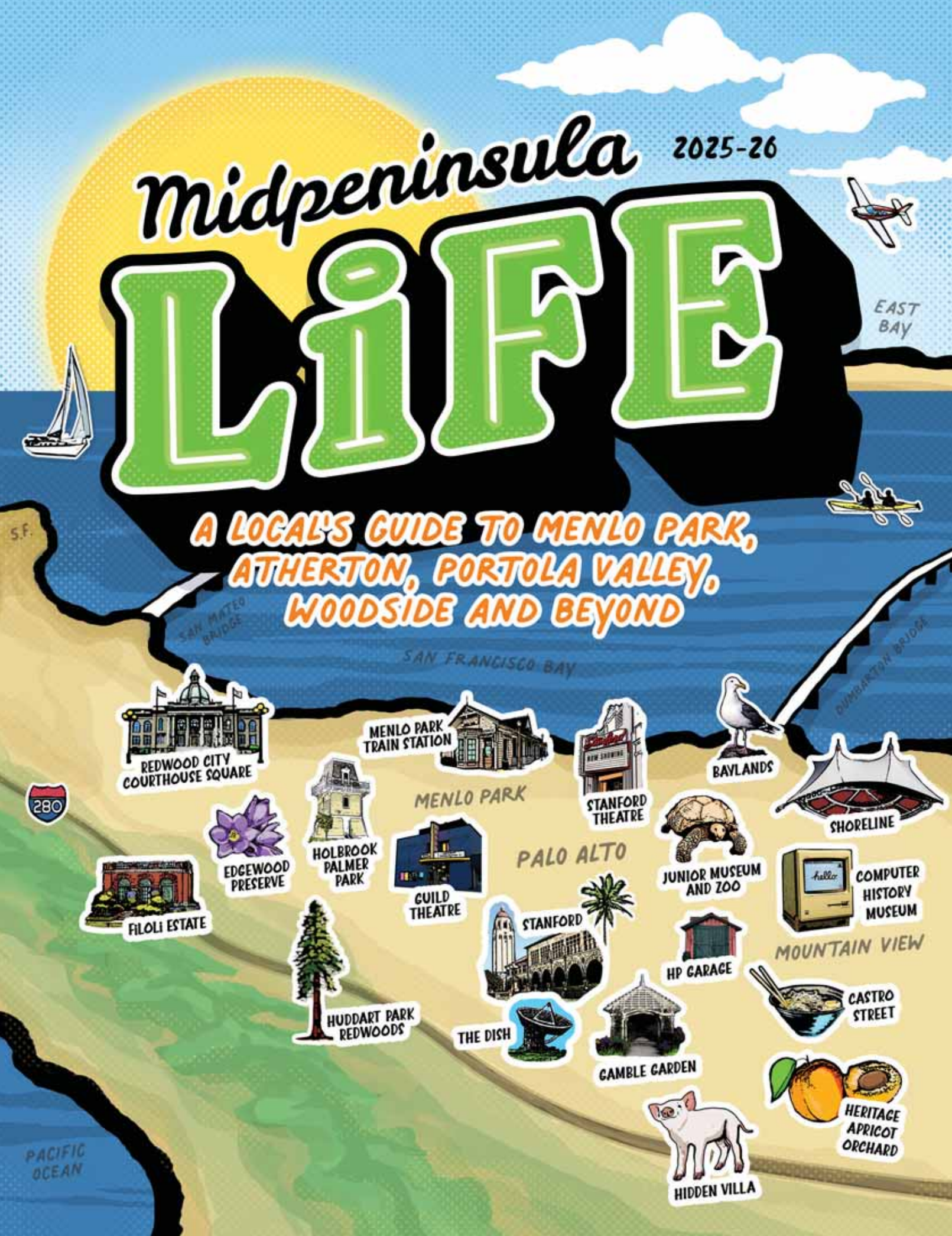


Midpeninsula

2025-26

LIFE

A LOCAL'S GUIDE TO MENLO PARK,
ATHERTON, PORTOLA VALLEY,
WOODSIDE AND BEYOND



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COURTHOUSE SQUARE



EDGEWOOD
PRESERVE



FILOLI ESTATE



HOLBROOK
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REDWOODS



MENLO PARK
TRAIN STATION



GUILD
THEATRE

MENLO PARK



STANFORD

PALO ALTO



STANFORD
THEATRE



JUNIOR MUSEUM
AND ZOO



HP GARAGE



GAMBLE GARDEN



BAYLANDS



SHORELINE



COMPUTER
HISTORY
MUSEUM

MOUNTAIN VIEW



CASTRO
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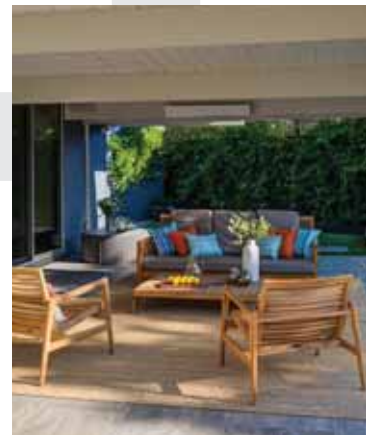
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It's Time to Renew





Allied Arts Guild in Menlo Park.
Photo by Sophia Markoulakis.

On the cover: Attractions and landmarks from life on the Midpeninsula. Photo illustration by Shannon Corey.

midpeninsula Life is The Almanac's guide of places to see and things to do along the Midpeninsula curated by our Lifestyle editors. Inside, you will find a variety of ways to explore and enjoy the unique offerings that make Menlo Park, Atherton, Portola Valley, Woodside and the greater Midpeninsula a sought-after place in which to live, including our "Trail" features of curated things to do, as well as maps and information on local parks, museums and other attractions.

In addition to this publication, you can visit AlmanacNews.com to stay up to date on news and events happening in the area, or subscribe to our free news, food, arts and Six Fifty newsletters at AlmanacNews.com/ newsletters. If you've got suggestions for next year's Midpeninsula Life, please email editor@AlmanacNews.com. We appreciate your feedback.

—**Karla Kane and Linda Taaffe**
Midpeninsula Life editors

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MIDPENINSULA LIFE

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Following the arts trail



A resident's guide for exploring music, sculptures and one-of-a-kind arts offerings along the Peninsula year-round

From outdoor jazz concerts to a collection of gigantic troll sculptures scattered among the trees in a redwood forest to a two-day festival that salutes Japanese culture and heritage, the Peninsula has no shortage of venues to experience the arts — no matter what time of year.

Each week, our arts editor Heather Zimmerman goes from community to community along the Peninsula from Mountain View to Woodside in search of arts events — whether longtime favorites, new works or one-of-a-kind offerings — to feature and share with readers.

We sorted through her coverage to create this curated list of ways to experience the arts during every season, along with some of her insider tips.

To stay up to date on the Peninsula art scene, subscribe to Weekend Express at AlmanacNews.com/weekend-express.

..... • "TROLLS: Save the Humans" on view at Filoli in Woodside. Photo by Gary Sexton. Photo courtesy Filoli House & Historic Gardens.

PALO ALTO

Great Glass Pumpkin Patch

► *Thousands of glass gourds on display, September*

1 One of the favorite signs of fall around these parts is the appearance of a particular pumpkin patch filled with gleaming glass gourds. An autumn tradition for the past 30 years, the Great Glass Pumpkin Patch brings over 10,000 blown-glass pumpkins to the grounds of the Palo Alto Art Center every fall. The event, presented by the art center and the Bay Area Glass Institute, features glass pumpkins of every size and color, as well as other autumn-themed glass pieces. Like actual pumpkins, which take time to grow, this unique harvest is months in the making, with about 25 artists working throughout the year to stock the Great Glass Pumpkin Patch. Visitors who want to learn how this pretty produce is made can check out glass-blowing demonstrations that are held throughout the weekend at the art center.

The 30th annual Great Glass Pumpkin Patch takes place at the Palo Alto Art Center (1313 Newell Road), 10 a.m.- 5 p.m., Sept. 27-28. Free. *Details: greatglasspumpkinpatch.com*

PALO ALTO

Code: ART

► *Outdoor interactive 'creative laboratory,' October*

2 Every other year, Palo Alto's downtown turns into an interactive "creative laboratory" for three days as part of Code: Art. The Palo Alto Public Art Program brings temporary public art installations and urban art interventions, or "prototypes," to various locations throughout downtown for the public to explore. This year's festival is scheduled to take place from 6-10 p.m. on Oct. 16-25 with Lytton Plaza serving as the location of the event's centerpiece. During each night of the festival, there also will be an immersive eight-story light show projected on the facade of the Palo Alto City Hall. Free. *Details: cityofpaloalto.org (search CodeArt).*

EDITOR'S SIDE NOTE:

For those who can't make the festival, there are plenty of other opportunities to explore sculptures, murals and interactive art pieces throughout Palo Alto at your own pace. The city has created

an interactive map with photos, artist information and other details for more than 120 permanent and temporary art pieces that people can use for their own self-guided tours. *Interactive map: bit.ly/44yIsDF*

STANFORD

Documentary film festival

► *'Messages for the Future,' October*

3 Stanford's United Nations Association Film Festival (unaff.org) offers 11 days of screenings of 60 films at venues in Palo Alto, East Palo Alto and the Stanford University campus Oct. 16-26. (San Francisco also hosts an evening of screenings.) The documentary films focus on human rights and vary in length from shorts to feature-length, making it easy to take in a session of as many as three or four films in an afternoon or evening. This year's theme is "Messages for the Future." Founded in 1998 by Stanford educator and film critic Jasmina Bojic in conjunction with the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the festival is one of the oldest solely documentary film festivals in the nation. Many of the documentaries screened at the festival have gone on to win Academy Awards. This year marks the festival's 28th anniversary. *Details: unaff.org*

EDITOR'S SIDE NOTE: Can't make the festival? The United Nations Association holds special screenings of documentaries featured at past festivals throughout the year at local libraries, theaters and other locations. *Schedule: unaff.org*

MOUNTAIN VIEW

Downtown music series

► *Music and street dining, April - October*

4 Mountain View's Castro Street offers two free music series. Concerts on the Plaza features bands every Friday evening from 6-7:30 p.m., June through September, in the Civic Center Plaza at 500 Castro St. The outdoor concerts include a variety of musical performances. Spectators are encouraged to bring a blanket or lawn chairs. This season's series winds down with the Drifting Cowboys (Hank Williams Tribute band) on Sept. 26.

The city's Music on Castro series features singer-songwriters who perform in the street on the 200 block of Castro, which is closed to traffic. Stores and restaurants stay open later in the evening for the event. The series takes place in the downtown commercial district every Wednesday from 5-6:45 p.m. from April through October. *Schedule: bit.ly/CastroMusic*

EDITOR'S SIDE NOTE: Looking for a more intimate setting? The Showcase at Roger Bar and Restaurant at Mountain View's Ameswell Hotel (800 Moffett Blvd.) is a monthly concert series featuring up-and-coming musicians. The curated concerts typically feature four to five artists who each play 20-minute sets, followed

Continued on page 8



10

13

4

85

MOUNTAIN
VIEW



"Grove" by Pneuhaus is among the installations that will be on display at this year's Code: Art. Photo courtesy city of Palo Alto.

Music@Menlo co-founders and artistic directors David Finckel and Wu Han. Photo courtesy Alex Irvin.



