society.

Region 2: Half Moon Bay

Nestled at the epicenter of Half Moon Bay is Main Street, a picturesque downtown filled with unique specialty stores, art galleries, local bookstores, restaurants and romantic inns. Many of these places are housed in historic buildings dating back to the mid-1850s when commerce first originated in the area and have been carefully restored to preserve their authenticity. Half Moon Bay is predominantly an agricultural community, supplying the region with the freshest harvest California has to offer. Along Rt. 92, multi-generational farms produce year-round seasonal vegetables, fruit and flowers. Lemos Farms offers a petting zoo, a pony ride and a train trip. Wine connoisseurs can savor local selections at La Nebbia, the area's local winery, or head to the tasting rooms at Half Moon Bay Wine & Cheese and Vinoteca for an extensive selection of rare wines and flights.

Region 3: The South Coast

This region begins just south of the city of Half Moon Bay and runs to Pescadero. The area boasts 80 miles of coastal splendor with some of the state's most outstanding beaches and captivating nature reserves. Sea lions abound at Año Nuevo State Park, while more than 200 bird species inhabit the Pescadero Marsh natural preserve. Pigeon Point Lighthouse is an ideal spot to take in panoramic view of the Pacific (and perhaps a whale sighting). Explore the towering redwoods and babbling creeks hiking the trails at Butano State Park. Be sure to plan a visit to the village town of Pescadero with a tour Harley Farms, an award-winning goat dairy farm. Dig into just-baked artichoke bread at the local grocery market or head to legendary Duarte's for a bowl of their famous artichoke and green chili soup and olallieberry pie. Just west of the intersection of State Route 1 and State Route 84 is San Gregorio Beach; an idyllic location for a seaside picnic, an energizing morning run or simply taking in the picturesque views.

Region 4: The Redwood Region

Beauty and adventure intertwine in the Redwood Region. Experience the area's most beautiful scenic by way with a ride along Skyline Boulevard, California State Route 35, a mountain road dotted with redwoods. Many nature trails line Rt.35 for a spontaneous hike with spectacular views. Sample award-winning wines at Thomas Fogarty Winery or have lunch at the famous Alice's Restaurant in Sky Londa. Stop by Filoli House and Gardens and Yerba Buena Nursery to experience their vibrant and ecologically diverse gardens.

Website:

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Blog:

www.visithalfmoonbay.org/blog

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Location:

Easily accessible from the Bay Area and Silicon Valley, Half Moon Bay is located 28 miles south of San Francisco and 32 miles northwest of San Jose. Nestled between the dramatic green Santa Cruz Mountains and the spectacular Pacific Ocean, this charming seaside community is the perfect place for Bay Area visitors seeking to experience the best of the surrounding areas all in one conveniently located place. The famous Route 1, also known as Pacific Coast Highway, runs directly along Half Moon Bay's magnificent shoreline, providing breathtaking views of the ocean, abundant agriculture and redwood forests.

History and Culture:

Spanishtown, or Half Moon Bay as it is now called, is the oldest settlement in San Mateo County, dating back to the 1840's. Costanoan Indians originally inhabited the land for hundreds of years until the 1840's when land grants were deeded to early Spanish settlers. Mexican and Chilean laborers soon followed, and the village was dubbed "Spanishtown." In 1874, Spanishtown officially became known as Half Moon Bay.

The city of Half Moon Bay was incorporated in 1959 and today remains similar to its original beginnings as an agricultural town. Half Moon Bay has been diligent in preserving its history, with vibrant elements of the past still visible in the many historic buildings in Downtown Half Moon Bay along Main, Purissima and Johnston streets. Present day "explorers" of Half Moon Bay will still see original farms dating back to the 1800's, as well as miles of deserted white sandy beaches, ancient giant redwood forests, beautiful state parks, vast fields of wild flowers set against hillsides, and hiking and biking trails along craggy ocean bluffs and mountain ridges.

Population and Demographics:

The population of Half Moon Bay is 12,870. The average age is 47.1. The average household income is \$106,211. (Source: www.worldpopulationreview.com, 2017). The median home value is \$1,247,000 (Source: www.zillow.com, 2018).

