

Danville Times

Half Moon Bay offers more than pumpkins

By Kelly Pollard , CORRESPONDENT
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The crowds from Half Moon Bay's famous Art and Pumpkin Festival last weekend have drifted away from this sleepy coastal town.

But they have left behind excellent pumpkin farms, world class restaurants and opportunities for up close encounters with creatures in the tide pools and fresh catches at the working fishermen's Pillar Point Harbor.

A trip to Half Moon Bay, just a one-hour weekend drive from Danville, wouldn't be complete without a stop at one of the famed pumpkin farms.

Daylight Farms, known unofficially as "Farmer John's," is most well-known for its vast pumpkin field, where they grow several varieties of pumpkins, including Atlantic Giants, which range between 250 and 500 pounds. This year, check out the hay pyramid and the multiple photo opportunities, including a pose on a John Deere tractor.

Pillar Point Harbor is a visual feast with fishermen docking and showing off their catches every afternoon.

Visitors may catch glimpses of squid, Dungeness crab and salmon. The fishermen will also charter fishing boats, clean your fish at your request and direct you to local restaurants that are more than happy to cook your fish for you.

"There is also a special phone number you can call ahead of time to find out what each dock is selling for the day," said Kelly Chamberlain, publicist for the Half Moon Bay Business Improvement District.

"And November kicks off our Dungeness crab season."

Adjacent to the harbor is Sam's Chowder House, recently featured on the Today Show as one of the top five "Best Sandwiches in America," in honor of their lobster roll sandwiches.

The casual atmosphere and fresh fish, including a seafood market where visitors can take home their own clam bake, is a surefire delight for seafood lovers. Another attraction are the tide pools at Fitzgerald Marine Reserve up Route 92 in Moss Beach.

"Tide pools are great year-round. You can see all kinds of sea life, and it's the perfect activity for families," said Chamberlain. She advised always checking the tide reports for low tide before journeying out. They can be accessed through .

The Half Moon Bay coast daytrip can be topped off with a stop at Moss Beach Distillery.

"Come experience spectacular fall sunsets from the ocean view patio at the Moss Beach Distillery," said Beverly Anolin of Moss Beach Distillery.

"Savor delicious appetizers or sip refreshing cocktails while staying comfy next to one of our fire pits or snuggle under a warm blanket that we will provide.

A former speakeasy of the Prohibition era, Moss Beach Distillery now offers brunch and high-class seafood and steaks. The distillery gets visitors in the Halloween spirit, with its Blue Lady ghost.

Visitors can see the lights over the bar swaying, if they look closely.

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