



Pinnacles and Big Sur National Parks with San Francisco Trip Notes
April 17 – 27, 2019

Highlights.

- A wonderful three days in San Francisco, part with Tracy, my hero. Every time I see her I wonder why I don't manage to get to the west coast more often. A brilliant, vibrant woman with a very full life.
- A new national park. I didn't want to be counting them up but that may become an interesting subject. I'd see more parks if I didn't repeat some so many times. I am soon on what will be my fourth trip to Yellowstone. Five or six to Yosemite. My second to Capitol Reef coming up.
- I am always happy and comforted to be on a trip with ParksPlusHiking.com. Safety, fun, everything one would want.
- I am even happier to be able to keep up – even if only sometimes.
- Parts of Pinnacle National Park reminds me of Angels Landing in Zion National Park, only shorter. Thank heavens.

Pictures compliments of Nola:



Crazy? I thought so, but we all did it, just some of us whining a bit more than others. Then glad we'd done it.

Travel Thinking Thoughts

- About United Airlines elite status. I don't know why I didn't ever get global status as each year I have surpassed the level that they first introduced it to be. They don't tell who gets Global anymore but I sure didn't.
- On my own, and without any work mileage because my company retained it, I have been a million miler for some years and now close to 2 million.

- Travel is tiring? Not if you are spoiled with an elite status. I find it relaxing and I get quite a bit of reading done. I think being without connectivity is good. On the other hand, I suspect that pricing on airlines without first class status could be better.
- Food is crappy? I don't agree at all and that could be because I'm easy-going on food or maybe because I am amazed that they can feed so many people out of a teeny little gallery and so well and reasonably healthy.
- Yes flights are full and yes flights are often times delayed, but considering the low price we pay and the business model, I'd say they do really well. In the days of Pan American Airlines and TWA, they had back up planes and they had standby crew, but now our prices are considerably lower and we get what we pay for.
- Shopping and restaurants in airports have become like a Mall and plenty classy. Airport lounges are competing with each other to be the best. American Express centurion or United Polaris are the best I can imagine.

First report from San Francisco

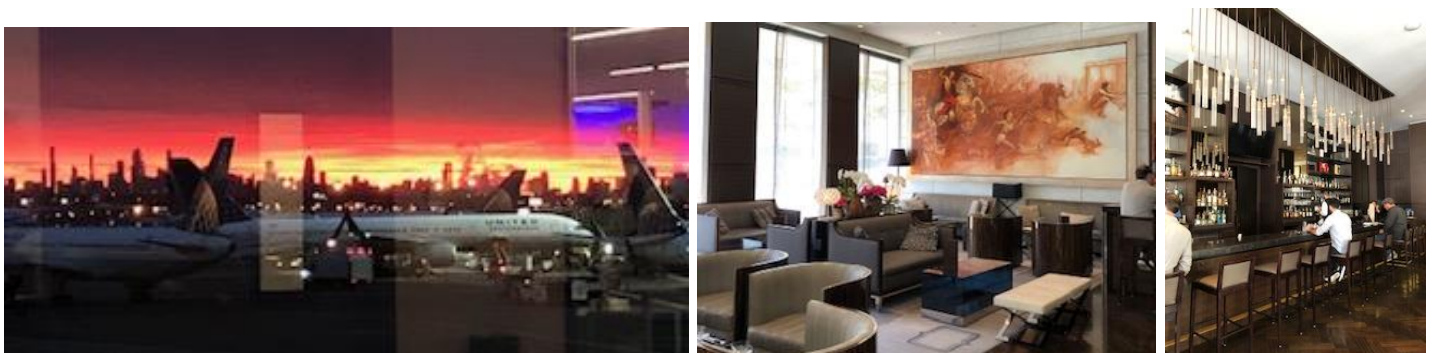
Amazing. I can wake up at the Atlantic Ocean and land at the Pacific Ocean well before noon. From the excitement of the New York City area to the dreamland of San Francisco.

Amazing too that I am given the unique opportunity of staying at the St Regis San Francisco for a nice price. Thank you for my adoption into the Marriott family who have now acquired the Starwood hotels.

And thank you for my United Airlines 1K status which upgraded me to the Dreamliner with lie flat seats.

I checked into the hotel before 11 AM and was granted a room where I hurried to the coffee pot having gotten up at 3:30 AM which translates to midnight West Coast. All of which allowed me much of the day on my feet renewing acquaintances with San Francisco. I have been here many times both for personal travel and for business. I also grew up in the valley.

I will be here through Saturday evening; on Sunday I join a hiking group going to pinnacles national Park and along the Big Sur coast.



Wow. It is no wonder that there was a lineup of people with their cameras out. Was it because of the beauty or to prove how early we got up?

Into the St Regis I found it to be understated elegance. Top-quality everything with the best of service and even more importantly an amazingly sweet price for me. My 8th floor room overlooks the gardens at the Museum of modern Art and the convention center.

More San Francisco

I thought it was another marathon day but according to the pedometer it just felt that way. Am I getting older and tire more easily?

