



THE SWEEPING CAVALLO POINT HOTEL

# SAUSALITO: Beauty and the Bay

BY DON AND ANN JACKSON

IF YOU'RE UP FOR A UNFORGETTABLE WEEKEND OR DAY GETAWAY, WE'RE ABOUT TO MAKE YOUR DAY. GETTING AWAY TO ARTSY SAUSALITO, THE CLOSEST MARIN COUNTY TOWN TO THE GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE, WITH BLOCKBUSTER VISTAS OF SAN FRANCISCO, IS A COMPELLING PLACE TO UNWIND.

This eclectic community with over 200 art galleries and shops combined with those breathtaking views has always had an almost magnetic draw. An astonishing list of top-notch lodging choices, highly touted restaurants, and a cornucopia of intriguing activities abound.

**A Little History:** In the early 1900s, Sausalito was a bustling transportation hub, during prohibition it was known as a hangout for bootleggers, and during World War II the population increased to over 30,000 as it became one of the country's most successful ship building communities. Operating round-the-clock, Sausalito reportedly set a ship-building record by cranking out 93 Liberty Ships and tankers in just a few years of operation. After the war, the city once again downsized and became a bohemian hangout for well-known artists, writers, and musicians, and not too surprisingly, a famous San

Francisco madam was elected mayor. Today, Sausalito is recognized as one of California's most prestigious residential communities and a superb getaway destination during any season.

**What to do:** Still known as an artists' haven, browsing through the many diverse galleries is certainly a must for art lovers. Our favorite: Fingerhut Gallery ([www.fingerhutart.com](http://www.fingerhutart.com)). Strolling the entire town, waterfront and nearby Fort Baker area are easy propositions and highly recommended.

Another emphatic suggestion: Drive out to the Marin Headlands along the water's edge, a good portion on a one-way road, and you'll encounter picture-perfect moments at each rugged turn. While in the Headlands be sure to make these stops—the newly rebuilt state-of-the-art Marine Mammal Center ([www.marinemammalcenter.org](http://www.marinemammalcenter.org)), recognized

COURTESY KODIAK GREENWOOD/CAVALLO POINT



SWEET PEA RAVIOLI  
AT MURRAY CIRCLE



BLACK COD WITH MONTEREY ABALONE  
AND NORI AT MURRAY CIRCLE



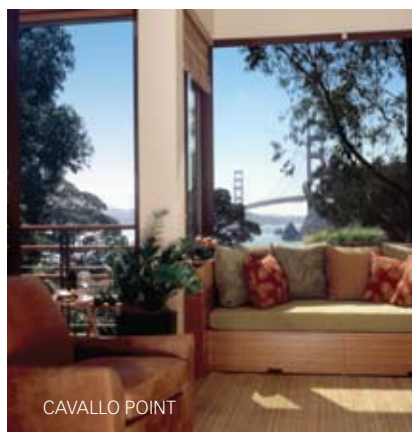
CAVALLO POINT



CASA MADRONA HOTEL



MARINE MAMMAL CENTER



CAVALLO POINT

as one of the world's finest rescue and rehabilitation facilities; the secluded Rodeo Beach; the landmark Point Bonita Lighthouse (*open Saturday through Monday, 12:30-3:30 p.m.*); and for you military buffs, don't miss the only restored U.S Army Nike Missile site in the country, where you can actually tour the underground site. After watching the gigantic missile rise out of its hidden location, you'll then step onto the elevator platform and return to the former top-secret bunker while holding onto the missile. (*Wednesday through Friday, tours at 1 p.m., 2 p.m., 3 p.m.*) Major bonus: No admission fees for any of the above. For info on the Headlands, Point Bonita, and the Missile Site, visit [www.nps.gov/goga/marin-headlands.htm](http://www.nps.gov/goga/marin-headlands.htm).

**Where to Stay and Dine:** Cavallo Point Lodge ([www.cavallopoint.com](http://www.cavallopoint.com)), located on the former Fort Baker property overlooking San Francisco and the Bay, is the first new premier lodge opened on National Park Service property in years and has been receiving major buzz. Whether you stay in the beautifully converted former homes of high ranking officers or the brand-new lodging facilities on the hill, you'll be blown away by the tasteful décor and amenities. Don't miss a peaceful visit to their Healing Arts Center and Spa. If it's a clear day, another must is the brief half-hour hike from behind the former chapel to the top of the hill for ultimate views. For a special occasion dinner, be sure to dine at their signature restaurant, Murray Circle, the only Michelin star-rated dining in Marin County. Another option, Casa Madrona Hotel and Spa ([www.casamadrona.com](http://www.casamadrona.com)), a classic inn and personal favorite for years, dramatically combines historic Victorian architecture and modern amenities on a steep hillside. Poggio, an authentic Tuscan trattoria in Casa Madrona, provides one of the best Northern Italian culinary experiences we've had anywhere in a long time.

Other dining tips: For a happy hour and nightlife hangout, Horizons ([www.horizonssausalito.com](http://www.horizonssausalito.com)) has a long history of celebrity activities (Robin Williams worked here, and for folks like Janis Joplin and Mick Jagger it was 'party central'). For seafood, try Scomas ([www.scomassausalito.com](http://www.scomassausalito.com)), popular sister restaurant to the one in San Francisco; and for the best bistro, be sure to dine at Le Garage ([www.legaragebistrosausalito.com](http://www.legaragebistrosausalito.com))—this locals country French favorite is actually in a garage, but the food warrants a Rolls Royce parking spot.

More lodging options: Inn Above Tide if you prefer to be on the water ([www.innabovetide.com](http://www.innabovetide.com)); Hotel Sausalito is a stylish, early 1900s mission-revival boutique inn centrally located on the town square with complimentary morning coffee and pastries ([www.hotelsausalito.com](http://www.hotelsausalito.com)); Gables Inn is another attractively refurbished historic inn that provides complimentary evening wine and cheese ([www.gablesinnsausalito.com](http://www.gablesinnsausalito.com)). [SJM]

**For complete info about events, arts, and more, visit [www.sausalito.org](http://www.sausalito.org).**

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: KODIAK GREENWOOD/MURRAY CIRCLE (2); MICHAEL VENERA/CAVALLO POINT; CASA MADRONA; STEVEN ROTHFELD/CAVALLO POINT; DAVID WAKELEY/MARINE MAMMAL CENTER