Continued from page 7

by an interview session. The series is held from 6-10 p.m., on the first Friday of each month. *Details: bit.ly/TheShowcaseSeries*

WOODSIDE

'Trolls' at Filoli

► *Temporary outdoor exhibition, now-November*

5 The wooded area at Filoli House & Historic Gardens (86 Cañada Road) has become the temporary home of six gigantic trolls scattered among the trees within Filoli's Natural Lands for guests to discover on their adventures through the property. Created by Danish sculptor Thomas Dambo, a leading recycle artist who specializes in creating large-scale sculptures, the outdoor sculptures are made from reclaimed materials and use fairytales, whimsy and monumental scale to examine how we connect to the natural environment and the importance of recycling, plants, gardens and art. "TROLLS: Save the Humans" will be on display through Nov. 10. *Tickets and information: filoli.org/trolls*

EDITOR'S SIDE NOTE: Just beyond the troll exhibit is the Lamchin Interpretive Center, a cultural museum that explores the life of the Lamchin, an independent tribe of the Ramaytush Ohlone people, who were the original inhabitants and stewards of the San Francisco Peninsula. Through murals and exhibits, learn about the basketry, food, art and history of the Lamchin. The Association of Ramaytush Ohlone (ARO), in partnership with Filoli, created an interpretive center in 2024 to share the story of the original people of this place. *Details: filoli.org/lamchin*

PALO ALTO

Stanford Theatre

► *Classic films in a historic movie palace, year-round*

6 Peninsula film lovers can catch a classic movie and hear the Wurlitzer organ play at the historic Stanford Theatre (221 University Ave.), which celebrated its 100th anniversary on June 9. Taking in a show at the Moorish-revival-style theater is much like experiencing how it was in its early heyday. Now owned by the nonprofit Stanford Theatre Foundation, the meticulously restored movie palace boasts tile floors, beamed ceilings, red velvet seats and a restored Wurlitzer organ, which includes the 1926 console from Hollywood's Grauman's Chinese Theatre and 1928-era pipes from New York's historic Loew Theatre. The organ is played live during intermissions, as well as to accompany silent films. The theater shows



Old vehicles from the 1920s park in front of Palo Alto's Stanford Theatre on June 9, 2025, for the theater's 100th anniversary celebration. Photo by Anna Hoch-Kenney.

classic movies from Hollywood's Golden Age and often hosts festivals highlighting the works of certain actors or directors. *Schedule: stanfordtheatre.org*

EDITOR'S SIDE NOTE: Moviegoers might notice a different aesthetic and feel to the classic films shown at the theater compared to newer movies — that's because the movies played at Stanford are shown on restored 35mm prints, thanks to David Packard Jr., son of Hewlett Packard co-founder David Packard. After leading restoration efforts at the Stanford Theatre in the 1980s, he turned toward preserving old 35mm films that are known to deteriorate over time. (Film historians estimate that approximately half the films made before 1951 no longer exist.) Through the Packard Humanities Institute, which is recognized as among the leading philanthropic organizations funding film preservation, he has reportedly helped restore films at a cost of \$10,000 apiece to ensure future generations will be able to enjoy classic movies.

LOS ALTOS

First Friday

► *Outdoor music, murals, immersive art displays, year-round*

7 Downtown Los Altos comes to life with music and art on the first Friday of every month when more than a dozen bands, from solo performers to 17-piece groups, perform on downtown street corners and sidewalks outside of restaurants and stores. Put on by the Los Altos Mountain View Community Foundation,

the monthly music series sprang up in 2011. Los Altos First Friday takes place year-round from 6-9 p.m. *Details: losaltosfirstfriday.org*

EDITOR'S SIDE NOTE: In addition to music, art enthusiasts at First Friday can enjoy about two dozen murals and interactive or illuminated sculptures in and around the city's downtown triangle. The collection, which includes both permanent and temporary rotating pieces, is part of a program founded by the nonprofit Los Altos Arts. As part of First Friday, free art tours are held from 5-6 p.m., starting at 169 State St. *Details: artslosaltos.org*

PALO ALTO

3rdThursday

► *Dinner and a show, year-round*

8 Live music comes to street corners and sidewalks along Palo Alto's California Avenue once a month during the city's 3rdThursday music series that launched in May 2023. The series features a variety of acts each month, ranging from full jazz bands to guitar soloists. There's also plenty of outdoor dining options and children's games set up in the street, which is closed off to traffic. Palo Alto resident Carol Garsten, the event's producer and a longtime contributor to the First Friday music scene in neighboring Los Altos, said she was inspired to bring something similar to Palo Alto. 3rdThursday runs from 6-9 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month. Free. *Details: 3rdthursday.fun*

STANFORD

Outdoor sculpture tours

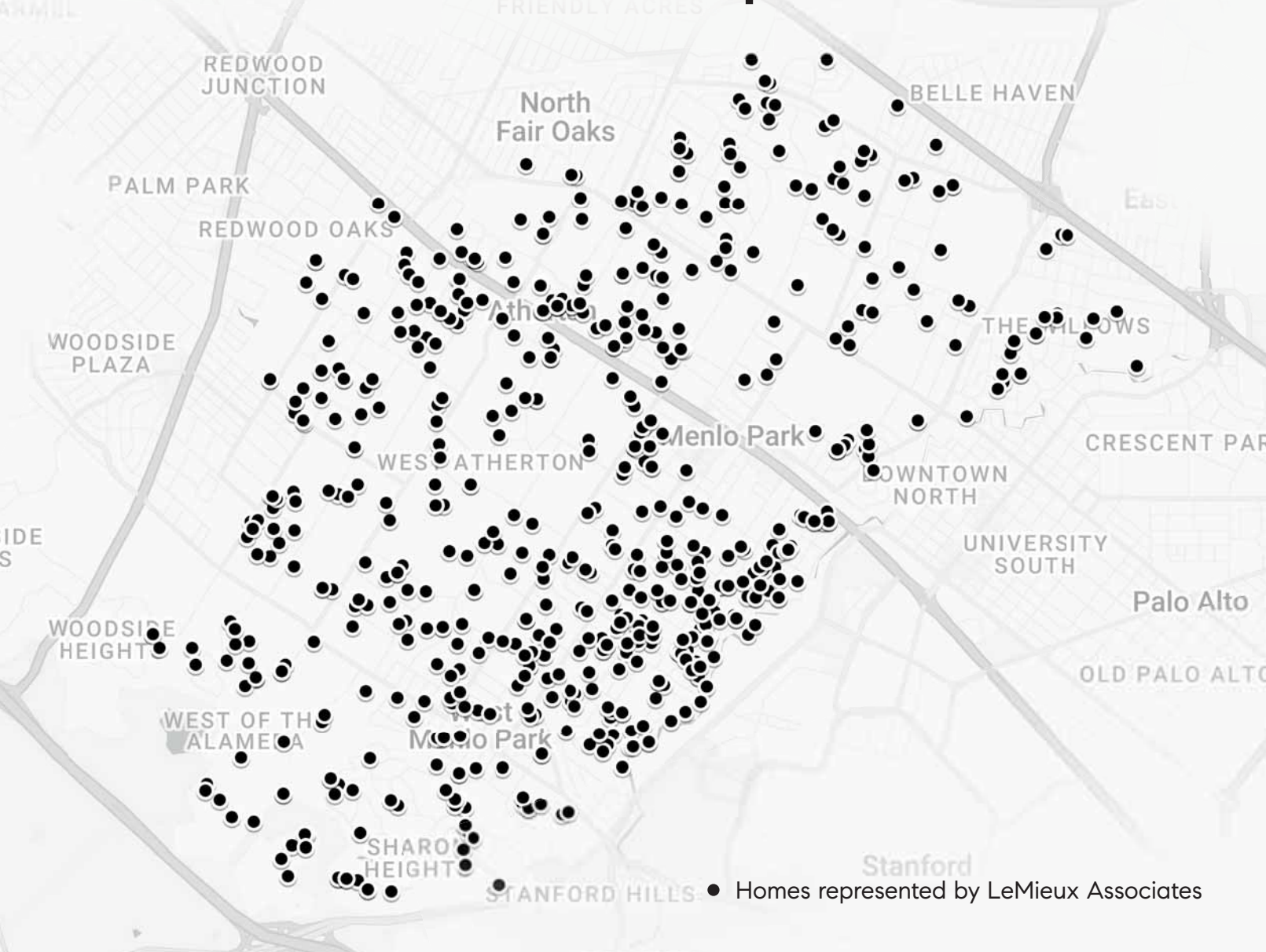
► *Docent-led walks of 19th and 20th-century outdoor collections, year-round*

9 The Cantor Arts Center at Stanford University features a variety of exhibits within its walls but also offers the chance to enjoy the best of both worlds: the great outdoors and an array of unique art. On the second and third Sunday of each month, the center holds docent-led tours of its diverse collection of outdoor sculptures surrounding the museum, which is well-known for its numerous works by renowned 19th-century sculptor Auguste Rodin, as well as more modern 20th-century pieces by artists such as Charles Ginnever, Bruce Beasley and Douglas Abdell. Tours are free and meet in front of the museum (328 Lomita Drive at Museum Way, Stanford) at 2 p.m., unless otherwise noted. For those who want to explore beyond the museum, the Cantor Center also hosts 90-minute tours of the university's eclectic artworks located in the

Continued on page 10

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Continued from page 8

Quad and south campus areas on the first and fourth Sunday of the month at 2 p.m. Tours leave from the top of the Oval (near the benches). *Details: tinyurl.com/52zvmca4*

EDITOR'S SIDE NOTE: The public art program at Stanford has been in existence for over a century and consists of more than 80 outdoor art installations that can be enjoyed any time at your own pace. Of particular interest is a very different permanent art installation called "Tree of 40 Fruit," which was planted in 2022 next to the Rodin sculpture garden. The living tree sculpture was created by American artist and Syracuse University professor Sam Van Aken, and is capable of growing 40 different kinds of stone fruit, such as plums, peaches, nectarines, cherries, apricots, and almonds. The university offers six different self-guided tours. *Maps: public-art.stanford.edu/tours*

MOUNTAIN VIEW

Pear Slices

► *A unique festival of short plays by local writers, spring*

10 Mountain View's Pear Theatre (1110 La Avenida St.) delivers high-quality theater in a small space all year round, but one of the highlights each year is "Pear Slices," a spring festival of one act, original plays written by members of the long-running The Pear Playwrights' Guild and starring a cast of local actors. The plays vary wildly in tone and topics so there's sure to be a slice to suit every theater lovers' taste. It's a great way to see new drama in a bite-size format. The festival will mark its 24th season in spring 2026. *Details: thepear.org*

MIDPENINSULA

Silicon Valley Open Studios

► *A behind-the-scenes peek of local artists' work, May*

11 Every spring, hundreds of established and emerging fine artists from Silicon Valley open the doors to their studios to give the public a behind-the-scenes look at their work and workspaces during Silicon Valley Open Studios. This free event is one of the largest fine art shows open to the public in the San Francisco Bay Area. It features painting, sculpture, jewelry, photography, woodworking, mixed media, pastels, pottery, metalwork, textile art and more. Open Studios is held the first three weekends in May. Each weekend highlights artists from different regions in the area, including the Midpeninsula. The event will celebrate its 39th year in 2026. *Details: svos.org*

STANFORD

Stanford Jazz Festival

► *Rising stars and well-known names in jazz, June-August*

12 The Stanford Jazz Festival takes place for six weeks every summer at various venues on the Stanford University campus, providing festival-goers the opportunity to see both well-known names and rising stars in jazz. Over the past five decades since Stanford grad Jim Nadel launched Stanford Jazz Workshop in 1972, the organization has been an incubator for future jazz greats as well as a venue for legends, including Stan Getz and Dizzy Gillespie. In addition to concerts by various artists, the festival also offers favorite regular features such as the Stanford Jazz Workshop all-star jam and early bird jazz for kids. *Details: stanfordjazz.org*

EDITOR'S SIDE NOTE: If you are interested in more than just jazz, check out Stanford's Summer@Live concert series held for two weeks every July at the historic Frost Amphitheater (351 Lasuen St.). This summer series has featured everything from concerts by jazz pioneer Louis Armstrong to performances by the Oregon Shakespeare Festival to symphonies to a tribute to The Beatles. *Details: live.stanford.edu*