After walking through and enjoying at the Buena Vista Park and the Martin Luther King waterfall memorial, I walked down as far as the tenderloin area but then chickened out going any farther. The homeless have taken over the streets. (Stunning. See SFO homeless report:<https://amp.businessinsider.com/un-expert-san-francisco-homeless-cruelty-2018-11>)

So I walked up and through Union Square, but not being a shopper, that didn't take all that much time. The famous dome in Neiman Marcus took on more significance when I read its history. I continued on up the Stockton Hill and into Chinatown. I went by the French restaurant at the entrance to china town but decided I wasn't hungry enough to warrant such a meal yet. Nor to go into the fortune cookie factory where they give samples. Had I seen a place for bubble tea, I would have stopped. Within time I found myself heading into North Beach and the long Columbus Avenue, passing by Washington Square and the cathedral where Marilyn Monroe and Joe DiMaggio were married, and also by numerous restaurants I have frequented in the past. The "stinking rose" brings a smile to my face remembering a meal there that must have included a whole bouquet of garlic. (Obviously famous for their garlic dishes). I presume I exuded garlic for a few days thereafter. Today I remembered (and needed) where the restrooms were in the back of the restaurant so I exuded enough there to continue my walk. Starbucks and Subway lock their restrooms and I can only presume it is because of the many homeless.

At the end of Columbus Avenue is the Powell and Mason Street trolley/tram full of laughing and loud tourists hanging off the rails and then at the end a long line to get the return trip. From there it's quite near to Ghirardelli Square and the free chocolates giving one enough energy to continue along the water to fisherman's wharf. I got as far as the famous sourdough bread restaurant Boudin when I got an email directive from my friend Sharon who lives part-time in North Beach that I should eat fresh seafood at Scoma's <https://scomas.com/about/>. No joke. Thank you Sharon. Quite the place.

It was a walk to go backwards and out a long pier I have never been before but well worth it. It is the only known restaurant in the area that has their own fish dock. As local customers came in, I could hear the wait staff explaining what boat and what captain had brought in what catch of the day. Though it was a very simple lunch order, I managed to spend \$70. You don't get fresh for cheap. I needed not only the food and the glass of wine but a rest because my little tootsies were very tired and I was reasonably sure that I had put on at least a half marathon of steps. I knew I had climbed many hills. Leaving Scoma's, I went through the very touristy fisherman's wharf and along the Embarcadero before starting up the hill to Coit Tower through a lovely water course and waterfall park. Better sense over took me and so continued toward market Street and finally back through Union Square and then my hotel. I would've had a drink in the St Regis lovely understated elegant lobby until I saw that one glass of wine started at \$23 - add tax and tip.

Later when I declined the hotel's evening turn down service but jokingly said I'd take the pillow chocolate, this sweet little attendant offered to have some sent to me. I declined that too — but rather quickly along came delivery of a lovely St Regis bag filled with four little boxes of chocolate. They will keep their five star rating as far as I am concerned.

Tomorrow Friday brings a visit with friend Tracy who I haven't seen for too long. We met on our way to Sydney and then ran into each other coincidentally while in Sydney. She has hosted Marie on a visit through Stanford, visited us in a San Francisco townhouse rental, and taken up a half marathon challenge of one event a month. In California it is easier to do because there are so many year-round. I look forward to a catch-up with her on Friday, and will then go on to Stanford on Saturday before starting a hike on Sunday out of San Jose.



In the Buena Vista Park across from my hotel with a view of MOMA.



Chinatown is one of the most densely populated areas in the Americas. It is thought that there are many who aren't even counted.

The Transamerica building.

The Stinking Rose sounds like a joke but it's been highly rated by many TV chef personalities. It's a joke to me, but I've eaten there.



These little go cart looking thing this give you a GPS tour of San Francisco.



Mounds and mounds of crab and shrimp and I ate the whole thing. To include lots of sourdough bread so I didn't need to stop again to eat in Boudin. Boudin seems to sell a lot of bread in the shape of lobsters and crab. This new "tallest" in San Francisco is a new start up and they are donating millions and trying to help with the homeless. Looks like they could house a lot of folks but that's apparently not the plan.

You can go tour this new high rise of San Francisco. There are tours but they are booked up through July.

Friday - maybe MOMA.

Goodbye San Francisco – Hello Big Sur

After a couple of super days in San Francisco and then Sanford with friend Tracy I am off to hike first in the Big Sur area and then in Pinnacles National Park.

I will miss the perfect location and the St. Regis Hotel for simpler but plenty OK accommodations. It starts in San Jose at the residence Inn. While that is a world away in luxury it is lots for the money. From St Regis: This upscale high-rise hotel next to the Museum of Modern Art is a 4-minute walk from the Moscone Center and a 9-minute walk from Union Square. The refined rooms with marble and exotic-wood details feature chaise lounges, flat-screens plus rainfall showers and soaking tubs open to the room (with optional privacy screens). Upgraded rooms add city/park views, while suites come with in-room butler service and separate living areas.

I gave up their breakfast - not willing to pay \$40 and went for groceries at Trader Joe's instead. It's a good thing I went to Trader Joe's and brought some leftovers to San Jose because I leave before breakfast begins at Residence Inn.

