



The Half Moon Bay Coastside: Small-Town Charm and Beach-Town Beauty

The Coastside gets the best of both worlds: the comfort of a close-knit community and the splendor of the Pacific Coast.

BY MEGAN LYNCH

Drive down Highway One (the Pacific Coast Highway or PCH) during the weekend and you'll be amazed at the beauty you see: huge cliffs dropping off into the ocean, sunlight glistening off the water and rolling hills in the backdrop. The beaches are picture perfect: with clean sand and surfable waves. But you aren't the first or the only one today to pick up on this beauty: all around there are people driving down the coast to enjoy the beautiful scenery.

Each weekend, people from across the Bay Area drive to the Half Moon Bay Coastside to explore the beautiful area and take advantage of the relaxing atmosphere. The area has become so popular that beaches are often packed on sunny days and people are slowly getting in on the secret: Half Moon Bay and its neighboring towns are great places to visit and great places to live. "This is an incredible place to live and a great place to raise a family," said Realtor Jeffrey Wolf.

When the tourists clear out at the end of the day, what's left is a caring community with a solid foundation. This means neighbors who support one another and work together. The area still has that small-town feel common to Southern towns and villages. This creates lasting friendships and long-time homeowners.

"This is a place where people know each other. Kids play in the street because everyone keeps an eye out on them. It has a small-town feel," said Realtor Allan Bernardi.

The Half Moon Bay Coastside is located on the Pacific Coast at the intersection of Highway 92 and the PCH. Neighboring towns including Montara, Pescadero, El Granada, Loma Mar, La Honda, San Gregorio and Moss Beach are located up and down the PCH. The area is located about 40 minutes south of San Francisco, 45 minutes

north of San Jose and 20 minutes west of the Central Peninsula (including Belmont and San Mateo).

The small-town feel makes the Coastside



PHOTOS BY MARYANN BOLOGNA, THE EXAMINER

a wonderful place for families with children. The community is close-knit and people really take the time to get to know each other. Going to the supermarket can turn into a social event since you seem to know everyone at the store. People wave when they see each other on the streets and look out for one another.

For kids, this means growing up in a supportive community. Children grow up in a stable environment and get to know their neighbors. They can grow and succeed because they are supported by their families and their community. "Parents are interested in participating in their kids' schools and in supporting their children. This gives kids the chance to find a niche, feel comfortable and really excel," said Wolf.

Wolf is a member of SAMCAR (the San Mateo County Association of Realtors).

SAMCAR is a professional trade organization that organizes Realtors on the Peninsula. The Association provides members with opportunities for community involvement

and access to a network of professional resources and business contacts. Realtors must abide by a strict code of ethics and participate in additional training above and beyond state real estate license requirements.

Children attend one of three public elementary schools, one intermediate school and one high school. Some also attend neighboring private schools. Because of the small school community, kids often meet each other in elementary school and remain



friends through the years. This makes for smoother transitions to high school.

Many kids are also involved in local

sports teams and participate in gymnastics, little league and other activities. Families also spend a large amount of time outdoors: hiking, biking and spending time at the beach. There are plenty of opportunities for exploring the great outdoors at local beaches and state parks.

"A lot of people don't realize that some of the biggest Redwood trees in California are in San Mateo County," said Bernardi. "We also have some beautiful parks like Butano State Park for camping and hiking."

The mild coastal weather also makes it easy to spend time outdoors. Cool coastal breezes purify the air, making it cleaner than many other Peninsula cities. The air also cools off the area in the summer, which makes for mild, rather than scorching, summer days.

As for the fog, it's not as bad as many people think! "It's not always foggy here and when it does come in, it burns off in the evening. If anything, we have mild year-round weather—and if you don't like the heat, it's perfect."

Enjoy the outdoors? Longing for a small, close-knit community? The Half Moon Bay Coastside may be perfect for you. Plus, with scenery this beautiful and mild weather you can't go wrong!

Information in this series of community profiles is provided by the San Mateo County Association of REALTORS® (SAMCAR). Megan Lynch is a freelance journalist based in San Francisco. Please send questions, suggestions or feedback by e-mail to samcar@samcar.org or call 650.696.8200.

The Examiner

Maryann Bologna 415.359.2652

Anson Chan 415.359.2822

The Top Five Reasons to Live in Half Moon Bay Coastside

BY MEGAN LYNCH

SAFETY

The Half Moon Bay Coastside makes up one of the safest communities on the Peninsula. Unlike some cities with a single police department, the area is patrolled by the Half Moon Bay Police, the Highway Patrol and the Park Service, among others. Although residents benefit from this extra protection, in reality there is no need for it: the area is so safe that there is little crime reported each year. Neighbors also look out for one another and this gives the community a safe and caring feel.

PROXIMITY TO THE OCEAN

Many residents live just minutes from the beach and can walk there each day. This means they get plenty of surfing, tanning and relaxing time during the year. They also get beautiful sunsets, sunrises and the opportu-

nity to live near some of the Peninsula's most breathtaking scenery. Residents also get to enjoy the cooler weather and romantic foggy days during the summer thanks to the cool coastal air.

SECLUDED ENVIRONMENT

Being on the Coastside feels miles away from the hustle and bustle of Bay Area life. Coming home each day is like coming home to a private, secluded resort. Forget pollution, loud noises and congestion, you can feel miles away from the big city and still be within a half hour drive of every amenity you can think of. This means you can finally get the peace and quiet you've been looking for.

SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

Residents of the Half Moon Bay Coastside work together. They support their

children, their friends and their neighbors. This, in turn, has created a close and supportive network of families. People look after their neighbors and their belongings and work to make sure everyone is safe. This close network creates lasting friendships that span lifetimes.

CLEAN OCEAN AIR

Living by the ocean means more than just sandy beaches and crashing waves, residents also benefit from living near ocean air. The ocean air is regularly cleansed by coastal breezes and is much cleaner than city air. The winds also cool off the area during summer days, making for pleasant and mild weather year-round. This makes it easier and more enjoyable to spend time outdoors and be active. Goodbye smog, hello cool ocean breeze!