MOUNTAIN VIEW

Obon Festival and Bazaar

► *Japanese music, dance, crafts, July*

13 Every July, thousands of people descend on the grounds of the Mountain View Buddhist Temple (575 N. Shoreline Blvd.) to celebrate the two-day Obon Festival and Bazaar. The free celebration, which honors the spirits of ancestors and Japanese culture, has been held in the neighborhood since the temple was built in 1957 and showcases Japanese dancers, taiko drummers, flute players, food and crafts. The next festival will be held on July 18-19, 2026. *Details: bit.ly/4k7bLk4*

ATHERTON

Music@Menlo

► *Three weeks of chamber music, July-August*

14 For more than two decades, Atherton's Music@Menlo has provided the opportunity for audiences to enjoy and learn about chamber music during its flagship chamber music festival at Menlo School (50 Valparaiso Ave., Atherton) held over three weeks each



Students of the Mountain View Buddhist Temple Taiko program perform at the temple's Obon festival. Photo by Anna Hoch-Kenney.

summer. Music@Menlo offers master classes in which audiences can watch young performers learn from experienced musicians, as well as artist talks and lectures offering insights into featured music. Concerts highlight the works of specific composers and programming explores various aspects of the composers' life and works. *Details: musicatmenlo.org*

EDITOR'S SIDE NOTE: For those who don't want to wait until summer to enjoy the festival, Music@Menlo now offers concert series and lectures throughout the year. Past concerts also can be viewed online. *Details: musicatmenlo.org*

WOODSIDE

King's Mountain Art Fair

► *Fine art under the redwoods, September*

15 The Kings Mountain Art Fair is held in a bucolic setting among the redwoods. The juried arts fair, which was founded in 1963 as a fundraiser to help create a volunteer fire department for the remote Kings Mountain Community, is ranked among the top art fairs in the state, according to the Art Fair Sourcebook. The outdoor festival, which takes place on the forested grounds of the Kings Mountain Community Center and Firehouse (13889 Skyline Blvd.), provides visitors a rare opportunity to walk the redwoods while taking in a juried exhibition of gallery quality fine arts and crafts. The festival takes place over Labor Day weekend each year. Free. Works from artists featured at the fair can be viewed and purchased on the Kings Mountain Art Fair website. *Details: kingsmountainartfair.org* ■

— Information compiled by Linda Taaffe

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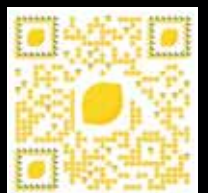
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A day with the Grateful Dead

Exploring the band's early Midpeninsula stomping grounds 60 years later



The Grateful Dead in 1970, in a rural setting – Bill Kreutzmann, Ron “Pigpen” McKernan, Jerry Garcia, Bob Weir, Mickey Hart, and Phil Lesh. Photo courtesy Herb Green, *Billboard*, December 1970.

This December marks 60 years since the Grateful Dead played their first show.

The Dead's beginnings as a band is inherently a local Peninsula story. From the initial impromptu jam between Jerry Garcia and Bob Weir that led to the formation of the pioneering psychedelic band, to the group's first performance, to the moment members decided on the band's now world-famous moniker, the Midpeninsula served as the backdrop.

By the time the Grateful Dead's eclectic-psychedelic style gained popularity and they became a symbol of the counterculture movement with a devoted following of fans worldwide, the band had relocated elsewhere in the Bay Area, but the mark they left on the Midpeninsula remains indelible.

To commemorate the official formation of the Grateful Dead in 1965, we've decided to explore the band's early Midpeninsula stomping grounds that are considered significant places of importance in the group's history.

PALO ALTO

Dana Morgan Music Shop

► The birth of a band

This is the place where Jerry Garcia and Bob Weir first met on New Year's Eve 1963 and decided to form a band. Weir was reportedly looking for a club to get into when he heard Garcia plucking the banjo from inside Dana



The former site of Dana Morgan Music Shop, which is now a luxury mattress store. Photo by Linda Taaffe.

Morgan Music Shop (534 Bryant St.), where the 21-year-old worked as was a guitar and banjo teacher. Weir and Garcia ultimately spent the night playing music together — and the rest is history. Today, the former music shop is home to a luxury mattress store. (Just around the corner at 451 University Ave. is the former site of Swain's House of Music, another shop where bandmembers used to rent their instruments in the early days. The shop's name is embedded in the sidewalk in front of the building.)

MENLO PARK

Magoo's Pizza (now Bar Loretta)

► First live performance

This site at 639 Santa Cruz Ave. once housed Magoo's Pizza Parlor, where the band made its public debut with its first-ever live performance as the Warlocks in 1965, just months



A plaque outside Bar Loretta marks the original site of Magoo's Pizza parlor where members of the Grateful Dead played their first live performance as the Warlocks. Photo by Anna Hoch-Kenney.

before members renamed themselves the Grateful Dead. A commemorative plaque marking the occasion hangs outside the building, now called Bar Loretta. The restaurant pays homage to Magoo's and the Dead. The owner reportedly is working with Bob Weir to create a Grateful Dead exhibit inside the bar and recently held a 60th anniversary cocktail party and fundraiser benefit for the new musical “Jerry Garcia in the Lower Mission” by Richard Montoya.

PALO ALTO

High Street home

► The band finds its iconic name

This wood-shingled bungalow is considered a significant place of importance in Grateful Dead history. It was on the front porch where Jerry Garcia (lead guitarist and vocalist) reportedly landed on the group's iconic name in 1965. Phil Lesh (bassist and vocalist) had invited his Warlocks bandmates — Garcia, Bob Weir (rhythm guitar and vocals) and Bill Kreutzmann (drums) — over to the home, which he was renting at the time, to find a new name after discovering another band also was called the Warlocks. Garcia was flipping through a dictionary when he randomly found the entry “Grateful Dead.”



The Palo Alto house where the band decided on the name the Grateful Dead. Photo courtesy DeLeon Realty.

PALO ALTO

Big Beat Club

► *Legendary acid test party*

The Big Beat Club is another place of significance in Grateful Dead history. It was at this after-hours club on Dec. 18, 1965, where the band played a Ken Kesey Acid Test party just days after renaming themselves the Grateful Dead. (This would be the third acid test party they played as the Grateful Dead). This event reportedly is where sound engineer Owsley Stanley ("Bear") introduced Rock Scully, who later became the Grateful Dead's manager, to the band. Tom Wolfe wrote about the Big Beat party in his book "The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test." Today, the Dawoodi Bohra mosque sits on the site.



A mosque now sits on the site of the Big Beat Club where the band met its manager Rock Scully. Photo by Linda Taaffe.



The current Kepler's Books and Magazines at 1010 El Camino Real in Menlo Park. Photo by Eleanor Raab.

MENLO PARK

Kepler's Books

► *A counterculture hub*

Kepler's Books (originally located at 935 El Camino Real) was among Jerry Garcia's regular hangouts. It was the first bookstore in the region that allowed patrons to sit and read, hang out or play music, attracting a collection of poets, musicians and writers. Garcia "took up nearly daily residence as part of the Kerouac-inspired, neo-Beatnik crowd hanging out in Kepler's," according to PaloAltoHistory.org. He reportedly met Peter Albin (Big Brother and the Holding Company), with whom he collaborated on the New Riders of the Purple Sage, at Kepler's. The bookstore, now located at 1010 El Camino Real, marked its 70th anniversary in 2025.

PALO ALTO

Alta Mesa Cemetery

► *Pigpen's final resting place*

Alta Mesa Cemetery is the final resting place of Ron "Pigpen" McKernan, the Dead's original frontman who played harmonica and electric organ with the group from 1965 to 1972. McKernan died in 1973 of a gastrointestinal hemorrhage. He was 27. For decades, fans have made pilgrimages to Alta Mesa to pay respect to McKernan. Even today, picks, beads, hand-painted rocks and other objects can be found left on his grave. McKernan was posthumously inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame as a member of the Grateful Dead. His headstone reads: "Pigpen was and is now forever one of the Grateful Dead." ■

— Information compiled by Linda Taaffe



Ron "Pigpen" McKernan's grave. Photo by Clay Lambert.



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Superior Farms lamb rib chops at Taverna. Photo courtesy Taverna.



A citrus dessert at Eylan in Menlo Park. Photo by Chad Santo Tomas.

Following the restaurant trail

Check out some Peninsula dining establishments that opened this year

The Midpeninsula's vibrant dining scene is ever evolving and expanding – from fine dining to affordable eats, and representing a world of different cuisines. We've highlighted just a few of the many tasty spots that opened locally in 2025. Hungry for more? Follow the Peninsula Foodist on Instagram (@peninsulafoodist) and subscribe to the newsletter (AlmanacNews.com/peninsula-foodist) to get insights on the latest openings and closings, learn what the Foodist is excited about eating, read exclusive interviews and keep up on the trends affecting local restaurants.

MENLO PARK

Eylan

1 The team behind Palo Alto's Et-tan are also the creators of Cal-Indian restaurant Eylan, which recently earned Michelin Guide accolades (a Bib Gourmand and a Special Award for exceptional cocktails). The menu features seasonal ingredients and pan-Indian flavors, with influence from the Bay Area's culinary landscape and a focus on live-fire cooking.

500 El Camino Real
eylanrestaurant.com

MENLO PARK

Yeobo, Darling

2 Married chefs Meichih and Michael Kim – the team behind the Michelin-starred Maum (formerly in Palo Alto) and Bao Bei (formerly in Los Altos) launched the “upscale casual” Yeobo, Darling, which celebrates the



Grilled fish in Sichuan peppercorn beef broth with pickled cabbage, tofu and nan at Halal Street Xinjiang Cuisine & BBQ in downtown Mountain View. Photo by Adrienne Mitchel.

culinary couple's respective Taiwanese and Korean heritage, as well as their Asian American identities.

827 Santa Cruz Ave.
yeobodarling.com

MENLO PARK

Bubbelah

3 David Nayfeld, the chef-owner of Che Fico, opened Bubbelah, a fast-casual restaurant highlighting the flavors of the Jewish diaspora. Standout dishes include the whole harissa rotisserie chicken and the poppy seed chicken schnitzel, which are both available a la carte or as a wrap, pita or plate, said Nayfeld.

1300 El Camino Real, Suite A
bubbelahmpk.com

PORTOLA VALLEY

Taverna

4 Taverna has been serving farm-to-table, upscale Greek cuisine in Palo Alto since 2018 and now has a location in Portola Valley. It may be a fine-dining restaurant, but Taverna aims to be far from pretentious. It even has a kids' menu with Greek fries, spanakopita, chicken souvlaki and a grilled cheese sandwich made with kasseri cheese and brioche.

3130 Alpine Road, #300
tavernarestaurant.net

PALO ALTO

Macarena

5 Macarena, a traditional Spanish restaurant serving tapas and paella, was launched in downtown Palo Alto by husband-and-wife David Linares and Elizabeth Reviriego and chef partners Toni Santanach and Sergio Box.

420 Ramona St. | macarenarestaurant.com

PALO ALTO

Horsefeather

6 Horsefeather, a new American restaurant offering dishes like fried chicken with kimchi mac and cheese and a variety of signature cocktails, opened its Palo Alto location this year. Find classic dishes like cheeseburgers and deviled eggs, as well as more unique offerings like smoked tuna and mala cucumber.

855 El Camino Real #151 | horsefeather.com

PALO ALTO

The Farm

7 The Farm, created by Ismail "Jan" Unlu and Cemo Orge, specializes in single-origin, organic coffee and housemade syrups, as well as healthy options for breakfast, lunch and dinner. The food menu is a combination of classic American and Italian favorites, with a few Turkish dishes sprinkled in.

2450 Park Blvd. | dinefarmfresh.com



A selection of dishes from Johnny & Sanny's, including cioppino, roasted tomato caprese, bruschetta, fried calamari, lasagna, veal picatta, mafaldine con salsiccia (spicy sausage pasta) and shrimp cocktail. Photo courtesy Johnny & Sanny's.

