

The

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VILLAGE VIEW

A Social Magazine for the Residents of German Village

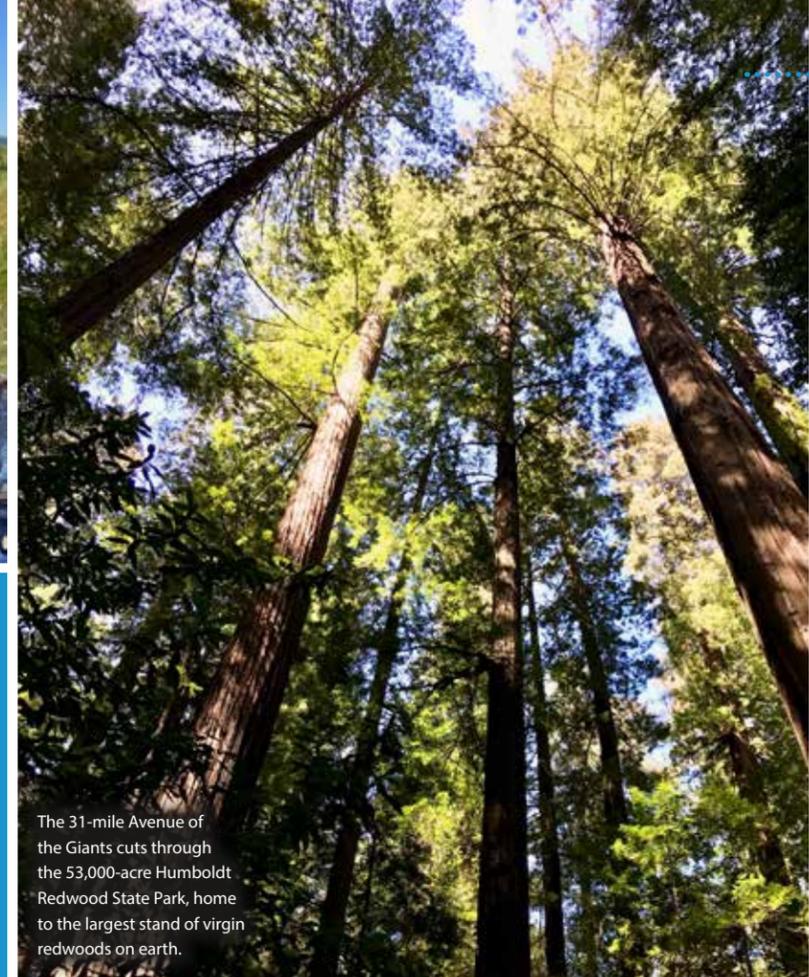


MEET YOUR NEIGHBORS

**BRYAN &
SARAH MARTIN
& SON, AYDEN**

Photo by Neal Raffensberger

OUR STORIES, OUR PHOTOS, OUR COMMUNITY



The 31-mile Avenue of the Giants cuts through the 53,000-acre Humboldt Redwood State Park, home to the largest stand of virgin redwoods on earth.

travel tales **two** FOR THE **road** AARON & BETH LEVENTHAL

For 25 years we have traveled together across America and abroad, seeking adventure and unique vacation destinations. On a recent trip along the Pacific coastline of California and Oregon, we escaped the hassle and hustle of urban America and enjoyed the warm hospitality of the locals.

While international travel can seem exotic and brag-worthy, a drive 1,000 miles north along the Pacific Coast in May provided a magnificent reminder of the natural beauty and scenic wonder of America. We purchased an economy fare for a five-hour direct flight on Southwest Airlines to Oakland, California and rented a Hyundai Sonata hybrid that averaged 40 miles per gallon, allowing more money for fabulous regional wining and dining.

1, a two-lane road that hugs the coastline and slices dramatically through majestic mountain passes. We stayed at Sea Ranch Lodge on a bluff overlooking the Pacific, and loved the rustic appeal of this small, secluded property on the Sonoma Coast. Our room had a striking ocean view, and a fireplace (a frequent feature in hotels along the Northern Pacific Coast) added to its cozy ambiance.

Several hours north, we stopped at the picturesque village of Mendocino, perched on headland bluffs above the Pacific. We strolled past Victorian architectural gems and white picket fences along narrow streets crammed with specialty shops, art galleries, museums and restaurants. Of note is the Mendocino Art Center, the 47-acre Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens and the historic Skunk Train. We enjoyed a delicious lunch and an ocean view from the upstairs patio at Flow; dinner was at Wild Fish, known for local organic fare and fresh-caught fish.

Along the Avenue of the Giants, about a four-hour drive north, we marveled at the colossal size and grandeur of the ancient redwoods. Taking short scenic nature trails into the forest, we found a spiritual quality to standing in the midst of a grove of a dozen gigantic trees, many 1,000 to 2,000 years old. We stayed at Myers Country Inn, a comfortable, family-run bed and breakfast, originally an 1867 stagecoach stop.

Our last California stop was at The Historic Requa Inn, a woodsy, country lodge overlooking the Klamath River. The inn is known for

its family-style dinners, and we got to meet our fellow travelers, passing delicious dishes prepared by the chef using locally-sourced organic ingredients.

After crossing into Oregon we stopped in Pacific City for lunch at The Grateful Bread, serving delicious breads and pastries and made-to-order specialties. In Depoe Bay, Captain Gary Stephenson of Whale's Tail charters took us for an exhilarating ride in his six-passenger Zodiac inflatable boat to spot dozens of gray whales.

Before heading to Portland for our flight home, we spent two nights in Cannon Beach at The Courtyard at the Cannon Beach Hotel, one of the oldest on the Oregon Coast, with an excellent French-inspired cafe.

With miles of scenic sandy beach and the iconic Haystack Rock, Cannon has been named one of the world's "100 Most Beautiful Places" by *National Geographic* - the perfect ending to a memorable North Pacific Coast adventure.

The Leventhals have lived in German Village for nearly 40 years. Professionally, Aaron is a travel writer, small group tour operator and former producer of the German Village Oktoberfest, while Beth is director of communications at Experience Columbus, the city's convention & visitors bureau. You'll find them strolling the Village with their dog, Lily.

We would love to share your vacation stories. Write to our resident editor, John Clark, at john.clark@n2publishing.com.



Castello di Amarosa is an authentic recreation of a 13th century Tuscan castle, just outside St. Helena in the Napa Valley.



After 45 years on the sea, Captain Gary Stephenson is an expert whale spotter and storyteller.



Haystack Rock, one of Oregon's most recognizable landmarks, rises 235 feet from the edge of the shoreline.

The first stop on our leisurely eight-day tour was the famed Napa Valley, where an estimated 450 to 500 vineyards and wineries produce some of the world's best wines. Our tasting experiences ranged from the lavish offerings of Castello di Amorosa to the limited-production vintages of Laura Michaels Wines in the charming, rural community of Calistoga. We browsed the Oxbow Public Market, filled with artisan producers and purveyors, and the nearby Culinary Institute of America Greystone, which offers cooking classes and demonstrations, a restaurant and café. At the end of the day, we indulged in rustic Italian fare at Bottega, Chef Michael Chiarello's award-winning restaurant in Yountville.

A few hours northeast, we connected with U.S. Highway

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