In San Francisco Tracy and I managed to get to the food trucks in time for lunch tacos before heading to MOMA. A docent tour plus some time in a special exhibit that only goes on a few days more. Then we were off for another meal and chose DelFina on Mission, next door to The Grove.

The Sea Ranch <https://www.sfmoma.org/exhibition/sea-ranch/> at MOMA.

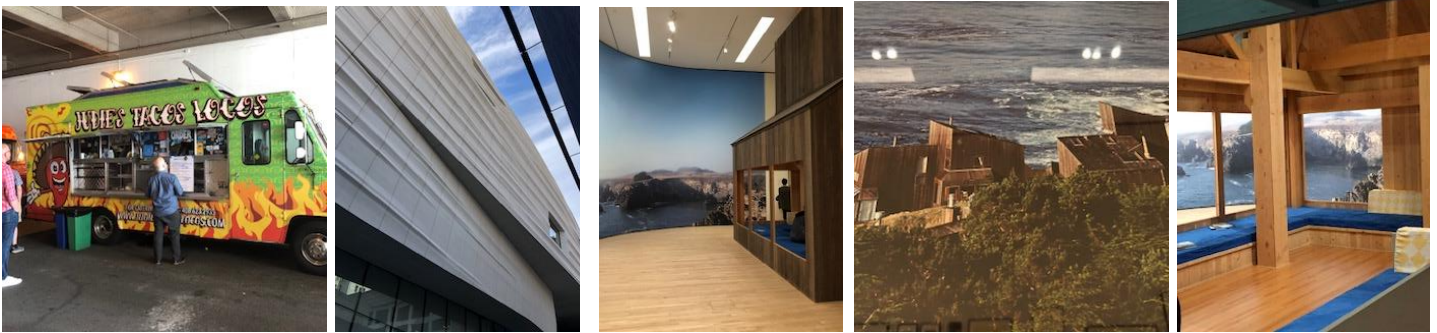
Distinctive architecture, uninhibited ocean views, bold super-graphics, shared open space, and meditative tranquility — these were the beginnings of The Sea Ranch, a beacon of Modernism on the Northern California coast. Designed by a small group of Bay Area architects and designers in the early 1960s, the development was envisioned as a progressive, inclusive community, guided by the idealistic principles of good design, economy of space, and harmony with the natural environment. This exhibition brings together original sketches and drawings from the project's designers, along with archival images, photographs of The Sea Ranch today, and a full-scale architectural replica. The environmentally attentive design philosophies explored at The Sea Ranch, along with the now-iconic graphics, resonated globally and continue to influence architecture and design today.

Saturday took me to Stanford to meet up with Tracy at the Anderson Collection - Art Museum <https://anderson.stanford.edu/>. Another docent tour which I needed for all the modern art. Then onto a new special exhibit about recently found Vietnam photography from the war time. It was emotional and required a rather quick wine or two thereafter and another California type healthy and lovely meal with lots of good conversation. "We Shot the War" <https://www.hoover.org/events/exhibition-we-shot-war-overseas-weekly-vietnam> The Hoover Institution hosted a live panel for "We Shot the War: Overseas Weekly in Vietnam" featuring Fred Turner, Cynthia Copple, Mai Elliott, and Phil Gioia.

Rarely seen photographs take center stage for the Hoover Library & Archives' new exhibition We Shot the War: Overseas Weekly in Vietnam. Exploring the interrelationships between art, journalism, and politics, the exhibition features photographs submitted to the Overseas Weekly's Pacific edition—a military tabloid at once beloved by troops and reviled by the Pentagon for its controversial

content. The Vietnam War occurred in a period of dramatic political, social, and cultural upheaval. The harrowing images that emerged from this era have shaped public opinion, have left indelible imprints on the American psyche, and continue to rivet viewers today. This exhibition adds new material to the canon, presenting intimate images of soldiers and civilians taken by photojournalists who immersed themselves in the daily life of the war-torn nation. The photographs reveal the gritty realism of combat alongside sanguine moments of hope and humanity in fresh and unfamiliar ways, strengthening our understanding of the realities of wartime. These rare photographs—spanning 1966 to 1972—emerge from a vast collection of 20,000 film negatives acquired by the Hoover Archives in 2014.

The hike. From www.ParksPlusHiking.com: In early 2013, President Obama signed legislation creating our nation's 59th and newest national park, Pinnacles. In 2019, Parks Plus Hiking will visit Pinnacles for the first time to marvel at the colossal namesake rock formations, strange talus caves, and stark yet vibrant desert landscape. While in the area, we'll also spend two days drinking in the sweeping Pacific Ocean vistas on coastal trails near Big Sur, CA. For good measure, we'll also spend a day exploring Fort Ord National Monument, itself created in just 2012.



There is a website called “off the grid” where you can find out where the food trucks are. We had Russian, Vietnamese, Mexican, and all sorts of countries represented in about seven trucks. The new addition to MOMA was not jokingly said to be designed with the idea of a box of Kleenex outside of the box.