Climate:

Half Moon Bay is blessed with comfortable weather year-round, with the average temperature approximately 54.2° F (12.3° C), and ranging throughout the year between 46.1° F (7.8° C) and 62.3° F (16.8° C). Seasonal morning fog in the late summer and fresh cool breezes off the ocean provide a refreshing escape from the sweltering hot summers throughout rest the country. Lush vegetation and redwood trees thrive year round in the temperate weather. The comfortable temperatures allow visitors to take advantage of the plethora of outdoor activities throughout the entire year. The average annual rainfall is 28.98 inches.

Industry:

Half Moon Bay's top three industries are:

1. **Agriculture, specializing in floriculture.** The top producing floriculture crops

include potted flowering, cut flowers, ornamental flowers, Christmas trees, and bedding plants. The highest producing vegetable crops are brussels sprouts, fava beans, leeks, artichokes, pumpkins, peas, and snap peas. The total gross value of San Mateo County's agricultural product was \$ \$138,202,000 in 2017. (Source: San Mateo County Agricultural Crop Report).

2. **Tourism** – In 2017, overall annual Coastside visitors reached approximately 4,132,560. Half Moon Bay hosted approximately 216,372 overnight visitors generating \$80,897,062 in visitor spending (based on an average room rate of \$225).
3. **Commercial fishing** – Commercial fishing generates \$11,227,677 annually. Approximately 8,875,380 pounds of fish were caught in 2017, with the most prevalent being squid, anchovy, crab, sablefish, and halibut. (Source: San Mateo County Agricultural Crop Report)

Popular Attractions:

A coastal gem, Half Moon Bay boasts the best of California all in one place. Spectacular outdoor attractions showcase the powerful unspoiled beauty and bounty of the coast and the dramatic redwood trees.

- **Beaches** – From long stretches of sandy beach to a rocky shoreline with tidepools, Half Moon Bay has many stunning public, private and state beaches to explore. Wildlife includes a wide variety of waterfowl, sea otters, sea lions, and elephant seals.
- **Farms** – Half Moon Bay is home to a number of working farms that are open to the public. Farms filled with vegetables and flowers allow visitors to experience and learn firsthand about the bounty of area by sampling the fresh local produce, picking their own fruit and vegetables, petting the animals and making their own goat cheese. During the fall, pumpkin patches abound, and in the winter, Christmas tree farms are open for the public to cut down and purchase their holiday tree.
- **Hot Houses and Field Flowers** – Half Moon Bay's number one industry, floriculture, is prevalent throughout the entire area, overflowing with acres of gorgeous flowers. There are many farms and nurseries to visit and learn more about the abundance of local flora that thrives throughout the area.
- **Pillar Point Harbor** – This working fishing harbor provides a unique opportunity for visitors to interact with local fisherman and purchase fresh seafood such as Dungeness crab, salmon and tuna directly off of the boats. Locally owned coastal cafes dot the harbor, featuring the daily catch, delicious clam chowder and other local treats.
- **Redwood Preserves** – Ancient giant redwood trees native to the central and northern California coast are in abundance throughout Half Moon Bay. Purissima

Creek Trails, located on the western slopes of the Santa Cruz Mountains overlooking Half Moon Bay, is a favorite place to these “skyscrapers” considered to be the tallest trees on earth.

- **Tide Pools** – Spectacular tide pools full of Coastside aquatic life such as starfish, small crabs and sea urchins are located at Fitzgerald Marine Reserve at Moss Beach and Miramontes Point in front of The Ritz-Carlton, Half Moon Bay.
- **Wineries**– The San Mateo Coast is home to more than 80 wineries. La Nebbia Winery is located in Half Moon Bay and features award winning wines and a gorgeous picnic area adjacent to a large pumpkin patch. Nearby, nestled in the Santa Cruz Mountains is Thomas Fogarty Winery, known for their excellent pinot noir and chardonnay, with fantastic views of the San Francisco Bay Area.

Recreational Activities:

From surfing some of the world’s largest waves to world-class golfing and horseback riding, Half Moon Bay has a plethora of activities sure to please everyone.

