



# The WTA WiseTraveler<sup>SM</sup>

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## Travel Destination

### California's North Coast - Muir Woods to Eureka: The Golden Miles

by Jayne Condon - Leisure Traveler and WTA Member

Gold was discovered here in 1848, the Gold Rush took place the following year, and in 1850 the Golden State became the 31st member of the Union. California's state flower is the golden poppy, and its motto is Eureka, for "I have found it." The "it," of course, is gold.

But even if those first nuggets had never been spotted, the nickname, the flower and the motto would still apply. From the break of daylight over the mountains to the cobbled paving of the sea at sunset, from the northern grasslands to the southern deserts, based on its rank as America's richest state or simply on the color of its air, California is truly El Dorado.

For travelers on its awesome coastline, the northern third, from the Oregon border to San Francisco Bay, may be the mother lode.

Last year, my husband Bill and I spent ten days in November, exploring, lazing and luxuriating along this gorgeous stretch of the country's waterfront.



The Rugged Coast at Goat Rock State Beach

Within an hour of our landing at SFO, we stood on the overlook at the northern end of the Golden Gate for another (nearly) airborne view of the magical city across the Bay. Some of the most dramatic views of the bridge itself show it rising above frequent fog. We were luckier than that; the day was crystal clear, and the vista awesome.

By the end of the second hour, we were in Muir Woods National Monument, [www.nps.gov/muwo/](http://www.nps.gov/muwo/), walking the mossy trails and drinking in the beauty of old growth sequoias that date back to the time of the Crusades.

Leaving the redwoods, we viewed the rugged coast from Muir Beach Overlook, and then that evening dined on wonderful local rock cod and barbecued Hog Island oysters at the Olema Inn, 800-532-4252, in Olema. We spent our first night at the lovely Ten Inverness Way Inn, 415-669-1648, [www.teninvernessway.com](http://www.teninvernessway.com), just a few miles

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## California's North Coast - continued from page 1

up the coast in Inverness. Rates are \$145-180, and includes a full breakfast.

Our first morning was a Sunday. We awoke to brilliant sunlight, and took our time with the Inn's famous breakfast. That afternoon, leaning into 50-mile winds, we walked out to a point high above the ocean for another breathtaking view of the coast from the Point Reyes lighthouse.

We looked at South Beach, from ground level, where the wind-buoyed noisy birds above the billowing surf and the glittering, streaked, November sea was anything but pacific. But just around the corner, the scene changed dramatically at Drake Beach, where we found the sanctuary discovered by its namesake, the English explorer who had sheltered in the embrace of this pristine cove some 400 years before us.

Looking inland and northward from Point Reyes, this part of the California coast is verdant, rolling, sometimes-precipitous farmland, and the pasturage to great dairy farms. In more than one Hollywood epic, it has doubled for an idealized 19th century New England, and sometimes even old England. The resemblance isn't so much in the topography as in its wild openness and weather-mellowed richness.

After breakfast on day three, we headed north again by car, this time for Mendocino.

Along the way, we stopped at Goat Rock State Beach (1 mile south of Jenner), [www.mcn.org/1/rparks/parks/scsb.htm](http://www.mcn.org/1/rparks/parks/scsb.htm), to admire the great herds of seals. Wonderfully graceful and energetic in the water, they become ungainly inchworms on the shore, which is probably why they spend their land time just lolling lethargically at the water's edge, grunting, barking, and basking in the sun.

Next, we visited the rustic beach at 60,000-acre Salt Point State Park, 707-847-3221, [www.mcn.org/1/rparks/parks/saltp.htm](http://www.mcn.org/1/rparks/parks/saltp.htm), and from the overlook at Fisk Hill Cove we had a dramatic view of Sentinel Rock.

This is all thirsty work, and late that afternoon we pulled in at the quaint Husch Winery, 800-55-HUSCH, [www.huschvineyards.com](http://www.huschvineyards.com). Their

tasting room is in a rustic, rose-covered wooden cottage, which in turn is at the edge of the vineyard, where row after row of colorful and impeccably neat grapevines stretch on forever. The hostess welcomed us with warmth and a pleasant, easy humor, and we tasted a number of award-winning offerings.

She recommended a dinner stop at the Albion River Inn Restaurant, 707-937-1919, even helping us with reservations. From peppered oyster appetizers, entrees of broiled prawns in a lime sauce and fresh swordfish, through to the multi-berry syllabub topped with poppy ice cream, it was one of the best meals ever.

