

Modern Guide to Pescadero: Elephant Seals, Hiking, Tide Pools, Farm Stops + More

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July 1, 2025

Pescadero is a quirky little gem just south of Half Moon Bay, where everything runs at a slower speed and fresh-baked garlic artichoke bread is always on the menu.

Blink and you might miss the two-block "downtown," where you'll find an unassuming taqueria inside the gas station. Walk through redwood groves, look for sea stars in the tide pools, then enjoy a slice of olallieberry pie to reward you for a day well spent. If you want to make it an overnight, you can even bunk up at the lighthouse—complete with an ocean-view hot tub.



Mercado and Taqueria de Amigos

(Courtesy of [@chilliandmint](#))

Duarte's Tavern

A local favorite since 1894, Duarte's serves American country cooking with a Portuguese influence. Visit on the weekend to try their cioppino loaded with seafood, or go for a bowl of cream of artichoke soup served side by side in the same bowl as their green chile

soup. Seafood dominates the menu, naturally, but you'll also find French dip sandwiches and burgers. Our top tip? Save room for the olallieberry pie. // 202 Stage Rd., duartestavern.com

Mercado and Taqueria de Amigos

Even if you've driven through Pescadero's tiny core, you may have missed this spot for craveable burritos, tacos, and enchiladas. You'll find it inside the gas station on the corner, and there are picnic tables outside to sit. But your best bet is to order some fish tacos and take them to one of the nearby beaches to enjoy to the sound of waves crashing. // 1999 Pescadero Creek Rd., [instagram.com/mercadoytaqueriadeamigos](https://www.instagram.com/mercadoytaqueriadeamigos)

Arcangeli Grocery Co.

Don't miss Arcangeli Grocery Co., which has been serving up fresh-baked bread and picnic items for nearly a decade. This is where you'll find the garlic-and-herb artichoke bread that the town is known for. Pick up a loaf warm-from-the-oven to eat immediately, and a bake-at-home loaf to take with you. You can also DIY a sandwich or swing by the deli in the back to have them make one stacked high with chicken salad, roast beef, or turkey. // 287 Stage Rd., normsmarket.com

Downtown Local

This coffee shop is a gathering spot for locals and weekend visitors. Shop their eclectic wares—from handmade body products to vintage posters and trinkets—as you wait for your oat milk latte. The spicy chai is not to be missed—and it goes especially well with a morning bun—the perfect combo to fuel you up before a hike. // 213 Stage Rd., [instagram.com/downtown_local](https://www.instagram.com/downtown_local)



Libby Patterson Organics Perfume Camp

Harley Farms Goat Dairy

Visitors of all ages will delight in a stop at Harley Farms. Here, you can meet the goats over the fence, or get close-up on a farm tour. Swing by the farm store to pick up goat milk soap, goat cheese, honey, and other locally made goods. This is also a great spot to host a party or join in a three-course farm dinner. // *205 North Rd.*, harleyfarms.com

Pescadero State Beach

You'll find plenty of scenic coves and windswept beaches along Highway 1 in Pescadero. If you are visiting at low tide, look for crabs and sea anemones in the tide pools. Walk along Pescadero Creek, then pass under the highway to reach the trails along the marsh—a perfect spot for birdwatching. // *18253 Cabrillo Highway S. (San Gregorio)*, parks.ca.gov

Butano State Park

This state park is just a short drive from Pescadero's main drag, but you'll feel miles away once you hit its trails. While the campground is closed due to a damaged water supply, you can still visit for the day. Keep an eye out for banana slugs as you hike the Little Butano Creek Trail or any of those through the redwoods. // *1500 Cloverdale Rd.*, parks.ca.gov

Año Nuevo State Park

The highlight of visiting this state park is hiking along the bluffs to see elephant seals that return to this area annually to breed and birth their pups. Guided hikes are required from December through March, but the rest of the year you can do the four-mile round-trip hike on your own. // *1 New Years Creek Rd., parks.ca.gov*

Libby Patterson Organics Perfume Camp

Tucked next to Arcangeli Grocery Co. is a group of rustic shops selling everything from art to soaps and body lotion. It's here that you'll find Perfume Camp, a lush garden full of herbs and blooms where you can book a DIY perfume-making experience for you and your friends. // *251 Stage Rd., libbypatterson.com*

R&R Fresh Farms

Berry picking is the highlight at this farm just across the road from Harley Farms. From mid-June on, you can treat yourself to strawberries, olallieberries, and blackberries. In the fall, pumpkins and hayrides take over. // *2310 Pescadero Creek Rd., [instagram.com/rnrherbsinc](https://www.instagram.com/rnrherbsinc)*



Costanoa

(Courtesy of Costanoa)

Costanoa

Want to spend a few nights in the area? Costanoa is the spot, with a wide variety of accommodations to suit every budget. Stay in the lodge if you're looking for a traditional hotel-type experience, or go for a tent bungalow or cabin for a bit more privacy. You can even pitch a tent or bring your own RV if camping is more your style. The property has hiking and biking trails, plus a restaurant serving up coastal California cuisine. // 2001 Rossi Road at Hwy 1, costanoa.com

Pigeon Point Lighthouse

You've likely spotted this stunning lighthouse on Highway 1 before, which has a lovely hostel ready to welcome guests with two-, three-, and six-person rooms with shared kitchens and common areas. Staying here puts you right on the coast, with sandy beaches and tidepools just a short walk away. Perhaps best of all is the on-site hot tub overlooking the coast—which you can make a reservation for when you check in. // 210 Pigeon Point Rd., hiusa.org