

THE ASPEN TIMES

Voyages: Coastal Cool

By Kelley J. Hayes



The Birds and Bodega Bay

Speaking of the 1960s, if you saw it, you never forgot the power of Alfred Hitchcock's 1963 thriller, "The Birds." This epic film was shot and took place just down the coast in the scenic and very bird-friendly town of Bodega Bay.

We had to go.

The Bodega Bay Lodge is the westernmost outpost of the exceptionally welcoming Woodside Hotels family of inns that include wine-centric properties in both Napa (Napa Valley Lodge) and the Carmel Valley (Bernardus Lodge and Spa). It sits just south of the town of Bodega Bay and is a hop, skip and back-road jump from the Russian River Valley and Westside Road, arguably the Rodeo Drive of

California pinot noir.

Not as rustic as Timber Cove, The Bodega Bay Lodge's hotel experience is more traditional in scope. The Lodge vistas are more tranquil than energetic as it sits perched above a bird sanctuary and marsh that is a part of the Bay itself

Eighty-three guest rooms are laid out in terraced buildings composed of local timber and natural stone that offer views stretching out over the marsh to the Pacific. Fishing boats head out the channel through the fog each morning as surfers ride the beach break just down the road from the hotel.

Golfers and spa lovers will find fairways, or solace, at the property. Or both. The beachfront Robert Trent Jones Jr. Scottish-style links, the public course at "Links at Bodega Harbour" are a short stroll away. And the intimate spa provides a plethora of services, including a Cabernet Grape Seed Scrub. After tee time, a spa session and an afternoon swim in the infinity pool above the bay, the time is right for some coastal cuisine at Drakes, the casual but sophisticated dining room with the views of the bird sanctuary. Duck and Merry Edwards pinot anyone?

For us the highlight of the stay on the bay was an afternoon putting the fat tires of the hotel's complimentary beach cruiser bikes on the sand on Doran State Park right down the hill. The low tide ride in the fresh Pacific breeze was a total California experience and one to which we will return.

The Bodega Bay Lodge provides wine country proximity, comfort and a complete Sonoma Coastal package of amenities. Far from cookie-cutter, the hotel keeps four beehives and a collection of owl houses on property.

It is truly "of" Bodega Bay.