We stayed that night at Surf 'n Sand Lodge, 800-964-0184, [www.mcn.org/as/surfsand](http://www.mcn.org/as/surfsand), in Ft. Bragg. Rates are \$59-175, depending on the season and room size. The next morning, after a 2.5 mile walk, we headed into town for a delicious breakfast at the Mendocino Hotel, 800-548-0513, served in a garden setting.

Other fun takes in this small but vital town include the many New England style homes, which line its streets (one of them famous locally as the setting for *Murder She Wrote*), and the quaint and interesting shops at its small center.

We enjoyed Mendocino Headlands State Park, 707-937-5804, [www.mcn.org/1/mendoparks/mndhdld.htm](http://www.mcn.org/1/mendoparks/mndhdld.htm), and its visitors' center in the restored 1854 Ford House, as well as the winding floral trails through nearby Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens, 707-964-4352, [www.gardenbythesea.org](http://www.gardenbythesea.org), admission \$1-6, with lookouts for whale watching and spectacular ocean views.

A long, twisty ride to Garberville ended happily that evening at the pleasant, Tudor-style, nautically named Benbow Inn, 800-355-3301, [www.benbowinn.com](http://www.benbowinn.com), just south of town. Rates for 2000 season range from \$115-305, double occupancy. Breakfast at Woodrose Cafe, 707-923-3191, on Redwood Drive got us off to a good start the following morning for a day trip to Shelter Cove, a quiet, seasonal community that reminded us of Cape Cod. Further along, we walked a short

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## Habla Anything?? - Berlitz and Beyond

by W. Lynn Seldon, Jr. - Travel Writer

Though he lived before the days of easy global travel, Maximilian Berlitz changed the way we learn languages. As a foreign language instructor he'd made great strides in teaching, but an illness in 1878 changed his methods and the instruction of languages forever.

Berlitz fell ill from overwork and was forced to ask his newly-hired assistant, Nicholas Joly, to assume the teaching load. However, Frenchman Joly spoke no English, so Berlitz told him to simply point at objects and use a question and answer approach. Recovering five weeks later and fearing the worst, Berlitz was delighted to discover his students engaged in lively conversations in French. Berlitz quickly recognized the essence of what was to become the Berlitz Method® and struck out on his own later that year. He would make language-learning history.

Today, the range of Berlitz offerings are typical of what's available to travelers. Whether you just want to learn the basics or everything of a foreign language, there are lots of options. Berlitz's catalog highlights include: language reference materials; travel-related language publications ideal for short trips; and home study materials.

Along with all of these publications, Berlitz also offers a wide range of courses in more than 50 countries. Their "Immersion" classes in host countries are now extremely popular as well, giving travelers an opportunity to visit new places and learn a language. Of course, Berlitz isn't the only game in town. Many other excellent companies offer a wide array of products and services.

The Lonely Planet series of small phrasebooks are often ideal trip companions. Designed by travelers for travelers, Lonely Planet produces dozens of pocket-sized phrasebooks with all the vital words and phrases you'll need, plus descriptions and explanations of local culture, customs, menu decoders, and extensive dictionaries.

Lonely Planet's publisher of phrasebooks, Sally Steward, says, "Don't worry if you haven't studied languages before. Your biggest hurdle is overcoming the fear of saying aloud what may seem to you to be

just a bunch of sounds."

Steward says that the best way to start overcoming your fear is to memorize a few key words, like "hello" and "how much?" She adds, "Write some words and phrases down on a piece of paper and stick them around your home."

Visual translators are another excellent addition to your carry-on. Several companies publish picture guides that enable travelers to point to images or icons to communicate their needs. Kwikpoint™ International Translator is an excellent choice. Travelers simply point to universally recognized color picture symbols to communicate about food, lodging, medical needs, emergencies, and other necessities. The laminated folded cards come in full and wallet sizes. Kwikpoint is quite popular, according to Rochelle Jaffe, owner of Travel Books & Language Center, one of the largest travel book and language stores in the nation.

For computer buffs or those who would like to master more of a given language, CD-ROMs are a fun way to learn a new language. The best disks offer vocabulary drills, games, and short conversations that take full advantage of this interactive medium.

