



The Spirit of the Forest

A reverent ride past Mendocino County trees big and small in the Rolls-Royce Ghost

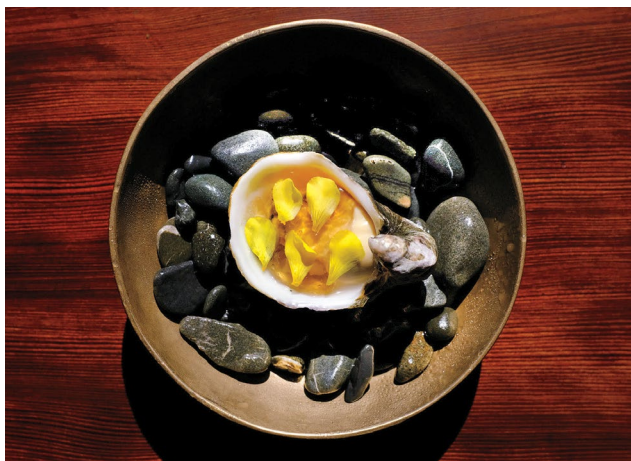


The forest is silent, or nearly so, the wind a low hum in the canopy above, our footsteps muted by the spongy soil—a millennium's hoard of fallen leaves. *Sequoia sempervirens*, coast redwoods, are the tallest trees in the world, and in **Hendy Woods State Park**'s Big Hendy Grove, a few miles northwest of Boonville in Northern California's Mendocino County, some, pushing a thousand years in age, reach well over 300 feet into the sky. Peering upward, my wife and I spy the black scars in their deeply furrowed bark, the mark

Above: walking through a redwood grove at Hendy Woods State Park

of lightning strikes shrugged off like bug bites, and here and there the telltale grids of boreholes, the work of pileated woodpeckers, whose hammerings echo softly in the stillness.

The hush continues as the doors of our Rolls-Royce Ghost squeeze softly shut, and in a cabin clad in leather and lambswool, we silently carve the sun-dappled curves of Philo-Greenwood Road on our way toward the coastal town of Elk and the Michelin-starred **Harbor House Inn**, whose chef, Matthew Kammerer, transforms ingredients from



Clockwise from top left: woodsy decor at Harbor House Inn; Mendocino Headlands State Park; an oyster with Douglas fir vinegar and sorrel petals at Harbor House Inn's Michelin-starred restaurant

nearby farms, forests, and the sea into delicacies of the highest order. At sunset, overlooking a churning Pacific, we revel in tangy fried *maitake* mushrooms, oysters graced with sorrel petals, then quail eggs, octopus, rockfish, and more, all washed down with an otherworldly '98 riesling from Austria's Wachau Valley.

The following afternoon, we grab paninis from **The Elk Store** and bring them to the overlook at **Mendocino Headlands State Park**, where we pop the cork on a perfectly chilled bottle of Lelarge-Puget hiding in the Rolls's Cool Chamber. Then it's into the woods again—although these woods are of an oddly Lilliputian sort. A few miles down State Route 1, near the town of Little River, in **Van Damme State Park**, the inhospitable soils

of a high plateau are home to a unique pygmy forest where 80-year-old Mendocino cypresses that are as short as a foot or two rub shoulders with dwarf

manzanitas, and where the tallest tree of all, the Bolander pine, stands a mere 20 feet. Their peaceful company is strangely familiar, for we were small once too.

THE CAR

2021 Rolls-Royce Ghost

In a world of automotive aspiration, the Rolls-Royce Ghost is the rarest of things, an automobile that need never announce its presence, for the simple reason that it is a presence. The newest incarnation—its name an homage to the 1907 Silver Ghost that established Rolls-Royce's reputation as the maker of "the best car in the world"—manifests a delicious tension between superlative luxury, breathtaking power, and an understated aesthetic that its creators refer to as "Post Opulence."

With a 6.75-liter twin-turbocharged V12 that devours distances effortlessly, and an extraordinarily sophisticated suspension that imparts a magic carpet ride on even the most rustic country roads, the Ghost is an absolute marvel for passenger and driver alike.

rolls-roycemotorcars.com, \$429,100