The Sea Ranch exhibit gave us a real House inside the museum. If you don't know about Sea Ranch or their logo, look at recent pictures of Robert Mueller when he is wearing a Sea Ranch baseball cap.



Obviously we are into MOMA regular art displays. Some good and some need explanation. Coincidentally we had both Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera shown on our tour and Tom and I and a local friend have a special day about Frida Kahlo coming up on May 2 at the Brooklyn Museum. Do you recognize this Santa Fe artist? She thought these mountains were like elephants. We heard the area is now full of fracking equipment. Georgia O'Keeffe would be devastated. Tracy with a much calmer Mondrian (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Piet_Mondrian before going onto a very angry Diego Rivera. I never had but after some help I could see all the hands and hurt woman figure in this. It was painted shortly after his first divorce from Frida who he knew he had hurt deeply as much because of all his affairs.



I do have a little more understanding now of the Rothko art. I was once blessed with a tour of the Houston chapel with three walls of what first look like all black Rothko. Maybe I never sit still long enough but I never quite got to the meditative feel and look it was supposed to give me. I did finally see the gradations of black with tones of blue. I am pleased to have just looked up and found that this chapel and the three Rothko paintings survived the flood.

We are still in the San Francisco MOMA and this is the old section. It has a sweet remembrance for me being up on this glass bridge during a cocktail party with disco lights and music below. The whole place (to include me) vibrated.

On Saturday I met Tracy at the Anderson Collection Art Museum <https://anderson.stanford.edu/>.

It is so special that this family collected not just art but friendship with the artists and have now donated all of their collection to Stanford. We stopped for a while at this tree out front. Don't you think it is art in itself?

In the interior of the new San Francisco MOMA used to be this giant piece of art. It is hard to imagine how many trucks it took to move the steel labyrinth sculpture to its new location outside of the Anderson art museum.



I have always enjoyed this artist whether I understood it or not. I do understand the dramatic stairway being a piece of art in itself.

Off to more of Stanford campus. A dream. Tracy went to school there, played volleyball on a scholarship and we went and watched a little bit of beach volleyball. She lives within an easy walk of campus. We were last there when we delivered a Marie for a summer internship program.



We look good with wine glasses in our hand, don't you think? Something I can do well.

Days 1-3 hiking

Shocker. From a 5-star hotel to a 1-star hotel. Well, maybe that's not exactly fair. The rustic cabin was certainly in a 5-star location. A big time saving-grace was it reminded me of a happy time in my childhood when the family would go to the very simple wood cabin near the Truckee River at Lake Tahoe well before Lake Tahoe got to be fashionable.

Here is from the website: <https://ripplewoodresort.com/> - Surrounded by forest along the Big Sur River and the Cabrillo Highway, this complex of rustic cabins is 2 miles from Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park and 5 miles from Pfeiffer Beach. Rustic, unpretentious cabins (no TVs) provide mini-fridges, coffeemakers and decks, plus ceiling fans, bed linen and towels. Upgraded cabins add kitchens, fireplaces and living rooms, as well as river views, outdoor sitting areas and/or fire pits. A quaint cafe serving breakfast and lunch. There's also a modest convenience store. End.

They forgot to tell that there was no phone, no cell coverage, and no Wi-Fi. All to great distress by Tom when he couldn't find me, or my hiking leaders, or even get the hotel to answer. Add - no hairdryer (available by request) so it was just as well that the shower didn't provide enough water to wash my hair. (But they quickly sent a maintenance fellow to give me a new shower head even though it was Easter). The kitchen was pure 1950s and the plumbing mostly worked. (It became evident why there was a toilet plunger available.).

But wow, sitting on the deck with the running stream, looking up at the huge redwoods, and watching the Stellar Jay's play, all with a glass of wine, probably made it all worthwhile. (Truth in packaging requires me to say that we were able to get Wi-Fi in the little grocery store across the highway. Yet it took walking up a steep dark and long hill.) Though some said it was "just one step up from camping" I suspect we all thought it was a memorable experience and worthy of a repeat.

For hiking, it is a dream to hike along the ocean high cliff and then come back through the forest of redwoods. It was not a dream to be warned about the ticks and see the huge amounts of poison oak. But, touchwood, all have been avoided so far. (Later, I broke out with small clusters on various body parts after getting home.)

Most Beautiful Drives in the U.S.: <https://blog.seeqr.com/most-scenic-drives-in-us/>

Another shocker may be on its way. The weather has been absolutely perfect in the high 60s with a nice breeze and plenty of blue skies. (Quite cold at night). In a day or two it is expected to be 90°.

Sunday, Day 1 of hike.

Fort Ord National Monument, Distance: 9 mi, elevation Equivalent to 68 flights of stairs per my pedometer. Difficulty: 2

Many of the low hills of central California exhibit a wet/cool winter and dry/hot summer weather pattern. A classic example of this ecosystem is Ford Ord National Monument near Monterey. On the first day of our new Pinnacles/Big Sur tour, we'll hike a number of the trails that crisscross Fort Ord. Not only a great warmup for the more challenging trails to come, this day should also provide great scenery and abundant spring wildflowers. Following our hike, we'll make our way to Big Sur and the Ripplewood Resort with its comfortable, rustic, riverside cabins set in a redwood forest. End.