MOUNTAIN VIEW

Halal Street Xinjiang Cuisine & BBQ

8 Halal Street Xinjiang Cuisine & BBQ is owned by Sudai Ma and Isaming Deng, who are also behind Halal Street Hot Pot & Cuisine in Newark. The menu, crafted by Ma herself, highlights comfort foods eaten in her and her husband's hometown of Xinjiang. This autonomous territory in northwest China has a cuisine featuring a blend of cultural influences, including Persian, Turkish, Mongolian and Chinese.

174 Castro St.
halalstreethotpotxinjiangcuisine.com

MOUNTAIN VIEW

Johnny & Sanny's

9 Johnny & Sanny's is a nostalgic Italian American concept from the team behind Doppio Zero, a Southern Italian restaurant with five Bay Area locations. Step inside and go back in time – servers wear black bow ties, the menu offers classics like Cobb salad, meatballs and cioppino and old black-and-white Italian and American films play on loop.

110 Castro St. | johnnyandsannys.com

MOUNTAIN VIEW

Tandoori Junction

10 Tandoori Junction is the only restaurant in downtown Mountain View to serve food past midnight seven days a week and the only business open to 2:30 a.m. Find a selection of Northern Indian dishes cooked in a tandoor, a type of clay oven. Like the food, the ambiance at Tandoori Junction is casual, and

much of the business is focused on takeaway and delivery.

698 W. Dana St. | tandoorisjunction.com

LOS ALTOS

El Comal

11 Downtown Los Altos' El Comal offers all-day dining featuring cuisine from Oaxaca and Yucatán. For breakfast, find traditional dishes like huevos rancheros and chilaquiles, as well as more modern options like Mexican avocado toast. The lunch and dinner menu features a vegetarian section and includes a variety of tacos, salads and specialty plates.

266 Main St. | elcomalkitchen.com ■

—Information compiled by
Adrienne Mitchel and Karla Kane

HUNGRY FOR MORE?

Here's a partial list of Midpeninsula eateries voted the "Readers' Choice" by local readers. See full "Readers' Choice" listings at AlmanacNews.com/readers_choice.

ASIAN RESTAURANT

Chef Chu's 1067 N. San Antonio Road, Los Altos | chefchu.com

BREAKFAST

Stacks 600 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park | stacksbreakfast.com

BURGERS

Alice's Restaurant 17288 Skyline Blvd., Woodside | alicesrestaurant.com

DESSERT

Mademoiselle Colette
816 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park
mademoisellecolette.com

ITALIAN

Avanti Pizza Fresh Pasta
3536 Alameda De Las Pulgas, Suite 4, Menlo Park | avantipizzafreshpasta.com

JAPANESE RESTAURANT

Dashi Japanese Restaurant 873 Hamilton Ave, Menlo Park
dashijapaneserestaurant.com

MEXICAN RESTAURANT

Amigos Grill 3130 Alpine Road, Portola Valley | amigosportola.com

OUTDOOR DINING

Bistro Vida 641 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park | bistro-vida.com

SANDWICHES

Bianchini's Market 3130 Alpine Road, Portola Valley | bianchinismarket.com

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Court Ruling Fails to Halt Commission Collusion and Price Fixing in Real Estate -
The DeLeon Insight
(May 2025)



Off Market Listings - A Hidden Sale or a Discriminatory Practice? -
The DeLeon Insight
(May 2025)



Agents Push for "Pocket," "Private," or "Exclusive" a.k.a. Hidden Listings -
The DeLeon Insight
(July 2025)

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MEET THE NAMESAKE BEHIND ZAREEN'S

For many Peninsula residents, Zareen's is one of the first restaurants that come to mind when craving Pakistani or Indian cuisine. Established in Mountain View in 2014, it has grown to three locations and is known for its affordable and quality food. In 2020, Michelin listed it as a Top 100 restaurant in the Bay Area.

So it might come as a surprise that Zareen Khan initially wasn't interested in cooking. She had dreamed of becoming a doctor until her older sister married a man with a passion for cooking. This piqued her interest in cooking and later helped her recognize the labor and love behind the food that her mother, sister and aunts made.

That experience, combined with cooking classes that she took with Azra Syed, whom she calls the "matriarch of Pakistani culinary instructions," sparked her passion for Pakistani cooking that has yielded her popular restaurants in Mountain View, Palo Alto and Redwood City. And now, most recently, she has released a debut cookbook co-authored with her husband, Umair Khan.

"Zareen's Pakistani Kitchen: Recipes from a Well-Fed Childhood," released in March 2025, features popular Pakistani, Indian and



Zareen Khan

Bangladeshi specialties and staples. Recipes include dishes that are among the favorites served at Zareen's, as well as South Asian street foods, but the cookbook is also "a food crawl down memory lane" with Zareen and Umair Khan's favorite home-made meals from their childhoods in Pakistan.

We recently interviewed Zareen about her journey with Zareen's restaurants and her new cookbook.

Peninsula Foodist: *The book is dedicated to "the generations of mothers and grandmothers who fed us with love" and it spotlights several women that you "love and admire." Why was it important to make women a focal point of this cookbook?*

Zareen Khan: Where I am is because of so many other women who paved the way for me. I want to be one of those women to help the next generation behind us move forward.

Peninsula Foodist: *A major theme of the cookbook is making Pakistani food accessible without sacrificing authenticity. How did you seek to find this balance?*

Zareen Khan: I want it to be not so complex (readers) actually give up, so I simplified

some of the recipes. It still won't take away from the authenticity of the dish ... For me, it's very important that all this knowledge that we've gained over generations is not lost in future generations because it's too complex or time-consuming.

Peninsula Foodist: *How did you decide which recipes to feature from the restaurant?*

Zareen Khan: This book is based on some of the items we eat on a daily basis in Pakistan and India, and then we have also featured some of the dishes that are made on special occasions like biryani. We also wanted to feature some of the street food because you can't get it here.

Peninsula Foodist: *Which recipes evoke the most nostalgia?*

Zareen Khan: The aloo gosht. When I was in Pakistan, I would come from college and it would always be the same dish, and I'd hate it — it's like, "Aw, again aloo gosht." But it's strange how things have turned out — now I kind of crave it, and the first thing I want when I go back home to Pakistan is to ask my sister to make that aloo gosht. Aloo gosht is basically a curry with potatoes and meat, like a stew. ■

This is an excerpt of a recent interview by Juila Brown that appeared in the Peninsula Foodist. Read the full story: tinyurl.com/59m4vhmc.



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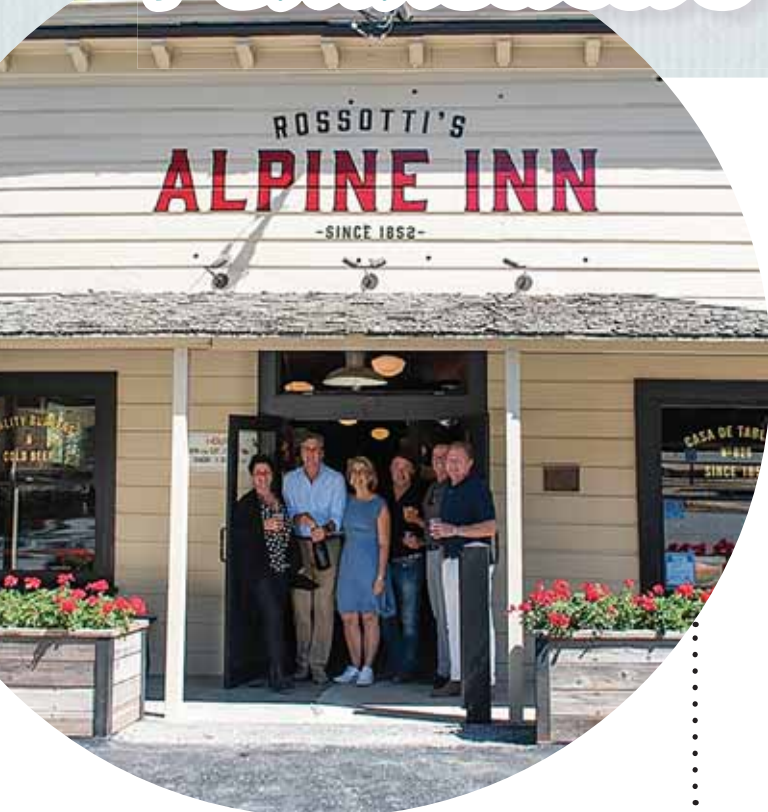
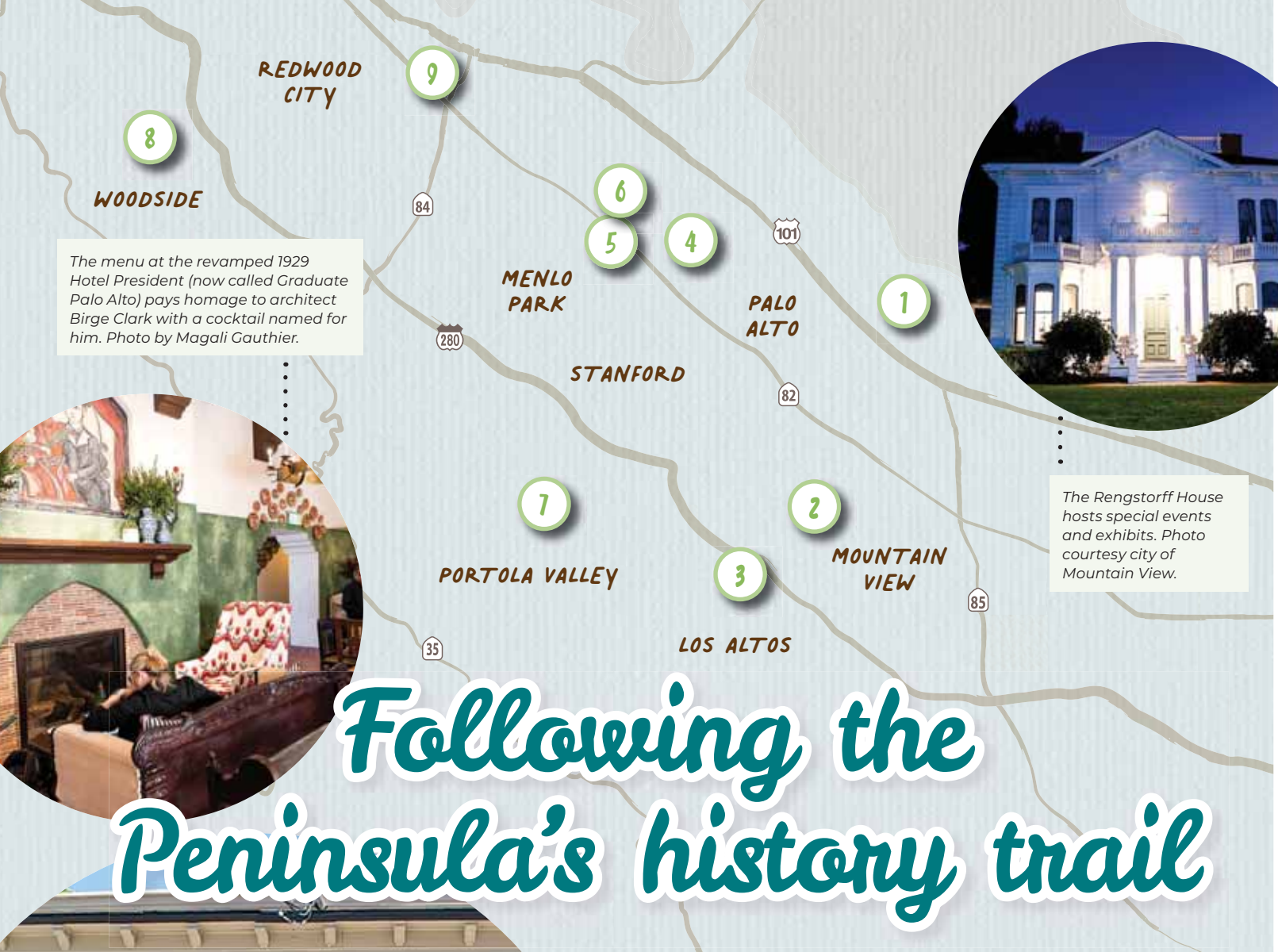
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Visitors can still grab food and a drink at Rossotti's Alpine Inn, California's second-oldest continually run tavern. Photo by Sadie Stinson.

