

COMMUNITY/[TRAVEL](#)

# Discover a Slice of Italy's Amalfi Coast in the Bay Area's Sausalito

By [Patty Burness](#) Nov. 2nd, 2017



*Photo Credit: Casa Madrona Hotel & Spa*

If you've visited Italy's Amalfi Coast, you know the beauty of the azure sea, meandering coastline and picturesque fishing villages. The Bay Area has its own slice of Italian heaven in Sausalito. As close as it is to San Francisco, it's often an overlooked destination.

Sausalito is a beautiful playground—for a day trip or overnight. And it's easy to get to: Either a gorgeous ferry ride or a quick hop over the Golden Gate. My husband and I tried both options, and here's what we found.

## Stay

Some say the ferry ride from San Francisco to Sausalito is the second most beautiful in the world just behind the Star Ferry excursion between Hong Kong and Kowloon. You decide.

[Casa Madrona](#) is a quick walk across Bridgeway from the ferry. This recently renovated boutique hotel hugs the hillside and offers stunning views of Richardson Bay, Belvedere and the San Francisco skyline from almost every room. Find privacy in a luxurious setting.

The hotel property includes a contemporary wing as well as the historic mansion, originally built in 1885, which mixes Victorian finishes with the latest high-tech accessories and luxe amenities in its rooms and suites. There are also stand-alone cottages, guesthouses and bayside accommodations nestled in the hill that are equally plush. We stayed in one of these spacious, airy rooms with modern finishes, a soaking tub and private patio. (Request a room up from the street to avoid early morning noise.)



*Photo Credit: Inn Above Tide*

[The Inn Above Tide](#) is tucked into a corner of Sausalito also steps from the ferry. This deluxe hotel is situated right over the water and offers unparalleled views of the Bay, Angel Island, the San Francisco skyline and more.

The rooms are beautifully appointed—most with fireplaces and Jacuzzis. Relax on the patio and take in the active water scene filled with kayakers, sailors and rowers. Zoom in on the birds and boats with the binoculars found in each room. In the evening, meet other guests and enjoy wine and cheese in the drawing room. Head back the next day for a generous continental breakfast. Come the first of the year, a renovation is planned for more high-end suites.

### **Play & Shop**

Grab one of the complimentary bikes from The Inn Above Tide and explore Sausalito's two main streets—Bridgeway and Caledonia. You'll quickly experience the town's laid-back vibe. During World War II, Liberty ships were built here. Wander along the waterfront and see remnants of the ship building industry as well as a thriving houseboat community. Discover galleries, restaurants, antique shops and more. Unwind in one of the parks or climb up Princess Street for more shopping, beautiful homes and phenomenal views.



Photo Credit: Patty Burness

On Bridgeway, stop at [Bacchus and Venus](#) for an interesting selection of handcrafted wines from California producers. The space incorporates a wine bar and gallery so taste the small lot wines while perusing pieces from local artisans as well as unique pottery from Tunisia. Check out 175 labels from wineries that make less than 100 cases each (bottles are available for purchase). Choose by the glass with the option of a few corked by a Coravin. Favorites include the 2011 Red Wine from Parador Reserva in Napa (57 percent Cabernet Sauvignon, 43 percent Tempranillo), the 2013 Playground Cellars Tempranillo from Paso Robles and the 2008 Petite Sirah Dessert Wine from J. R. Storey. A percentage of some wine profits go to environmental causes.

Recently, [Madrigal Family Winery](#) celebrated three years in their modern Bridgeway tasting room adorned with works from local artists. From vineyard management to making wine, passion runs in the family. Their estate vineyards produce some exciting wines like these 2013s: The Bordeaux Blend, Sonnet #63 (Cabernet Sauvignon/Merlot/Cabernet Franc/Petit Verdot/Malbec), and the Cabernet Sauvignon Las Viñas del Señor. Also try these 2014s: Estate Tempranillo, Estate Cabernet Franc and the Barberis Petite Sirah.

A stop at [Lappert's Ice Cream](#) is essential. With two locations on Bridgeway, there's no reason not to. And [Pick Me Up Chocolate](#) is another spot you won't want to miss; arrange for a pairing with Madrigal wines at their tasting room.



Photo Credit: Patty Burness

[Copita](#) is a fun place to learn about tequila, savor Mexican fare and be part of a great street scene. Starting with a margarita (or two) is a must—like the Copita (Herradura blanco, fresh lime juice and agave nectar). Or create your own margarita from an extensive list of 100 percent blue agave tequilas. They also offer flights so you can sip and compare.

The menu is full of mouth watering choices like the crudo made with tender halibut served with cherries, Serrano chilis, mint basil cilantro oil and fresh lime; and the ceviche tostada made with flounder, lime, red onion, cucumber, tomato, Serrano chilis, cilantro and avocado. The Baja-style cod is prepared with a beer batter, avocado, wasabi and parmesan aioli, cabbage slaw and micro shiso served on corn tortillas made in-house. The flavor and texture of the Strawberries al Mezcal make for a great dessert.

[Poggio](#), a popular Italian trattoria, is known for its Northern Italian cuisine and fresh ingredients. There's a lively atmosphere from morning til night with a friendly neighborhood crowd, outdoor seating and views that don't quit. A glass of the Malvoti Carpeno Prosecco is a terrific way to kick off the meal.

The menu changes daily, but favorites persist: Chef's selections of cooked and cured meats done in-house, and the wood-fired veal and pork meatballs served in a zesty tomato sauce. We started with the carne cruda—a new dish made with raw, hand-cut veal, black truffle, quail egg and parmigiano reggiano. We also shared the luscious special antipasti: Burrata, stone fruit, prosciutto and arugula.

The creamy risotto was loaded with mussels, clams, shrimp and bay scallops. We paired the dishes with these reds: the Ronco dei Roseti, Le Vigne de Zamo, Friuli 2004 and the Cabernet, 'Poggio' Robert Craig, Napa, 2015. The lemon mousse with meringue and pistachios for dessert should not be missed. On Tuesday nights, Chef prepares a specially-priced supper meant for sharing.