I forgot the power of the sun near to the coast and got quite a sunburn on my arms.

Monday - Day 2 of hike

Bluffs, Panorama, Ridge Trails, Distance: 9 mi, Elevation equivalent to 97 flights of stairs, or 1200 feet up, Difficulty: 4

Today's destination is Andrew Molero State Park. There we'll hike a fascinating loop boasting stunning ocean views, a quiet, shaded redwood grove, vibrant wild flowers, and even two (barefoot/knee-deep) river crossings. Classic coastal California hiking!

Tue - Day 3 of hike

Manuel Peak, Distance: 9 mi, Difficulty: 5

Quoting a popular TV chef, today we "kick it up a notch" with our challenging ascent of the Mt. Manuel Trail. Located in Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park and the Silver Peak Wilderness, this trail climbs steadily along verdant hillsides revealing expansive views of the Pacific Ocean to the west, the Santa Lucia Range to the east, and abundant wildflowers all around. Following the hike, we'll head north to Salinas, the base for our upcoming exploration of Pinnacles National Park. End

After two nights in very rustic and beautiful surroundings, we move to the very modern and simple surroundings of Hampton Inn in Salinas where we will stay for three nights – and be connected!



Some beautiful canopy-trails.

My cabin number eight. It had a porch deck that hung over a fast running creek bed and was surrounded by huge old redwoods. It was however something from the 50s. Most of us agreed that the surroundings were beautiful and memorable and that the cabins were just one step up from camping.

Some like the water crossing and some made a big to-do out of it.



That is my cousin Cheryl and hiking leader Steve crossing back over the stream bed.



It was here that I could get some Wi-Fi. But it was up a steep hill, sometimes in the dark and didn't always work. I'm told this is a Steller's jay.

Day three hike had some beautiful terrain but it became hot and I decided not to even try for the top. I got over 2000 feet up and was tired of worrying about slipping on the steep loose gravel. About half of our people did get to the top which was 3300 feet.

Last days of hiking - minus one when I copped out.

The Weather took a major turn. It went from wonderful to disgustingly hot. At Big Sur and staying in the cabins at Ripplewood, we were wearing our down-filled jackets in the evening. Long sleeves while we were hiking along the coast. Moving to Salina it became warmer and warmer but not nearly as warm as it was inland at Pinnacles National Park. When we came back from our Wednesday hike, the van temp showed 96°, though it probably really only topped out at 91°. That may have been record heat for the area at this time of year. Thus I created not a strenuous rating but a BF rating. Not BFF for Best Friends Forever (though I had some of those on the hike) and not any X-rated words (though I secretly thought some of them) but the heat results required a BF=Barf Factor. Nola thought I'd been on too many fat/lazy cruises and she is mostly right. I thought age and heat contributed equally.

The first hot day gave us a lot of stream crossings which a couple of us utilized to cool off. We didn't hesitate to half strip and soak our shirts, bandannas, and hats in the streambed. We didn't mind the slimy green stream and probably dipped 5-6 times. I sure need laundry!

The second hot day proved at least two of us to be wimps. I canceled out. The body needed a rest, I knew I didn't need (or want) daily exercise, and I wanted nothing to do with 90° temperatures with lots of elevation to climb in the open fields under full sun. I do "nothing" very well.

There was an idea of what to do with my day off - just across the street from the remote hotel. It was called East of Eden Co. It looks like it might be a pharmacy but closer inspection found it to be a cannabis store. We don't have such in our tristate region. Yet.

Pinnacles National Park. https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pinnacles_National_Park

Wed - Day 4 of hike

North Wilderness & Balcony Caves Loop, Distance: 9 mi, Difficulty: 4, BF: 4 of 5.

For our initial visit to Pinnacles, we will explore the park's more remote north side beginning on the aptly named North Wilderness Trail. Just past Willow Springs, we'll connect to the Old Pinnacles Trail, then complete the loop on the Balconies Trail. Bring your flashlight, as Balconies Cave--a talus cave formed in the interstices under piles of very large boulders--requires some scrambling on dark, steep, uneven steps. (Don't worry, we'll bring a couple of extra lights in case you forget.) End.

The cave scrambling and some of the trail required steps beyond what my legs could do. Thank you to Jeff the trainer for my arm strength which plenty of times pulled me up. By rock or by trekking pole. It was no surprise to me that my upper body had some soreness whereas my legs never did.

Thu - Day 5 of hike

North Chalone Peak, Distance: 13 mi, Difficulty: 5

Our longest of this tour, the hike to North Chalone Peak starts on Pinnacles' west side Chaparral trailhead, crosses the spine of the park on the High Peaks Trails, then ascends 3,300' North Chalone Peak. We'll revel in the awesome views at the summit before retracing our steps back to the trailhead. End.

Thankfully I did not go as I'm sure the BF would have been 5. It was a very long day for everyone and some turned back early.

Fri - Day 6 of hike

Bear Gulch Cave, High Peaks, Condor Gulch Trails, Distance: 6 mi, Difficulty: 4, BF: 5

(It turned out to be more miles and maybe should change to a difficulty 5 rating next year.)