Different places and ways to delve into the past while enjoying the present

With roots tied to indigenous people, Spanish missions, the 1849 gold rush, early logging, agriculture and tech, the Midpeninsula boasts a colorful and varied history with plenty of fascinating historical points of interest. Many of these places are open to the public and provide visitors the opportunity to eat, drink, explore the arts and take in a show in addition to soaking in local history. From a Victorian home to a sprawling country estate to century-old taverns and former movie houses, we explored the region and found a variety of places and ways to appreciate and learn about the past while enjoying the present. This is in no way a comprehensive list of places to visit, but it provides a good starting point.

MOUNTAIN VIEW

Rengstorff House

► *From deteriorated Victorian farmhouse to stunning history museum*

1 Most people who have ventured into Shoreline Park have probably seen the Rengstorff House — the oldest home in the city and a striking example of Victorian Italianate architecture. Built in 1867 for settler Henry Rengstorff, who came to California hoping to strike it rich in the gold rush but ended up making his money as a rancher, the two-story white wooden home boasts front-facing bay windows, a central gable crowned by a widow's walk and a front portico flanked with square columns that stand out in stark contrast to the surrounding baylands. For more than 30 years, the former farmhouse-turned-history-museum has been open to the public, serving as a popular destination for weddings, tourists and even ghost hunters. The home is decorated with period pieces and hosts a variety of special events, including rotating exhibits, educational talks, bird-watching excursions along the shoreline and occasionally even candlelit tours.

EDITOR'S SIDE NOTE: The home became part of the motive behind what has been considered the largest mass kidnapping case in American history. Woodside High School graduates Frederick Woods and brothers James and Richard Schoenfeld — the now infamous Chowchilla school bus kidnappers — reportedly launched their plan to kidnap 26 school children and their bus driver in part because they wanted ransom money to preserve the abandoned, rundown mansion from destruction and make it their private residence, newspapers reported at the time. The museum is located at 3070 N. Shoreline Blvd. **More information:** friendsofhouse.org. (Sources: Embarcadero Media past articles, The Friends of "R" House)

LOS ALTOS

Heritage Orchard

► *A rare glimpse of the area's agricultural roots*

2 The 10-acre apricot orchard in front of City Hall at 1 N. San Antonio Road is among the oldest still in operation in Santa Clara Valley. Planted by early resident J. Gilbert Smith in the early 1900s, this historic landmark provides a glimpse of the city's agricultural past. During late winter to early spring, when the trees whitar full of white blossoms, the orchard becomes a popular site for photographers and artists. Behind the orchard is Smith's shingled farmhouse built from mail-order plans in 1899 that now serves as a history house museum. The house is surrounded by historic gardens, a tank house and farm equipment reflecting the

area's agricultural era. There's also a modern museum building designed to look like a barn, which contains the city's historical collections and permanent and rotating exhibits. **More information:** losaltoshistory.org

EDITOR'S SIDE NOTE: Not only can visitors stroll among the rows of Blenheim apricot trees, they also can purchase apricots harvested from the orchard at the DeMartini Orchard fruit stand across the street when in season (June-August). The annual harvest ranges from 100-200 boxes, depending on rainfall.

(Source: Los Altos History Museum)

LOS ALTOS HILLS

Old Purissima School

► *Former one-room schoolhouse now serves as a chapel*

3 The white steeple of St. Luke's Chapel in the Hills can be seen poking among the trees along southbound U.S. Highway 280, a short distance before the El Monte/Moody Road exit for Foothill College. Before the tiny wooden building on Duval Way was converted into a church in 1966, it served as a one-room schoolhouse for children of the area's early settlers. From 1901 to 1952, Purissima School, which was part of the Palo Alto Unified School District before the Los Altos School District purchased it in 1948, was a neighborhood elementary school. In the early days, students often would ride their horses to the school, which also served as a community hub where holiday gatherings and other celebrations were held. St. Luke's holds Anglican services in the former schoolhouse on Sundays. 26140 Duval Way (off Robleada Road). **More information:** st-lukeschapel.org

EDITOR'S SIDE NOTE: Generations of Los Altos Hills students attended the school starting from the town's earliest agricultural years into the early tech era. Notable alumni include David Packard Jr. (son of Hewlett-Packard co-founder David Packard and his wife, Lucile), as well as Carl Schmitt, a former state superintendent of banks in California and founding chairman and CEO of University National Bank, which became Comerica Bank.

(Sources: Los Altos School District documents, interviews with former students)

PALO ALTO

Former Hotel President

► *Revamped 1929 landmark pays homage to architect Birge Clark*

4 Just about everyone who has driven through Palo Alto likely has seen the Spanish-influenced architecture of Birge Clark. His iconic red-tiled roofs, stucco walls, arches and wrought iron details defined the burgeoning city's Early California style and had so much

influence on the look of its commercial and residential streetscapes that Palo Alto has been referred to "as the city Birge built." During a 50-year span, Clark designed 98 Palo Alto houses and nearly 400 buildings in and around the city, including the landmark 1929-era Hotel President on University Avenue, which has been refurbished and renamed Graduate Palo Alto. While the updated hotel aims to be an upscale homage to all things Stanford, much of the six-story Spanish colonial building that Clark designed has remained intact, including its wood-beamed ceilings, spiral tiled-staircase, wrought iron details and some of the lobby's historic green tiles from the original 1929 construction. Graduate Palo Alto is located at 488 University Ave. **More information:** graduatehotels.com/palo-alto/

EDITOR'S SIDE NOTE: As a tribute to Clark, the menu at the hotel's Lou & Herbert's cafe and bar features a cocktail named for Clark called "Birge's Blueprint." Visitors also can take the hotel's vintage Otis elevator, with a refurbished leather interior, to the top of the building to the President's Terrace, a rooftop bar with views of downtown and the Stanford quad.

(Source: Embarcadero Media past articles)

MENLO PARK

Guild Theatre

► *Former movie house now hosts live music*

5 The Guild Theatre (949 El Camino Real) is no stranger to big names: For more than 90 years, a steady parade of stars flickered across the screen of the Menlo Park movie palace. But now, the names that appear on the marquee are performing live inside. After undergoing a \$35 million renovation, the Guild reopened in February 2022 as a brand-new venue for live music. The 500-seat not-for-profit theater showcases an eclectic mix of national acts, solo musicians, local bands and occasional plays, in an intimate setting, providing lots of opportunities for concert-goers to see their favorite artists up close. Known as the Menlo when it opened its doors in 1926, the art deco-style movie house was among the earliest theaters to open along the Peninsula and showed films up until fall 2019. **More information:** guildtheatre.com

EDITOR'S SIDE NOTE: Although the theater has been renovated, the Guild's 1920s heritage can still be found throughout the space, including the light fixtures and other details, perhaps most notably in an art deco chandelier salvaged from the theater that hangs over the ground-floor bar. Outside, the theater's blade sign remains, refurbished with "Guild" spelled out in new neon lights.

(Sources: Menlo Park Historical Association, Embarcadero Media past articles)

Continued on page 22

Continued from page 21

MENLO PARK

Historic train station

► *Model trains at California's oldest train station*

6 Watch miniature passenger and freight trains run on tracks through mini towns and tunnels and over bridges and trestles at the historic Menlo Park train station (1090 Merrill St.). The West Bay Model Railroad Association built a model train display in the former Southern Pacific baggage building adjacent to the train station in Menlo Park where visitors can see the trains go around tracks and talk to club members. The building, constructed in 1867 by the San Francisco and San Jose Railroad Company, is the oldest railroad passenger station in continuous use in California. The station was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1974, and became a California Historical Landmark in 1983. The Railroad Association holds monthly open houses and holiday train shows in the building. *More information: wbmrra.ning.com*

EDITOR'S SIDE NOTE: Prior to the railroad line, it took four hours by stagecoach to travel between San Francisco and Menlo Park. For \$2.50, a one-way ride on the railroad took only 80 minutes, providing the area's wealthy families a convenient alternative to getting to their summer homes.

(Source: Menlo Park Historical Association)

PORTOLA VALLEY

Rossotti's "Zott's" Alpine Inn

► *Second-oldest continually run tavern in California*

7 Rossotti's Alpine Inn (3915 Alpine Road) is the place to soak in some local color and history while enjoying food and drinks. Dating back to 1852 and being the second-oldest continually run tavern in California, the place and its lore have attracted a wide cast of characters and fans, from patrons arriving on horseback to tech workers in Teslas and local families looking for a bite to eat after a game at nearby Rossotti Field. Inside, the tavern is decorated with Stanford athletics memorabilia donated by an alumnus. The restaurant also still has "horse parking" out front. The restaurant's menu ranges from elevated bar bites to burgers, sandwiches and woodfired pizzas. There's limited seating in the tavern and a 250-seat beer garden with covered seating, heat lamps and TVs for sports fans. *More information: alpineinnpv.com*

EDITOR'S SIDE NOTE: The tavern also holds a place in tech history. Out front, a plaque commemorates the "beginning of the internet age"

in 1976 when a crew of SRI scientists, sitting at a picnic table in the beer garden, successfully sent an electronic message from a computer.

(Sources: The SixFifty, the Peninsula Foodist)

WOODSIDE

Filoli estate

► *An up-close look at life on a lavish, century-old country estate*

8 No list of historical places would be complete without mentioning the 54,000-square-foot Filoli mansion. The Georgian revival-style estate is among the best-known historic properties in the region. With concerts, art strolls, holiday festivals, rotating exhibits and acres of gardens that change with the seasons, visitors can find something different to see or experience during each visit to the 106-year-old property. Built as a private resident in 1917, the home sits on 654 acres and is considered one of the finest remaining country estates of the 20th century. The property includes 16 acres of English Renaissance gardens, a 6.8-acre gentleman's orchard and hundreds of acres of natural lands with five distinct ecosystems and a 1-mile estate trail. The home and gardens are open for public tours year-round. Admission is charged. *More information: filoli.org*

EDITOR'S SIDE NOTE: Don't be surprised if the gardens and some of the mansion's rooms look familiar. Filoli has been featured in numerous films and television shows over the years, starting with "Heaven Can Wait" in 1978, as well as: "Dying Young" (1991), "George of the Jungle" (1997); "The Game" (1997); The Joy Luck Club (1993); "The Wedding Planner" (2001); "Rent" (2005); and the opening credits of "Dynasty" (1981-1989).

(Sources: Embarcadero Media past articles, Filoli.org)



Wyatt Earp, standing in front of the bar, patronized the Alhambra Theater in its early days. Photo courtesy San Mateo County History Museum.

REDWOOD CITY

Alhambra Irish House

► *Wyatt Earp's old stomping grounds*

9 Even now, 129 years after the Alhambra Theater (831 Main St.) opened its doors as a social hub in Redwood City, the building remains a Peninsula destination. The former theater and saloon is now Alhambra Irish House, an Irish gastropub that serves full Irish breakfasts and soda bread, as well as burgers and seasonal California dishes. The pub also hosts live music, karaoke nights and occasional drag brunches. The brick walls, wide plank floors and long, redwood bar are among the remnants that still exist from the Alhambra's old saloon days. Built in 1896, the Alhambra Theater hosted some of the best musical performances, operas and plays of the late 19th century for the "who's who" of the Peninsula. The theater, known for its elaborate Roman-Spanish architecture and its large seating capacity of 1,500, was considered one of the finest theaters between San Francisco and San Jose. *More information: alhambra-irish-house.com*

EDITOR'S SIDE NOTE: According to local lore, Wild West lawman Wyatt Earp patronized the place. Earp, who gained notoriety for his role in the gunfight at the O.K. Corral in Tombstone, Arizona, would make the trek from his San Francisco home to hang out at the saloon, located on the ground floor below the theater. (For those who might be skeptical: A photo of him standing at the bar hangs on the pub's wall.)