Travelers short on time and funds can use the Internet's many resources. Language tips are available online through the outstanding "Travlang" site at [www.travlang.com](http://www.travlang.com). This mega-site not only offers travel service links, it also offers a plethora of links to language resources, translating software, online dictionaries, and dozens of links to language-specific tutorial sites.

Thus, from a simple phrasebook to an immersion language class overseas, you can habla practically anything almost anywhere in the world.

### USEFUL LANGUAGE RESOURCES

- Berlitz can be reached through its Web site at [www.berlitz.com](http://www.berlitz.com) or by calling 800-923-7548.
- Kwikpoint can be ordered by sending the appropriate amount to Gaia Communications, PO Box 238, Alexandria, VA 22313-0238, or by calling 800-958-2907 for bulk orders.

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## California's North Coast - continued from page 2

distance on the black sand of 25-mile Lost Beach before returning to the Benbow.

We started Thanksgiving Day at church in Garberville, where we met a lovely local couple who invited us to their home that evening for a holiday dinner. It turned out the Orazems owned the Eel River Café, 707-923-3783, where we'd had a pleasant breakfast a few mornings before, so we knew we were in safe hands, but we were even more grateful for the warm and spontaneous hospitality.

We filled the middle of that day with a trip to Avenue of the Giants in the Humboldt Redwoods State Park, [www.humboldtredwoods.org](http://www.humboldtredwoods.org). Words are inadequate to describe the majesty of this winding drive among some of the tallest trees on earth, many as high as 30-story buildings. The Dyerville Giant, toppled in a lightning storm, measures 340 feet, with a root mass 35 feet across.

We spent the next day among gingerbread houses and interesting shops in nearby Ferndale, then moved on up the coast on the last leg to Eureka.

Our accommodations in Eureka were at the Hotel Carter, 800-404-1390, [www.carterhouse.com](http://www.carterhouse.com), connected with the popular Carter House Country Inn. Room rates range from \$94-187, suites from

\$195-297. We enjoyed a dip, more like total immersion in our immense hot tub, right beside a window with a lovely view of the harbor.

On Saturday night we went to the Sonoma Cook House, 707-442-1659, just a few miles up the coast and the real northern terminus of our journey. One of the last of the famous lumber camp eateries, it's now a family restaurant with good food and lots of it - at a reasonable price.

Other good dining during our stay in Eureka was at Café Waterfront, 707-443-9190, and the Restaurant 301 at the Hotel Carter was outstanding.

On the final day of our stay, it rained buckets. Fortunately, we had planned a visit to the Pacific Lumber Mill, [www.palco.com](http://www.palco.com), and managed to stay reasonably sheltered. The tour was a real eye-opener, at times even exciting.

The trip north, with all its side trips and back roads, totaled over 600 miles. Our return, straight down 101 to San Francisco, was only 240 miles and took less than half a day.

All in all, a terrific trip and highly recommended for any time of the year from early spring to late fall. 🌍

## Habla Anything?? - continued from page 3

- Travel Books & Language Center, based just outside Washington, DC, can be reached by calling 800-220-2665 or sending email to [travelbks@aol.com](mailto:travelbks@aol.com).
  - The Learning Company is at 314 Erin Dr., Knoxville, TN 37919, 800-726-5087.
  - The "Travlang" Internet site is at [www.travlang.com](http://www.travlang.com)
2. Memorize a few key words and questions. These should be words you'll be saying again and again, like "hello," "thank you," and "how much?"
  3. Learn at least one phrase that will be useful, but not essential, like "good morning" or "see you later." Having this extra phrase will enable you to move away from the basics and shows the locals you've tried to learn more of the language.
  4. Write some words and phrases down on a piece of paper and stick them around where you'll see them often.
  5. Don't be afraid to use a phrasebook during conversations. 🌍

### LONELY PLANET'S FIVE EASY STEPS TO GETTING STARTED:

1. Start with words or phrases you are already familiar with: *mamma mia*, *Gesundheit*, *faux pas*, and *que sera, sera*. This will help you get the courage to start speaking aloud.

## Travel Quiz

### Where In the World?

Here are six hot clues to a destination that will be described in more detail in a future copy of our newsletter. Any ideas where we are?

1. "Never call me Buggy."
2. *Ocean's Eleven*
3. Future waterfront property?
4. He did it his way.
5. The Strip
6. A Grand place.

Answer: Las Vegas