High Peaks Loop: <https://modernhiker.com/hike/hiking-the-high-peaks-loop-in-pinnacles-national-monument/>

Closing out our three days in Pinnacles, today we'll visit two of the park's most famous features. First, we'll break out our flashlights again as we explore Bear Gulch Cave, another classic talus cave. Exiting the cave, we'll climb back to the spine of the park near Hawkins Peak and then hike the technical section of the High Peaks Trail with its single-file rock-chipped steps and narrow ledges. (Note that protective metal handrails are installed on the steepest portions of this trail.) Once back on a "conventional" trail, we'll watch for California condors that call Pinnacles home as we make our way back to the Bear Gulch trailhead and ultimately back to San Jose (by van!) to conclude the tour. End.

I would rate this trail somewhere very near to Angels Landing in Zion National Park that I've done twice. Just shorter. I go UP fairly easily but then I am spooked going DOWN. GPS showed we did 1700 plus feet of elevation. My pedometer showed 9.1 miles and 91 flights of stairs combined. (Honest - a coincidence). It took me an unusually long time thereafter before I was able to eat anything and drinking I could never keep up with the sweating.

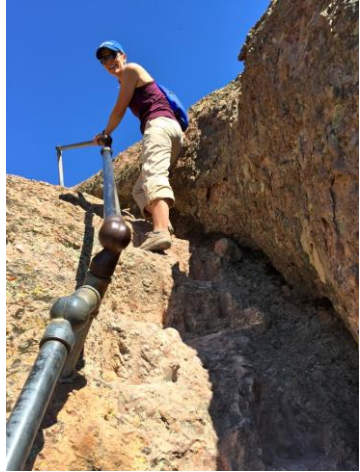
Tom asks: you call this fun? Yes. Only after we are done or in some cases, days later.



Between the picture above and the one below it was much too dark and spooky to take pictures and besides I needed both hands.



There's a little dot on the front face which is a rock climber with ropes. Back in are a bunch of other crazy hikers going up the stone steps and holding fast onto the metal railing where it existed. All of the following pictures are off the web. My hands were too busy holding onto my poles to take many pictures. I was too far in the back to take the time.



The End! Would I go again? Probably NO. But I am very glad I went once.

Overview per iPhone Pedometer

Sun, 9 miles, 68 flights of stairs

Mon, 8.7 miles, 92 flights

Tue, 8 miles, 78 flights

Wed, 10.2 miles, 58 flights

Thu, 1 mile, 3 flights – took the day OFF

Fri, 7.1 miles, 91 flights (officially only 6 miles so I must have been spooked enough to take more tiny steps)

What a nice end! Thrilled to get this:

.... your travel writing is getting better and better. I like your introspection on the vicissitudes of aging as it bears on the travel experience, particularly on the strenuous outings you continue to pursue. Only a very honest person would examine the difficulties within an ambitious trail agenda and separate the challenges into those strictly terrain and climate based and then overlay the compounding effect of older legs, feet and backs. I commend your good sense in "taking a pass" on some of the more difficult days; as we age it is easier to sustain injuries and slower on the recovery. Some recreational and pro athletes never seem to make that necessary adjustment. Your BF (barf factor) analysis is brilliant! As rational a gage as any to assess the coming day's requirements. Bravo! Keep the commentary coming!

Itinerary

Wed Apr 17

7:00am Depart Newark EWR via UA#1848

10:14am Arrive San Francisco SFO

Transport Air Bart to BART station to Montgomery Station
Choose East Bay or SFO; at Montgomery, exit up, go on Montgomery Street
At the Palace Hotel, Right on Mission.

Hotel The St Regis San Francisco – 3 nights
125 3rd Street, San Francisco, CA 94103 Tele: 415 284 4000

This upscale high-rise hotel next to the Museum of Modern Art is a 4-minute walk from the Moscone Center and a 9-minute walk from Union Square. The refined rooms with marble and exotic-wood details feature chaise lounges, flat-screens and Internet access (fee), plus rainfall showers and soaking tubs open to the room (with optional privacy screens). Upgraded rooms add city/park views, while suites come with in-room butler service and separate living areas. There's a fine-dining restaurant, and a casual eatery serving breakfast and lunch. Other amenities include a posh spa, a 24-hour gym and an indoor pool.

Fri or Sat Apr 19 or 20

With Tracy Hughes, probably in SFO Friday and public transport to meet up in Stanford on Saturday. TBD.

Friday: Food truck markets" <https://offthegrid.com/>

Fun Fact: 4:20 is the, now outdated, municipal code for marijuana violations. SFO will be full.

The Sea Ranch <https://www.sfmoma.org/exhibition/sea-ranch/> at MOMA.

