



Shepherders at work along Stage Road. Just down the way, Duarte's is a local institution.

Pescadero still pleases

Enjoy agricultural bounty, artichoke soup, and salty sea air

By Ann Marie Brown • Photographs by Sherry Tesler

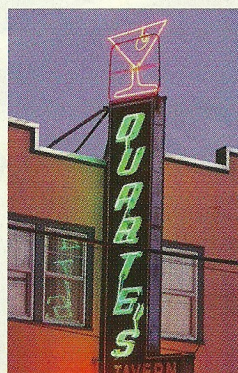
Looking for a quieter alternative to Half Moon Bay's pumpkin pageantry this month? Pescadero might be your best bet. Surrounded by acres of vegetable and flower fields and lined with weather-beaten buildings, the town is a step back in time.

The name Pescadero means "fish-monger," a reference to the days when Pescadero Creek teemed with steelhead and salmon. These days, the town teems with something else: charm. With its ¼-mile-long store-lined main drag, the village looks much like it has for more than 100 years—only smaller, relatively speaking. In the late 1800s, Pescadero was the fourth-largest town in San Mateo County.

Maeva Neale, a Pescadero resident and historian, says the area was once a resort destination for beachgoers, hunters, and fishermen. "Tourists would ride the Ocean Shore Railway

from San Francisco to Tunitas Creek, then take the stagecoach to Pescadero," says Neale. "The town had two large hotels, which were booked months in advance."

Though hardly anyone arrives by stagecoach anymore, some of the same attractions on Stage Road (Pescadero's main drag) are still drawing visitors. Duarte's Tavern (202 Stage Rd.; 650/879-0464), a Pescadero landmark, has been in operation since 1894, run by the Duarte family for four generations. Specialties include crab cioppino and other fresh seafood, artichoke soup, and olallieberry pie. Another venerable fixture is the Arcangeli Grocery Company (287 Stage; 650/879-0147), founded in 1929 and famous for its artichoke and garlic-herb breads, whose fresh-



baked aromas waft into the street.

Beyond the oldies, a handful of newer establishments enliven the mix. At the Phipps Country Store & Farm (2700 Pescadero Rd.; 650/879-0787), children enjoy seeing the barnyard animals, and would-be chefs sort through herb vinegars,

spices, dried beans, and produce.

For shoppers, Made in Pescadero (216 Stage; 650/879-9128) is a working gallery featuring locally made furniture. Tucked into neighboring century-old buildings are several new stores where browsers can hunt for jewelry, clothing, bath products, and garden wares. Time your visit carefully, however. Some shops are open Friday through Monday only—further proof that Pescadero has retained its small-town ambience. ♦

Travel planner

WHERE: 17 miles south of Half Moon Bay on State 1, turn left on Pescadero Rd. and drive 2 miles to Stage Rd.

CONTACT: The Pescadero Village Association puts out a brochure on visitor attractions; visit its website, www.pescaderovillage.com, for more helpful information or write to info@pescaderovillage.com.



MAP: CHRISTOPH DIERMANN