

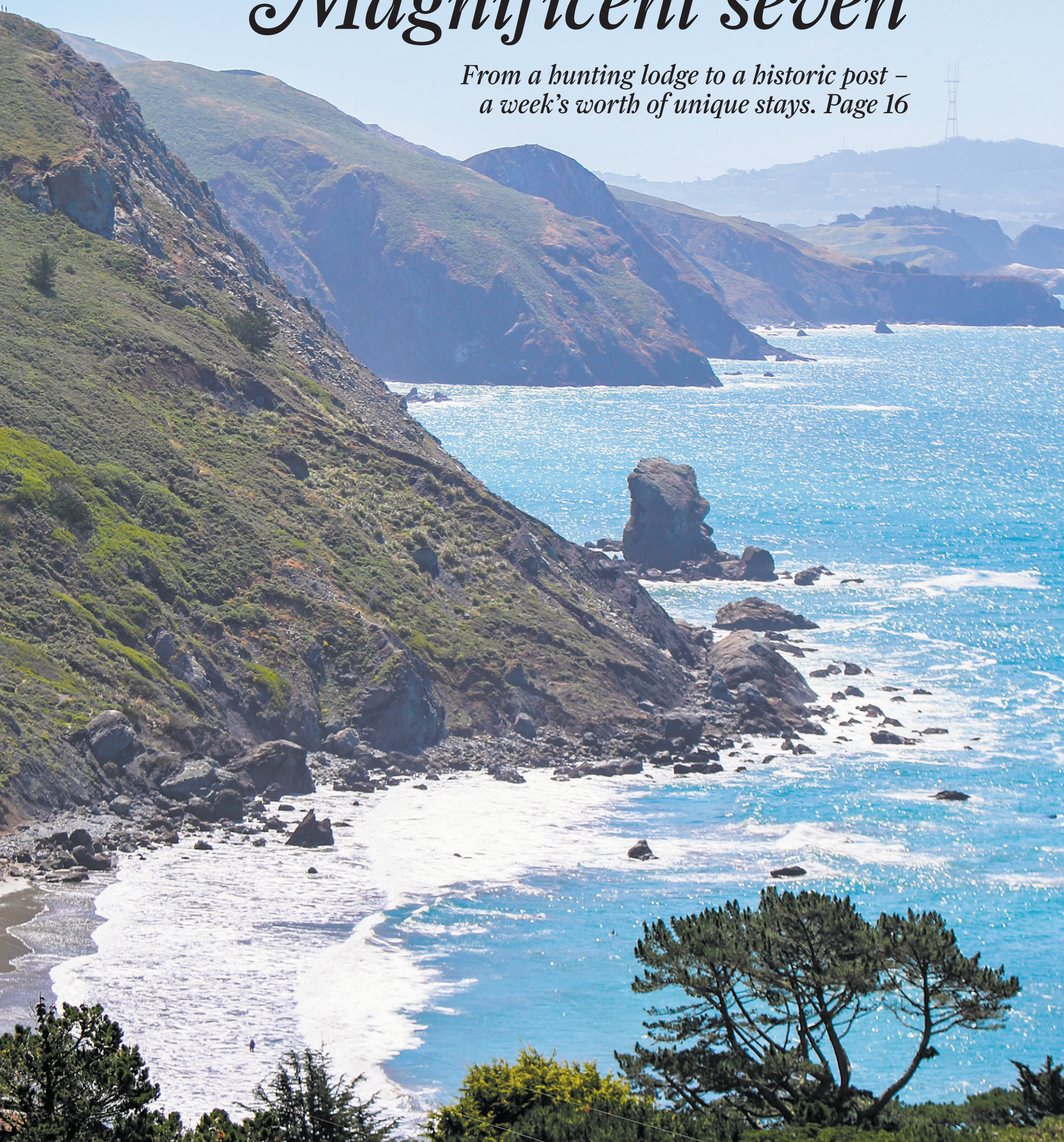
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Travel

Marin County

Magnificent seven

*From a hunting lodge to a historic post –
a week's worth of unique stays. Page 16*





Photos by Aubrie Pick

SAUSALITO INN ABOVE TIDE

The setting: The large flat-panel TVs and Blu-Ray DVD players at Sausalito's Inn Above Tide may be au courant, but they hardly compare with the wide-angle views from the hotel's 31 well-appointed rooms and suites, all of which not only face the water but seemingly hover over it. Watch ferries glide in and out of the dock next door as Angel Island looms nearby, or gaze at the broad swath of San Francisco shimmering across the bay; city lights and the Bay Bridge add sparkle to the night. If you can pull yourself away, Sausalito's urban attractions are within an easy stroll, and Marin's natural wonders within a short drive or bike ride.

The backstory: The three-story cedar-shingled hotel began life in the 1960s as a luxury condominium built on the site of a former garage by Bill McDevitt, who later converted most of it into office space. Sensing a sea change on Sausalito's formerly scruffy waterfront, he closed the building in 1993 for a two-year transformation into the luxurious Inn Above Tide, and continued to make enhancements until his death in 2011. Since then, his children have kept the hotel in the family, adding two new suites in 2014.

The appeal: Petaluma woodworker Aaron Crespi supplied the handsome headboards, bamboo and walnut tansu-style armoires and stump tables, part of the California contemporary decor that has recently been spruced up with a warm palette. Most guests are Northern Californians celebrating romantic occasions, drawn by gas fireplaces, private decks and soaking tubs in the majority of the rooms (there are 13 different floor plans), as well as those famous views. Fly-in tourists and business travelers also enjoy being so close to San Francisco, yet not stuck in its commotion at night. "It's a



completely unique experience in the Bay Area. You really do feel almost like you're on a ship, so divorced from the downtown area even though you're right in the heart of it," says general manager Mike Flaherty.

The extras: Head to the intimate Drawing Room or order room service to enjoy the complimentary and lavish conti-

mental breakfast: a half dozen kinds of fruit, fresh pastries from San Francisco's Crepe and Brioche, quiche, hard-boiled eggs, cheeses, yogurt, etc. Return in the afternoon for the daily wine and cheese reception, typically featuring Napa and Sonoma wines. In between, work off the calories on a loaner touring bike. Kass

Top: Continental breakfasting in style. Above: Bay views are always nice, but some are breathtaking. Left: Amazing vistas are everywhere at Inn Above Tide.

Green, McDevitt's daughter and co-owner of the hotel, created detailed maps for exploring Sausalito and the Marin Headlands by foot, bike or car; print and online versions are available for guests. Wi-Fi is free.

Good to know: Parking is \$18 a night, with unlimited in/out valet service. There's a two-night weekend minimum May through October and on major holidays; for a summer weekend stay, book six to eight weeks out, and a month out for a weekday stay.

Details: 30 El Portal, Sausalito. Rates start at \$385. (415) 332-9535, <http://innabovetide.com>

— Jeanne Cooper