Floor 6 - Distinctive architecture, uninhibited ocean views, bold super-graphics, shared open space, and meditative tranquility — these were the beginnings of The Sea Ranch, a beacon of Modernism on the Northern California coast. Designed by a small group of Bay Area architects and designers in the early 1960s, the development was envisioned as a progressive, inclusive community, guided by the idealistic principles of good design, economy of space, and harmony with the natural environment. This exhibition brings together original sketches and drawings from the project's designers, along with archival images, photographs of The Sea Ranch today, and a full-scale architectural replica. The environmentally attentive design philosophies explored at The Sea Ranch, along with the now-iconic graphics, resonated globally and continue to influence architecture and design today.

Ohana Floor of the newest (and tallest) addition to the SF Skyline... the Salesforce Tower. Sadly, it appears that their Saturday public tours are booked through July! Here's the site to keep an eye on for the future: <https://salesforcetowertours.com/>

Saturday at Stanford is the last day of a photo exhibit. We Shot the War

<https://www.hoover.org/events/exhibition-we-shot-war-overseas-weekly-vietnam>

The Hoover Institution hosted a live panel for "We Shot the War: Overseas Weekly in Vietnam" featuring Fred Turner, Cynthia Copple, Mai Elliott, and Phil Gioia. Rarely seen photographs take center stage for the Hoover Library & Archives' new exhibition We Shot the War: Overseas Weekly in Vietnam. Exploring the interrelationships between art, journalism, and politics, the exhibition features photographs submitted to the Overseas Weekly's Pacific edition—a military tabloid at once beloved by troops and reviled by the Pentagon for its controversial content.

The Vietnam War occurred in a period of dramatic political, social, and cultural upheaval. The harrowing images that emerged from this era have shaped public opinion, have left indelible imprints on the American psyche, and continue to rivet viewers today. This exhibition adds new material to the canon, presenting intimate images of soldiers and civilians taken by photojournalists who immersed themselves in the daily life of the war-torn nation. The photographs reveal the gritty realism of combat alongside sanguine moments of hope and humanity in fresh and unfamiliar ways, strengthening our understanding of the realities of wartime. These rare photographs—spanning 1966 to 1972—emerge from a vast collection of 20,000 film negatives acquired by the Hoover Archives in 2014. The exhibition is open to the public, free of charge, Tuesday–Saturday from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm in the Herbert Hoover Memorial Exhibit Pavilion, next to Hoover Tower, on the Stanford University campus. Parking on campus is free on Saturdays.

Saturday 4/20 is the Stanford Night Market: <https://events.stanford.edu/events/826/82673/>
The Stanford Night Market is a tradition hosted by the Taiwanese Cultural Society at Stanford University since 2001. Originally held inside Tresidder Oak Lounge, the Stanford Night Market grew and evolved over the years to become a prominent event on campus. Today, the Stanford Night Market is held in White Plaza between the Tresidder Student Union and the Post Office. Working with various other clubs on campus such as the Stanford Vietnamese Student Association (SVSA), Asian American Student Association (AASA), the Stanford Chinese Music Ensemble, the Stanford Undergraduate Chinese American Association (UCAA), and more, the Stanford Night Market brings people together for an evening of excitement and fun! 5:00 pm – 7:30 pm.
Anderson Collection at Stanford: <https://anderson.stanford.edu/> Docent tours are 12:30 and 2:30 on Saturdays.

Sat Apr 20

Late PM https://www.sftodo.com/parking/san_jose_airport_shuttle_vans.htm

Transportation Basics: How to Get from San Francisco from SJC

<https://www.sftravel.com/article/transportation-basics-how-get-san-francisco-sjc>

CalTrain schedule (weekend schedules differ) <http://www.caltrain.com/schedules.html>

Take SF to Menlo Park / Palo Alto. Tracy will pick up and store luggage in car.

Maybe get a view of the “Fred Flintstone’s Place”:

<https://www.nbclosangeles.com/news/local/Flintstones-House-Hillsborough-California-508096381.html>

Hotel Residence Inn San Jose Airport – 1 night
10 Skyport Drive, San Jose, CA 95110 Tele 408 650 0580

Host Hotel Country Inn and Suites by Radisson at airport
1350 N 4th St., San Jose, CA 95112 Tele: (408) 467-1789
<https://www.countryinns.com/san-jose-hotel-ca-95112/usasnca>

Sun Apr 21

8:00 am Start at Country Inn and Suites

From www.ParksPlusHiking.com - In early 2013, President Obama signed legislation creating our nation's 59th and newest national park, Pinnacles. In 2019, Parks Plus Hiking will visit Pinnacles for the first time to marvel at the colossal namesake rock formations, strange talus caves, and stark yet vibrant desert landscape. While in the area, we'll also spend two days drinking in the sweeping Pacific

Ocean vistas on coastal trails near Big Sur, CA. For good measure, we'll also spend a day exploring Fort Ord National Monument, itself created in just 2012.

Sun Apr 21 - Day 1 of hike

Fort Ord National Monument, Distance: 7 mi, Difficulty: 2

Lodging: Ripplewood Resort – 1st of 2 nights
47047 CA-1, Big Sur, CA 93920 Tele: 831 667-2242

From <https://ripplewoodresort.com/> - Surrounded by forest along the Big Sur River and the Cabrillo Highway, this complex of rustic cabins is 2 miles from Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park and 5 miles from Pfeiffer Beach. Rustic, unpretentious cabins (no TVs) provide mini-fridges, coffeemakers and decks, plus ceiling fans, bed linen and towels. Upgraded cabins add kitchens, fireplaces and living rooms, as well as river views, outdoor sitting areas and/or fire pits. A quaint cafe serving breakfast and lunch. There's also a modest convenience store.

