

Splash around with the Otters

by Bruce Lim

When traveling to Northern California it is recommended that you take a stop by Monterey. The small town of Monterey is most popular for the majestic tanks of the Monterey Bay Aquarium.

Not only can you see the underwater life up close and personal but you can take hikes through the sand dunes or kayak with the otters. Monterey is also famous for a world renowned golf course — Pebble Beach host of many U.S. Opens. If you don't want to get in touch with nature the seafood is fresh and tasty.

The Aquarium is home to many different sea animals. When visiting the Aquarium plan on spending a few hours walking around and learning about the different sea animals. The Sea Otter feeding can be viewed twice a day. Don't worry if you miss it because watching the otters groom is just as cute and amazing. Continue to walk around the aquarium and learn about what you can do as a consumer to make sure that the animals you are observing are around for your children and grandchildren. After taking a stroll through the aquarium, look for a good cup or bowl or clam chowder.

Stepping out of the aquarium puts you directly on Cannery Row. You can find an abundant amount of delicious food up and down Cannery Row. Before the shops and restaurants occupied the buildings, Cannery Row was exactly that — a sardine cannery. Cannery row is also home to many different candy shops, novelty stores, and restaurants.

The Old Fisherman's Grotto is great restaurant to watch the sea lions and otters swim around the bay. But if the weather is just too nice to be cooped up in a restaurant they also offer out door eating as well as a food cart to get fresh crab or shrimp cocktails as well as a piping hot bowl of clam chowder to eat on the adjacent beach. Make sure you clean up after yourself because Monterey's beaches and waterfronts are part of the National Marine Sanctuary. After having a snack you might want to take a little splash to burn off those calories.

Take a small stroll down the pier to Monterey Bay Kayaks. Where you can take a paddle through the bay and experience something memorable. While paddling around you will definitely encounter some wildlife. Otters and seals are curious creatures and enjoy taking a look at you but are not to be petted. As cute as they may look they are still wild creatures. If the idea of getting wet is not something you are keen on then think about a bay tour on a sail boat. But no matter what your choice of water craft a water tour is something not to be missed.

If you are not into the wild life of Monterey Bay think about walking or driving around town. Monterey offers many museums but walking through town you can experience many historic buildings and sculptures all around town. A trip to Monterey will be a nice trip that will include education, site seeing and relaxation for the whole family.

Chart House Restaurant off the coast of Monterey Bay.