- **Bird Watching** – Half Moon Bay is the ideal place for bird watching in the San Francisco Bay Area. Two refuges, Pescadero Marsh and Pillar Point Marsh, are the perfect place to see thousands of unique birds.
- **Bluff and Mountain Top Hiking and Mountain Biking** – A wide variety of hiking and biking trails lead through the redwoods and provide breathtaking views of the Pacific Ocean.
- **Dining** – With the abundance of fresh seafood, vegetables, cheese and wine there are many acclaimed restaurants in Half Moon Bay that offer visitors the opportunity to experience local California cuisine. The city’s wide dining variety also celebrates Italian, Thai, Chinese, Japanese, Mexican, Continental, American, French, and Mediterranean cuisines. The community is filled with local cafes and bakeries, oceanside restaurants, cozy pubs, and even a restaurant with a ghost.
- **Golfing** – Half Moon Bay is home to several award-winning championship golf courses overlooking the Pacific Ocean. Half Moon Bay Golf Links features two award-winning 18-hole championship golf courses. Directly outside of The Ritz-Carlton, Half Moon Bay are two championship courses: The Ocean Course, ranked as one of the top courses in California, is a Scottish links course meandering along the bluffs that boasts Pacific Ocean views from every hole; and The Old Course, a Parkland-style course lined by cypress trees, originally designed by Francis Duane and Arnold Palmer in 1973, and redesigned by Arthur Hills in 1999.
- **Historical Walking Tours** – Half Moon Bay cherishes its history, and its rural charm is reflected in many historical buildings throughout the area. The Half Moon Bay History Association offers a self-guided walking tour booklet,

Treasures of Half Moon Bay, available for a small donation. It features more than 50 historical homes, churches, commercial buildings, bridges and cemeteries, dating back to the 1800s. The book can be found at many shops, including the Chamber of Commerce at 235 Main Street, and the 1855 Zaballa House at 324 Main Street. The Zaballa House also has an interesting History Room with a diorama of 1861 Half Moon Bay.

- **Horseback Riding on the Beach** – whether galloping or simply riding at a relaxing pace next to the crashing waves of the Pacific Ocean, this is a unique and fun way for visitors to experience the beautiful coast.
- **Shopping** –charming historical Main Street is filled with many unique gift shops, art galleries and antique stores.
- **Sport Fishing** – Visitors can charter a boat and catch fresh fish such as salmon, rock cod and albacore tuna straight out of the Pacific.
- **Surfing**- Maverick's, located at Pillar Point, is home to some of the world's largest waves and one of the hottest surfing locations in the world. Surfer's Beach just south of Pillar Point Harbor is another popular spot.
- **Weddings** – Breathtaking views of the Pacific Ocean, rolling green hills and floating fragrant breezes from blossoming fields of flowers provide the perfect romantic backdrop for the ultimate wedding. Half Moon Bay boasts a wide variety of spectacular event locations, including quaint inns, coastal resorts, wineries and acclaimed restaurants.
- **Whale Watching** – The best time to go whale watching is January through the end of March when female whales are migrating north with their young calves. Whale watching tours depart from Pillar Point Harbor, four miles north of Half Moon Bay, regularly during the peak season.

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About the Half Moon Bay Coastside

The Half Moon Bay Coastside is a charming seaside respite located 45 minutes south of San Francisco. Nestled between the Santa Cruz Mountains and the Pacific Ocean, this breathtaking region consists of four distinct areas - the North Coast, Half Moon Bay, the South Coast and the Redwood Region. Featuring the best of Northern California all in one place, visitors will enjoy miles of white sandy beaches, redwood forests, a historic downtown filled with local artisan shops, beautiful state parks, fields of wild flowers, and trails along ocean bluffs and mountain ridges as far as the eye can see. A sampling of activities includes horseback riding on the beach, farm fresh dining, shopping, biking, hiking and world-class golfing and surfing.

For more information on visiting Half Moon Bay, visit www.visithalfmoonbay.org or call (650) 726-8380. Like our [Facebook](#) page and follow us on [Twitter](#) @visithmb and [Instagram](#) @visithalfmoonbay.

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