Many of the low hills of central California exhibit a wet/cool winter and dry/hot summer weather pattern. A classic example of this ecosystem is Ford Ord National Monument near Monterey. On the first day of our new Pinnacles/Big Sur tour, we'll hike a number of the trails that crisscross Fort Ord. Not only a great warmup for the more challenging trails to come, this day should also provide great scenery and abundant spring wildflowers. Following our hike, we'll make our way to Big Sur and the Ripplewood Resort with its comfortable, rustic, riverside cabins set in a redwood forest.

Mon Apr 22 - Day 2 of hike

Bluffs, Panorama, Ridge Trails, Distance: 8 mi, Difficulty: 4

Lodging: Ripplewood Resort – 2nd of 2 nights

Today's destination is Andrew Molero State Park. There we'll hike a fascinating loop boasting stunning ocean views, a quiet, shaded redwood grove, vibrant wild flowers, and even two (barefoot/knee-deep) river crossings. Classic coastal California hiking!

Tue Apr 23 - Day 3 of hike

Manuel Peak, Distance: 9 mi, Difficulty: 5

Lodging: Hampton Inn – 1st of 3 nights
23 Work Street, Salinas, California, 93901 Tele: 831-754-4700

Quoting a popular TV chef, today we "kick it up a notch" with our challenging ascent of the Mt. Manuel Trail. Located in Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park and the Silver Peak Wilderness, this trail climbs steadily along verdant hillsides revealing expansive views of the Pacific Ocean to the west, the Santa Lucia Range to the east, and abundant wildflowers all around. Following the hike, we'll head north to Salinas, the base for our upcoming exploration of Pinnacles National Park.

Wed Apr 24 - Day 4 of hike

North Wilderness & Balcony Caves Loop, Distance: 9 mi, Difficulty: 4

Lodging: Hampton Inn – 2nd of 3 nights

For our initial visit to Pinnacles, we will explore the park's more remote north side beginning on the aptly named North Wilderness Trail. Just past Willow Springs, we'll connect to the Old Pinnacles Trail, then complete the loop on the Balconies Trail. Bring your flashlight, as Balconies Cave--a talus cave

formed in the interstices under piles of very large boulders--requires some scrambling on dark, steep, uneven steps. (Don't worry, we'll bring a couple of extra lights in case you forget.)

Thu Apr 25 - Day 5 of hike

North Chalone Peak, Distance: 13 mi, Difficulty: 5

Lodging: Hampton Inn – 3rd of 3 nights

Our longest of this tour, the hike to North Chalone Peak starts on Pinnacles' west side Chaparral trailhead, crosses the spine of the park on the High Peaks Trails, then ascends 3,300' North Chalone Peak. We'll revel in the awesome views at the summit before retracing our steps back to the trailhead.

Fri Apr 26 - Day 6 of hike

Bear Gulch Cave, High Peaks, Condor Gulch Trails, Distance: 6 mi, Difficulty: 4

Closing out our three days in Pinnacles, today we'll visit two of the park's most famous features. First, we'll break out our flashlights again as we explore Bear Gulch Cave, another classic talus cave. Exiting the cave, we'll climb back to the spine of the park near Hawkins Peak and then hike the technical section of the High Peaks Trail with its single-file rock-chipped steps and narrow ledges. (Note that protective metal handrails are installed on the steepest portions of this trail.) Once back on a "conventional" trail, we'll watch for California condors that call Pinnacles home as we make our way back to the Bear Gulch trailhead and ultimately back to San Jose (by van!) to conclude the tour.

6:00pm Drop off at host hotel Country Inn and Suites
Address above

Hotel Courtyard San Jose Airport – 1 night
1727 Technology Drive, San Jose, CA 95110 Tele: 408 441 6111
Conf#70482275 – form in file

Sat Apr 27

7:35am Depart San Jose SJC via UA#1777
1:17pm Arrive Houston IAH for plane change

2:50pm Depart Houston IAH via UA#443
7:28m Arrive Newark EWR

Try Uber – Request only when ready. Exit arrivals level, following signs to ground transport and passenger pick up. Confirm location – select your terminal and door # so driver knows.

Participants:

Cheryl Scollan
Chuck M.
Bill and Karen – at Fairfield Inn
Carol Mueller
Bill Meredith – at 4-Points

Emergency:

Emergency Assistance Plus Program – 24/7
United Mileage Plus member #0186014 (card in D's Wallet)
Tele: 866 816 2073 or 60 328 1752 collect

Links:

In San Francisco, visitors and locals ride the rails as they did a century ago -

https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/travel/in-san-francisco-visitors-and-locals-ride-the-rails-as-they-did-a-century-ago/2018/12/13/c1dcad58-f337-11e8-80d0-f7e1948d55f4_story.html