(Sources: The SixFifty, Redwood City Pulse) ■

—Information compiled by Linda Taaffe

• • • • • The historic Menlo Park train station. Photo by Magali Gauthier.

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2 Dinkelspiel Station Lane
smcl.org/locations/1A

MENLO PARK

- 3 Menlo Park City Hall**
701 Laurel St.
menlopark.gov
- 4 Belle Haven Community Campus (includes Belle Haven Library)**
100 Terminal Ave.
menlopark.gov/Venues/Belle-Haven-Community-Campus
- 5 Menlo Park Library**
800 Alma St.
menlopark.gov/library
- 3 Menlo Park Police Department**
701 Laurel St.
menlopark.gov/Government/Departments/Police

PORTOLA VALLEY

- 6 Portola Valley Town Center**
765 Portola Road
portolavalley.net
- 6 Portola Valley Library**
765 Portola Road
smcl.org/locations/1v/

WOODSIDE

- 7 Woodside Town Hall**
2955 Woodside Road
woodsideca.gov
- 8 Woodside Library**
3140 Woodside Road
smcl.org/locations/1W

SAN MATEO COUNTY

- 9 San Mateo County administrative offices**
500 County Center,
Redwood City
smcgov.org



- 10 San Mateo County Office of Education**
101 Twin Dolphin Drive,
Redwood City
smcoe.org

- 11 San Mateo County Sheriff's Office**
330 Bradford St.,
Redwood City
smcsheriff.com

SPECIAL DISTRICTS

- 12 Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District**
5050 El Camino Real, Los Altos
openspace.org
- 13 San Mateo County Community College District**
3401 CSM Drive, San Mateo
smccd.edu

- 14 Sequoia Healthcare District**
525 Veterans Blvd.,
Redwood City
seqhd.org

- 15 West Bay Sanitary District**
500 Laurel St.,
Menlo Park
westbaysanitary.org

FIRE STATIONS

MENLO PARK FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

- (includes Atherton)
menlofire.gov
- 16 Station 1** - Middlefield Road,
Menlo Park
- 17 Station 2** - University
Avenue, East Palo Alto
- 18 Station 3** - Almendral
Avenue, Atherton

- 19 Station 4** - Alameda de las
Pulgas, Menlo Park
- 20 Station 5** - Fair Oaks Avenue,
Menlo Park
- 21 Station 6** - Oak Grove
Avenue, Menlo Park
- 22 Station 77** - Chilco Street,
Menlo Park

WOODSIDE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

- (Portola Valley, Woodside, and
portions of unincorporated San
Mateo County)
woodsidefire.org
- 23 Station 7** - 3111 Woodside Road,
Woodside
- 24 Station 8** - 135 Portola Road,
Portola Valley
- 25 Station 19** - 4091 Jefferson Ave.,
Redwood City

CHECK 'EM OUT

In addition to reading, watching and listening material, find care kits, karaoke machines, seeds and more at your local libraries

You are probably well aware that your local libraries are a great place to check out books, magazines, newspapers, CDs and DVDs. Your library card also lets you access streaming video and music, and audiobooks. But these days, you can do even more with your library account.

At the Atherton Library, for example (part of the San Mateo County Libraries system), patrons can try out its cutting-edge maker-space and digital lab with **3D printers**, a high-performance laser cutter and more, and check out many items beyond books, including **karaoke machines**. The county system's **Library of Things** collection also includes sewing machines, puzzles, bikes, ukuleles and even blood-pressure monitors.

Unique items to check out at Palo Alto's library system include canning sets, **Chromebooks** and even **interactive memory care kits for families caring for individuals with dementia**, with hands-on activities and resources for caregivers.

Members of local libraries can also check out **passes for county and state parks**, and, from the Palo Alto Library system, **a pass for Palo Alto's own Foothills Nature Preserve**.

At some libraries, including the Mountain View Library, you can check out not only **passes for parks**, but also a full **Park Pass Backpack complete with binoculars, compass and field guides**. Mountain View Library also offers stargazing kits complete with telescopes, hiking gear and bicycle repair kits.

Multiple Peninsula libraries also have seed lending libraries, where you can obtain packets of **flower, herb, fruit and vegetable seeds** to plant in your garden. Menlo Park, Palo Alto, East Palo Alto and Woodside are among the local libraries offering packets of seeds to take home.

"The Seed Lending Library is meant to educate, build community, and encourage residents to grow good food," Nick Szegda, assistant director of library services for the city of Menlo Park, said. "We hope that this resource sharing encourages sharing throughout the community, and helps build community resilience and self-reliance."

Local libraries also host frequent events and activities, from musical concerts to cooking workshops to **film screenings, author talks, yoga classes** and much more, including tons

MIDPENINSULA LIBRARIES

Atherton Library
smcl.org/locations/1a

East Palo Alto Library
smcl.org/locations/1e

Los Altos Library
(main and Woodland branches)
scclid.org

Menlo Park Library (downtown and Belle Haven branches)
menlopark.gov/library

Mountain View Library
library.mountainview.gov

Palo Alto City Library
(five branches)
library.cityofpaloalto.org

Portola Valley Library
smcl.org/locations/1v

Woodside Library
smcl.org/locations/1w

of activities for kids. ■

—Eleanor Raab and Devin Roberts
(additional info compiled by Karla Kane)

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The Almanac



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Holding court: How (and where) to play pickleball on the Peninsula

Here are some public places
to get in on the action

Pickleball is all the rage! Played with a paddle and a plastic ball with holes, pickleball combines elements of tennis, badminton and ping pong. It can be played indoors or outdoors on a badminton-sized court as doubles or singles.

While half of all serious pickleball players in 2021 were 55 and older, the fastest-growing age category of all pickleball players is under 24, according to the New York Times. It's America's fastest-growing sport, with participation increasing by 40% from 2019-2021 according to USA Pickleball, the national governing body for pickleball in the U.S.



..... Sam Sweet leans to reach the ball during a game at Holbrook-Palmer Park in Atherton. Photo by Magali Gauthier.



Mitchell Park in Palo Alto.
Photo by Magali Gauthier.

Locally, the sport also has been gaining support. On the Peninsula, many cities and towns now offer public places to play, and there are several pickleball clubs that offer clinics, classes, group play and other events for players of all skill levels.

In Palo Alto, the Palo Alto Pickleball Club now has over 900 members, many of whom fill the Mitchell Park courts seven days a week. In Atherton, park-goers overwhelmingly supported the recent opening of courts at Holbrook-Palmer Park after a “pickleball trial” in 2024. On average, most players surveyed during the trial said they play pickleball 2-5 hours a week at the park. And in 2024, Menlo Park opened its tennis and pickleball courts to all community members for free drop-in play due to increased demand for the sport.

Here’s how you can get in on the action.

MOUNTAIN VIEW

► Friendly open-play, competitive tournaments

1 The Mountain View Pickleball Club gathers for friendly open-play pickleball at Rengstorff Park every day. Players of all ages and skill levels are welcome. For those interested in trying pickleball, the group has a few spare paddles for newcomers. The group also organizes “round robins,” or competitive tournaments for players of similar skill levels.

Rengstorff Park has three dedicated pickleball courts: two netted courts and one lined court that needs a portable net. Courts are available on a drop-in basis and are open during daylight hours. Rengstorff Park also has dual-stripe courts for shared tennis and pickleball use (see shared court schedule online). Mountain View Sports Pavilion offers adult drop-in pickleball three days a week for Mountain View residents and employees of Mountain View businesses. **Club information:** mvpickle.org. **Court information:** bit.ly/3lghJ5b.

LOS ALTOS

► Indoor/outdoor play

2 Two tennis courts at McKenzie Park have been overlaid with six pickleball courts, with priority given to pickleball on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Los Altos’ parks and recreation department also offers indoor pickleball at Egan Gym on Monday and Wednesday evenings. losaltosca.gov/375/Pickleball



Pickleball players in Menlo Park. Photo courtesy Jim Schott.

PALO ALTO

► Drop-in play, ‘getting started’ sessions

3 Mitchell Park provides one of the most active pickleball scenes on the Peninsula, with 15 public courts offering drop-in play seven days a week from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. It is also home to the Palo Alto Pickleball Club, which is run by dozens of player-volunteers, who provide Getting Started sessions for residents age 12 and up several times per month. Court 9 is designated for beginners, while courts 10 and 12 are for players without partners. paloaltopickleballclub.org/court-rules

MENLO PARK

► Reserved play, drop-in play

4 The city of Menlo Park offers tennis and pickleball courts to all community members for free drop-in play at Kelly Park and Nealon Park, with reservations at Kelly Park also available. Paddles and balls are available free of charge at the Menlo Park Library. At Flood Park, tennis/pickleball courts open at 9 a.m. and are available on a first come, first served basis. bit.ly/3WeC9A5



ATHERTON

► Reserved play

5 After a trial pickleball program in 2024 and a town survey showing overwhelming support for permanent courts, the Town of Atherton designated two pickleball courts with nets at Holbrook-Palmer Park. Pickleball court reservations can be made online (check website for specific hours). Tennis keys are required for court access. ci.atherton.ca.us/191/Tennis-and-Other-Activities

PORTOLA VALLEY

► Beginner’s classes, clinics, monthly potlucks

6 Courts in Portola Valley Town Center can be used on a first-come, first-served basis, with reservations allowed at certain times and priority groups assigned to the courts to balance the needs of tennis and pickleball players. Beyond regular games, Portola Valley Pickleball, a group made up of Peninsula residents, offers spring and fall clinics in April and September, as well as classes for beginners on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9 a.m.. The group even hosts monthly potlucks. pvpickleball.net ■

— Information compiled by Margie Cullen, Karla Kane, Linda Taaffe and Jennifer Yoshikoshi.

Favorite outdoor destinations by season

The Six Fifty's 8 picks for exploring the Peninsula during winter, spring, summer, fall

Throughout the year, our writers at The Six Fifty scour the Peninsula to find the best outdoor activities and destinations our area has to offer.

We've curated their coverage to create a short list of some favorite outdoor adventures for each season — winter, spring, summer and fall. Our suggestions are by no means a comprehensive list, but we do offer outings in unexpected settings close to city centers, as well as more traditional destinations that we think our readers will enjoy.

To stay up to date on places to explore and things to do on the Peninsula, subscribe to The Six Fifty at AlmanacNews.com/the-650-explore-the-peninsula/.

FALL

Filoli

► Autumn bounty

Woodside's historic Filoli estate (86 Cañada Road) is home to 16 acres of English Renaissance gardens, a 6.8-acre Gentleman's Orchard, hiking trails and hundreds of acres of natural lands with five distinct ecosystems. Each season brings unique experiences, from garden parties to exhibits.

