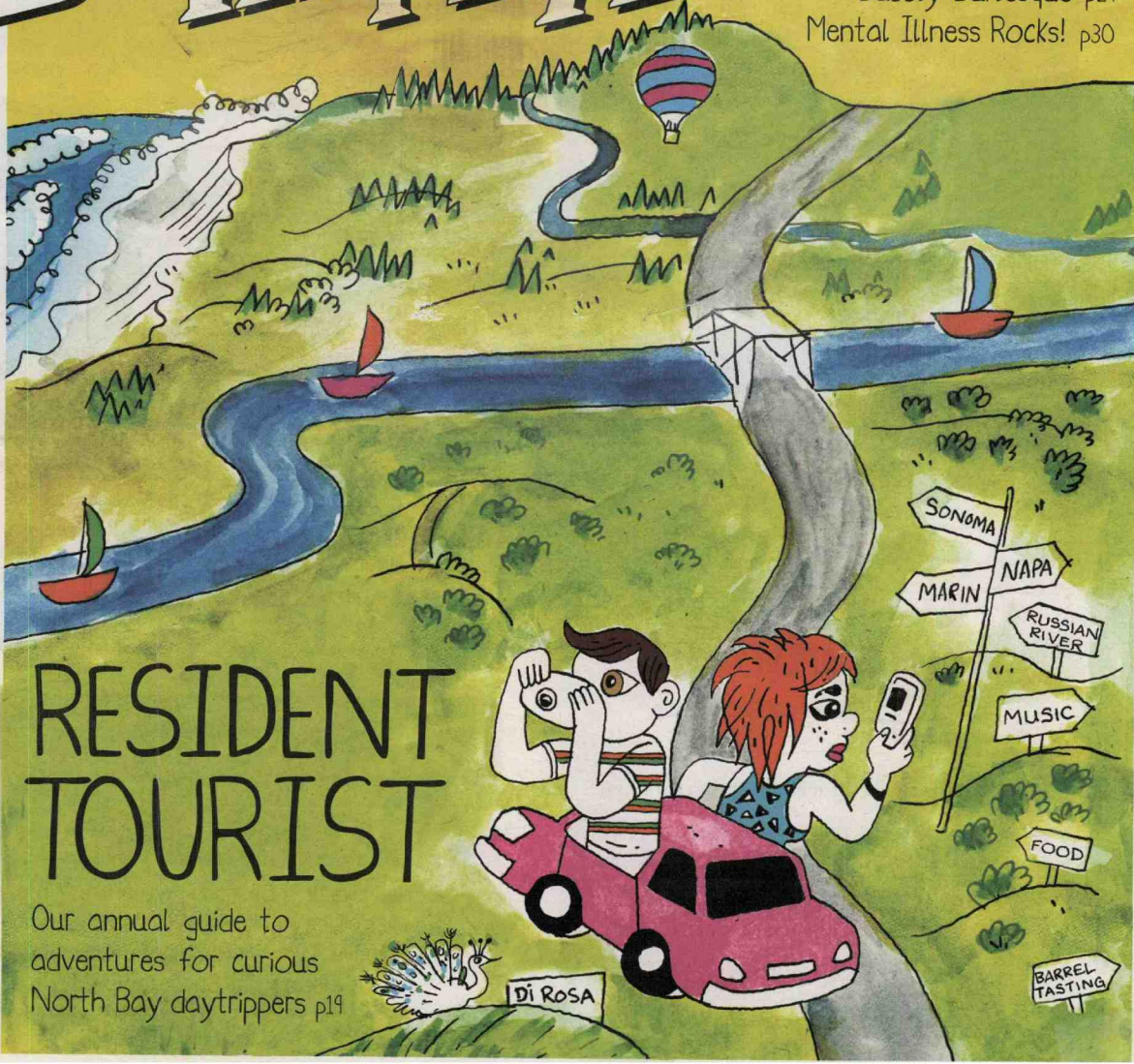


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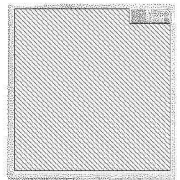
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RESIDENT TOURIST

Our annual guide to adventures for curious North Bay daytrippers p19





Back Yard Rambles

Here, now and wow: Exploring the North Bay's sights, sounds and flavors

BY TOM GOGOLA, NICOLAS GRIZZLE AND STETT HOLBROOK

When it comes to fun stuff to do and places to go, the North Bay is loaded. Great food and drink destinations? We've got that covered and then some. Ocean, mountains, hill, trails, rivers and winding roads? Check. Lively music venues and cultural attractions? We've got them in spades, too.

Our annual Resident Tourist issue celebrates our land of plenty with three themes—food and drink, outdoor recreation and music. We'll leave many of the more well-known attractions to the real tourists. This insider's guide is by no means exhaustive. We've had to pick and choose some of our favorites, lest we get started and never stop.

I've lived here just over three years, and I am very much a resident tourist myself, eagerly discovering new things about the North Bay that make me continually thankful I live here.

How do you play resident tourist in your own back yard? Let us know at letters@bohemian.com.

—Stett Holbrook →20

and sausage, they serve a hearty sandwich of the day made on crusty Della bakery ciabatta.

Further down the road in Larkspur, **Bel Campo Meats** is another meat palace. The butcher shop and restaurant sources all its meat from its own ranch in Mt. Shasta, giving new meaning to the term farm-to-table. Like Thistle, the meat is pricey, but that's how it should be. Just eat less of it. So-called cheap meat exacts a much higher price on the environment and on animal welfare. Bel Campo's burger with beef fat-fried fries will make you a believer.

Heading east to Napa County, the attraction is, of course, wine. But how does one avoid the tour bus crowds and all those nonresident tourists? You gotta know where to go.

Velo Vino Clif Family Winery, the winery from the Clif Bar folks, caters to enophiles and cyclists alike with cycling maps to various Napa Valley bikes routes and a cycling theme. St. Helena's **Raymond Vineyards** has a guest house for dogs and lots of funky, cool stuff like the crystal cellar tasting area. The rustic feel of **Rustridge Ranch and Winery** isn't painted on. It's real. The winery is on a horse ranch and offers a guesthouse if you want to spend the night.

If you appreciate serious Cabernet Sauvignon, make a pilgrimage up to Spring Mountain to **Cain Vineyard and Winery**. **Stagecoach Vineyard** offers winetasting, of course, but it also has 60- or 90-minute tours of the stunning 1,100-acre property. On a clear day, you can see all the way to San Francisco.

While many of the best things in life are free, some are definitely not. To my fellow resident tourists I'd argue that it's worth dining at St. Helena's **Meadowood** restaurant at least once. Along

with French Laundry, which will soon reopen in a new location, Meadowood is the only North Bay restaurant with three Michelin stars. Executive chef Christopher Kostow's cooking is hard to pin down, but let's go with cerebral and madly, creatively, out-of-this-world delicious.

Happy travels.—*Stett Holbrook*



It's not just a clever name; there are no dining tables at K&A Take Away.