Fall marks harvest season, when fruit from its century-old Gentleman's Orchard is ripe. Orchard Days (mid-September to mid-October) feature fall fun and celebrations of the area's agricultural past. *More information:* filoli.org

Windy Hill Open Space Preserve

► Sunset views

Rising 1,905 feet in the Santa Cruz Mountains, Windy Hill above Portola Valley offers sweeping views from San Francisco Bay to the Pacific Ocean. Fall's mild, clear weather makes sunsets especially stunning. The Anniversary Trail, a 1.5-mile loop, provides an easy hour-long hike to the summit, with a short spur leading to benches and a prime lookout. The preserve stays open 30 minutes past sunset. *More information:* openspace.org/preserves/windy-hill

WINTER

Palo Alto Baylands

► Highest, lowest tides of the year

Each winter, the Palo Alto Baylands Nature Preserve provides visitors the perfect place to witness king tides, when the Earth, sun and moon align to raise water levels over 9 feet — two feet higher than normal. These rare winter tides can flood trails and flush out birds usually hidden in the marsh. Environmental Volunteers leads free walks from the EcoCenter (2560 Embarcadero Road) during king tides, expected Nov. 5–7, Dec. 4–6, and Jan. 1–3. *More information:* evols.org/ecocenter

Gamble Garden

► Camellias in bloom

Since 1985, the extensive gardens that Elizabeth F. Gamble first planted on her estate in downtown Palo Alto in the early 1900s have been restored and expanded and open for the community to enjoy. The 2.5-acre non-profit Gamble Garden (1431 Waverley St.) is especially known for its extensive collection of camellias, which steal the show in winter. Rare varieties like the centuries-old camellia japonica "Kumasaka" bloom throughout the grounds, earning them the nickname "Queen of the Winter Flowers." Their brilliant display stretches from winter into spring. *More information:* gamblegarden.org

SPRING

Edgewood Park and Natural Preserve

► Spring wildflowers

Spring is peak wildflower season at Woodside's Edgewood Park (10 Old Stage Coach Road). On Saturday and Sunday mornings from early March through June, docents at Woodside's Edgewood Park and Natural Preserve offer 3-mile leisurely walks starting at the park's Bill and Jean Lane Education Center. *More information:* friendsofedgeswood.org



Orchard Days at Filoli in Woodside.
Photo courtesy Filoli.

The Rookery

► Egret breeding colony

Google's Mountain View campus is home to great egrets, snowy egrets and black-crowned night herons. Every spring, they return to the campus to raise their young in the street trees along Shorebird Way, or "The Rookery" (in the 1209-1231 blocks), where they have established a colony. From March to August, spectators can watch the entire breeding cycle. *More information:* scvas.org/egrets

SUMMER

Huddart Park

► Shady canyons

Just 3.5 miles west of Highway 84 in Woodside, Huddart Park (1100 Kings Mountain Road) offers 24 miles of kid-friendly trails winding through redwoods, oaks and firs.

With its shaded canyons, the 900-acre preserve, established by local lumberman James M. Huddart, is a favorite summer escape. Amenities include picnic sites, barbecue pits, a playground, and a campground. Cyclists and equestrians are welcome on designated routes. *More information:* smcgov.org/parks/huddart-park

Shoreline Lake

► Fireworks viewing on the water

Mountain View's 50-acre manmade Shoreline Lake (3160 N. Shoreline Blvd.) offers a variety of water sports and activities.

On July 4, the lake becomes one of the Peninsula's most unique fireworks-viewing spots. Visitors can reserve boats to watch the fireworks show put on at Shoreline Amphitheatre. *More information:* shorelinelake.com ■

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Meet the Peninsula's Birding guru, Rick Morris

Rick Morris can show you where the barn owls hang out, where the screech owls find their dinner and where the great horned owls nest. He can also show you hummingbirds, waterfowl, woodpeckers and more.

Morris is a local father and freelance tech worker with a passion for birdwatching and nature photography who leads local birding tours, where he shows Peninsula residents the wonderful winged nature that can be found flying, chirping and nesting in their backyards.

Morris hasn't always been a birder. "First I was a photographer before becoming a birder," he said. After being laid off from his corporate tech job during the pandemic, he started going out looking for hummingbirds with his camera.

"They were kind of my first birding love. ... (black-chinned hummingbirds) migrate here from April to June, and people go crazy over them because they're so colorful — they're gorgeous," he said.

After taking thousands of pictures of local birds, Morris wanted to share his love of winged creatures with his neighbors. He started making calendars and greeting cards out of the pictures that he took, and selling them online and at local coffee shops. He also began posting his bird pictures on social media, including Nextdoor.

Morris said that after his bird photos started gaining a following online, he had people approach him to lead local birding tours.

"When I would go to local gardens, or even at church, people would say 'are you Rick? I saw your pictures on Nextdoor,' or 'I follow you on Instagram.' ... And people started asking me 'well why don't you lead birding tours?'"

He took their advice to heart, and led his very first birding tour in January 2024. Since then, he has led over 40 tours for over 100 people, and is excited to lead more.

"When someone reaches out for a bird tour, I'll ask them 'what kind of birds do you like?'" he said. "Based on that, I will choose a location ... and I'll see what birds will be out at that time of year."

One perk of going birding with Morris is that you don't have to bring your own camera to get lasting memories of the birds you see on the tour. "I always give people the pictures that I take on their tours," he said.



Above: Local bird photographer Rick Morris photographs a pair of acorn woodpeckers at the Stanford Dish. Photo by Anna Hoch-Kenney. Left: A close-up of acorn woodpeckers taken by Morris. Photo courtesy Rick Morris.

We were able to get a taste of Morris' birding tours during a recent tour at the Stanford Dish. As we walked around the Dish trail, he pointed out all of the birds we were seeing — acorn woodpeckers, hawks, kestrels, swallows and more.

Though hummingbirds are his first love, Morris' current obsession is owls. Morris said that his most popular offerings are his evening owl tours.

Morris began leading owl tours following a tour request from a Stanford professor.

"He said 'can you take me out to see owls?' ... So I took him out, and we saw all three (local species of) owls ... I know where a barn owl is, a family of great-horned owls and a western screech owl," Morris said.

He posted pictures from his first owl tour online, and was soon inundated with owl tour requests.

Morris says that owls are great tour subjects because they are "pretty predictable and consistent."

"When I take people out, I know that I'm going to see (the owls) typically, whereas if I do a walking bird tour ... you'll have an idea of what you're going to see, but you get what you get ultimately," he said.

Since owls often return to the same place, and can be sensitive to too much activity, Morris said that he emphasizes respect for wildlife on his tours. "I tell the people (on the tours) to not post the location of the owls (online), because they can get overwhelmed by too many people."

Though he keeps most of his specific birding spots secret for the sake of the animals, Morris had some general suggestions for hotspots where budding birders can find cool birds.

"The Arizona Cactus Garden (at Stanford University) has been a great place — tons of hummingbirds and hawks there. ... Filoli has nice hummingbirds, too."

Shoreline Park in Mountain View and Byxbee Park in Palo Alto are his other suggestions. Morris said the Stanford Dish is one of his other favorite local spots to pop out to for a quick birding excursion. ■

—Eleanor Raab

Morris' Instagram: @Inthewildwithrick; find his bird calendars or book his birding tours: IntheWildwithRick.com. Contact Morris at inthewildwithrick@gmail.com.

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CITY, TOWN AND COUNTY PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

ATHERTON

- 1 Holbrook-Palmer Park**
150 Watkins Ave.
ci.atherton.ca.us/180

MENLO PARK

Community Services Department
menlopark.gov/parks

- 2 Bedwell Bayfront Park**
1600 Marsh Road
- 3 Burgess Park**
701 Laurel St.
- 4 Fremont Park**
Santa Cruz Ave. and University Drive
- 5 Hamilton Park**
545 Hamilton Ave.
- 6 Jack W. Lyle Park**
640 Fremont St.
- 7 Karl E. Clark Park**
313 Market Place
- 8 Kelly Park**
100 Terminal Ave.
- 9 Meta Park**
1 Facebook Way (Privately owned but publicly available)
- 10 Nealon Park**
800 Middle Ave.
- 11 Seminary Oaks Park**
299 Santa Monica Ave.
- 12 Sharon Hills Park**
Altschul Ave. at Valparaiso Ave.

- 13 Sharon Park**
1100 Monte Rosa Drive
- 14 Skate Park**
580 Alma St. (Burgess Park)
- 15 Stanford Hills Park**
2400 Branner Drive
- 16 Tinker Park**
1550 Santa Cruz Ave.
- 17 Willow Oaks Park**
490 Willow Road

PORTOLA VALLEY

- 18 Portola Valley Town Center Facilities (sports complex and Little People's Park)**
765 Portola Road
portolavalley.net/about/town-center
- 19 Rossotti Field**
3919 Alpine Road



- 20 Ford Field**
3329 Alpine Road
- 21 Triangle Park**
Portola and Alpine roads

WOODSIDE

- 22 Barkley Fields and Park**
5001 Farm Hill Blvd.
woodsidgetown.org/community/barkley-fields-and-park-0

SAN MATEO COUNTY PARKS

smcgov.org/parks

- 23 Edgewood Park & Natural Preserve**
10 Old Stagecoach Road,
Redwood City

- 24 Flood Park**
215 Bay Road, Menlo Park
- 25 Huddart Park**
1100 Kings Mountain Road,
Woodside
- 26 Wunderlich Park**
4040 Woodside Road,
Woodside

OPEN SPACE

- 27 Coal Creek Open Space Preserve**
Skyline Blvd., 1.2 miles north of Page Mill Road
- 28 El Corte de Madera Creek Open Space Preserve**
Skyline Blvd., 1.5 miles south of Kings Mountain Road
- 29 Los Trancos Open Space Preserve**
Page Mill Road, 1.5 miles east

of Skyline Boulevard

- 30 Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve**
Skyline Blvd.,
4.5 miles south of Hwy 92
- 31 Ravenswood Open Space Preserve**
Bay Road, East Palo Alto
- 32 Teague Hill Open Space Preserve**
Kings Mountain Road,
above the town of Woodside
- 33 Thornewood Open Space Preserve**
La Honda Road, 1.6 miles past the Portola Road intersection in Woodside
- 34 Windy Hill Preserve**
Skyline Blvd., Portola Valley

MAGIC

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Sure, we have amazing academics and brilliant teachers who absolutely love what they do (and they are a big part of our secret sauce). But wait until you see the choices outside the classroom. Athletics, performing arts, clubs, business and entrepreneurship, debate ... the list goes on and on. And when kids try something new and a passion is ignited, that is where the magic happens.

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Following the animal-lovers trail



From flamingos to goats to fun-loving meerkats, here are a few spots to get up-close to some of the Peninsula's favorite furry (and feathered and finned) creatures

The Midpeninsula can be a great place for animal lovers. Not only are there plenty of parks and nature preserves at which to observe wild creatures, there are also multiple animal adoption organizations that can help you find the perfect kitty, pup or other species to bring home and join the family. And in between the wild birds and beasts and the personal pets, there are opportunities for kids (and kids at heart) to learn about and encounter some animals up close. From flamingos to fish to farm life, here are a few favorite spots to check out.

..... Sarah Kazem takes Stormy, a miniature horse, on a hike in Wunderlich Park in Woodside. Photo by Jennifer Yoshikoshi.

CUPERTINO (RANCHO SAN ANTONIO)**Deer Hollow Farm**

1 Take an easy one-mile stroll into the popular Rancho San Antonio Open Space Preserve and you'll come upon Deer Hollow Farm, managed by the city of Mountain View's recreation division. Deer Hollow is an historic, working farm and educational center operating in the style of a traditional homestead. Home to 75-100 farm animals (including always-entertaining goats) as well as historic buildings, an orchard and a garden, the site is open to the general public to take self-guided tours and also offers school programs and summer camps. deerhollowfarm.org

LOS ALTOS HILLS**Hidden Villa**

2 A longtime beloved destination for summer camps, classes and day trips, Hidden Villa — which turned 100 in 2025 — is a working farm and environmental educational hub featuring pigs, cows, chickens, sheep and goats, in addition to an educational garden, miles of picturesque hiking trails and more. Visitors can explore at their own pace or sign up for various specialty programs and events, including an annual sheep-shearing and fiber arts festival in the spring. hiddenvilla.org

PALO ALTO**Palo Alto Junior Museum & Zoo**

3 The Palo Alto Junior Museum & Zoo, located in north Palo Alto's Community Center neighborhood, is a must for any young Peninsula animal fans, featuring more than 50 species and 300 individual critters, including fun-loving meerkats, elegant flamingos and Edward the tortoise. It's one of the oldest children's museums west of the Mississippi but in recent years received a major renovation and glow-up. And while dinosaurs may be extinct, here kids can play in the California Dinosaur Garden, an immersive exhibition set in California's cretaceous period with life-size dino sculptures to climb. paloaltozoo.org/home

PALO ALTO**The Barron Park Donkey Project**

4 Plenty of noteworthy residents have called Palo Alto home over the years but surely among the most beloved are the Barron Park donkeys. The

tradition of these equine charmers dates back to the 1950s, when Josina and Cornelis Bol kept a small herd of donkeys on the land that would later become Bol Park. Now, the Barron Park Donkey Project, a volunteer-and-donations-based organization, cares for the current donkeys in a pasture in the park, with volunteers taking them out for walks and meets-and-greets each week, to the delight of the community. The most famous of the donkeys is Perry, the mini-donkey with a big personality who served as the model for Donkey in the film "Shrek." Though Perry passed away in 2025, the park is currently home to April and Buddy. barronparkdonkeys.org

PALO ALTO**Mini Cat Town**

5 Mini Cat Town bills itself as a "kitten lounge and adoption center," which means that yes, you can absolutely apply to adopt one of its oh-so-adorable kittens, but if you're not ready or able to bring one home permanently, you can also pay to hang out with the kitties in the lounge area and get some quality snuggle-and-play time in 30-minute increments, while also helping to socialize the adoptable cuties. Mini Cat Town has several locations and over the summer of 2025, it moved its Palo Alto branch from Stanford Shopping Center to California Avenue. minicattown.org

WOODSIDE**Wunderlich Park**

6 Wunderlich park is a great place to explore nature but it's also a headquarters for horse fans. Visitors can check out the historic Folger Stable and admire the horses boarding on site. They can also sign up for a trail ride, riding lesson or, cutest of all, take part in the "Meet a Mini Horse" program, in which folks can meet Stormy, a miniature horse, and learn about horses and horse care. "Horses used to be a part of every person's everyday life a hundred years ago and now it's very rare," Wunderlich Park Executive Director Kym Teppo said earlier this year. "We see it as a special mission to maintain that connection to horses that's special to people in some way." huddartwunderlichfriends.org/wunderlich-park

REDWOOD CITY**Marine Science Institute**

7 Calling all budding marine biologists: Proximity to the San Francisco Bay (and, on the other side of the mountains, the ocean) is part of what makes the Midpeninsula a special place to be. At the Marine Science Institute, students and visitors can experience a 2,000 square-foot aquarium that serves as a temporary home for all sorts of live aquatic creatures from both the ocean and the bay. That's just one aspect of the shoreside institute, which also boasts a research vessel for voyaging, an interpretive center and more. sfbaymsi.org ■

—Information compiled by Karla Kane



Meerkats can be seen at the Junior Museum and Zoo in Palo Alto. Photo courtesy Palo Alto Junior Museum & Zoo.



A cluster of cats nap in a cat cave bed as another checks out the situation at the Mini Cat Town kitten lounge. Photo by Anna Hoch-Kenney.

CHECK OUT THESE NEW PLAYGROUNDS, PATHS AND POOLS ON THE PENINSULA

From breaking ground on new playgrounds to restoring an eroding creek, there is lots being done to make nature more accessible on the Peninsula in the year to come. If you're heading outdoors, check out these new trails, parks and playgrounds.

MOUNTAIN VIEW

Evelyn Park

Mountain View opened its newest green space, Evelyn Park (585 E. Evelyn Ave.), on May 28, 2025. The .68-acre mini park is the city's 46th park and includes a small play structure, a large lawn with a sculpted mound, pathways, a raised hut structure, a log piling climber and log steppers. The park is the first park in Mountain View to be maintained entirely with all-electric tools, according to the city.

MOUNTAIN VIEW

New aquatics complex and Magical Bridge playground

A new Magical Bridge playground opened at Rengstorff Park (S. Rengstorff Ave.) at the start of 2025, making it the 10th playground of its kind to welcome people of all ages, including those with disabilities. The new playground



Parents push children on swings at the Magical Bridge playground in Mountain View. Photo by Emily Margaretten.



The expanded Boulware Park reopened to the public earlier this year. Photo by Gennady Sheyner.

has all the trappings of a regular playground with inclusive design features built into it. It has wheelchair accessible swings, slides and spinners as well as special structures for those who may need sensory breaks. It also has a performance stage, tot zone and kindness cove to promote social connection and inclusion. The new Rengstorff Park Aquatics Center also opened at the park earlier this year. The facility includes a 25-yard by 25-meter lap pool with diving boards, as well as an activity pool with a water slide and interactive water features.

PALO ALTO

Boulware Park expansion

Palo Alto celebrated the expansion of Boulware Park (410 Fernando Ave.) earlier this year. The park is now .64-acres larger and includes two playground areas, a grassy meadow, a dog park, basketball courts and bocce courts. Plans to expand the Ventura neighborhood park had been in the works since 2019 when the city purchased the adjacent Birch Avenue site from AT&T to make the park larger. The city also installed a new bathroom and renovated the playground space at the 4.4-acre Ramos Park (800 E. Meadow Drive) this past April.



Filoli opened a new play space that emphasizes the natural surroundings. Photo courtesy Olivia Marshall/Filoli House & Historic Gardens.

WOODSIDE

Filoli's new outdoor play space and store

In early June 2025, Filolli (86 Cañada Road) opened a new nature playspace along its "TROLLS: Save the Humans" temporary art installation featuring six of Danish artist Thomas Dambo's gigantic folklore-inspired sculptures. The playspace includes interactive elements for kids, including an oak tree tumble, willow huts, play objects and a wandering pathway. And that's not all: There's also a new Trailhead Store near the stretch of Spring Creek Trail that opened in 2024. The store has snacks, drinks, souvenirs and hiking essentials, along with a scenic deck for relaxation. It is open 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily. The "TROLLS" exhibit is on view through Nov. 10. To purchase general admission tickets to Filoli to access the grounds, go to filoli.org.

MENLO PARK

Flood Park's new recreation facilities

Several new improvements, including picnic sites, tennis and pickleball courts, sand volleyball courts, a bike pump track and dog-friendly walking paths, were recently completed at the 21-acre Flood Park (215 Bay Road). A new accessible, nature-themed playground with climbing towers, bridges, multiple slides, ziplines, different styles of swings and more, including an area for children ages 2 to 5, is set to open at the park in spring 2026. ■

—Compiled by Linda Taaffe and Angela Swartz



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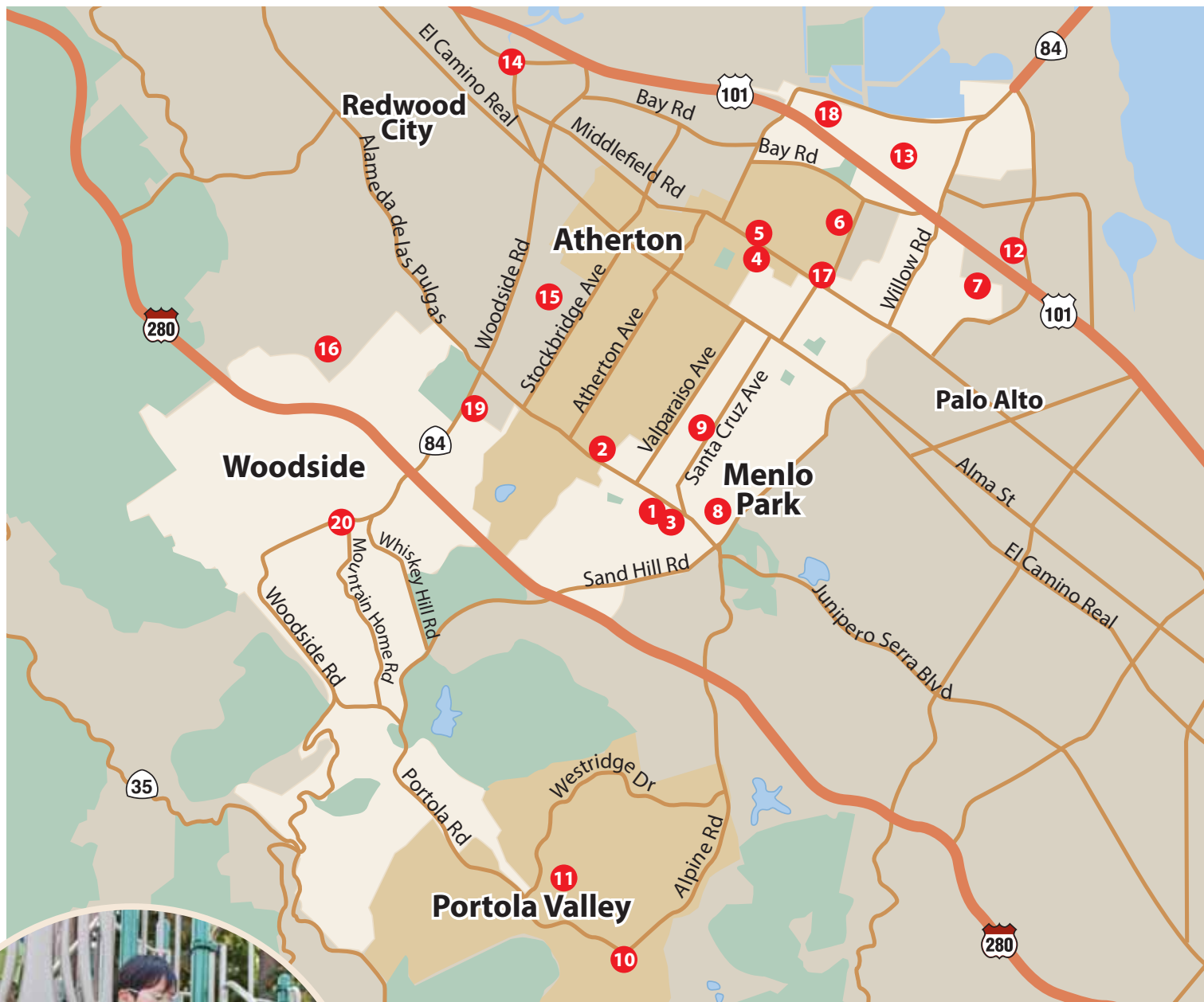
Menlo Park

Palo Alto

Portola Valley

Woodside

LOCAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Students at Ormondale Elementary School in Portola Valley pet Maple the therapy dog.
Photo by Jennifer Yoshikoshi.

LAS LOMITAS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

District operates two schools for children who live in parts of Menlo Park, Atherton, Woodside and unincorporated areas, including Ladera.

- 1 District office:**
1011 Altschul Ave., Menlo Park
ll.lesd.org
- 2 Las Lomitas Elementary School (TK-3)**
299 Alameda de las Pulgas,
Atherton
ll.lesd.org
- 3 La Entrada Middle School (4-8)**
2200 Sharon Road,
Menlo Park
le.lesd.org

MENLO PARK SCHOOL DISTRICT

The district operates five campuses. Spanish Immersion programs are available at Encinal and Laurel.

- 4 District office:**
181 Encinal Ave., Atherton
mpcsd.org
- 5 Encinal School (TK-5)**
195 Encinal Ave., Atherton
encinal.mpcsd.org
- Laurel School (TK-5)**
 - 6 Lower Campus:**
95 Edge Road, Atherton
 - 7 Upper Campus:**
275 Elliott Drive, Menlo Park
laurel.mpcsd.org

8 Oak Knoll School (TK-5)

1895 Oak Knoll Lane,
Menlo Park
oakknoll.mpcsd.org

9 Hillview Middle School (6-8)

1100 Elder Ave.,
Menlo Park
hillview.mpcsd.org

**PORTOLA VALLEY
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Portola Valley School District operates two schools for elementary-school-age students who live in Portola Valley, the unincorporated areas of Los Trancos Woods and Vista Verde, a portion of Woodside and along parts of Skyline Boulevard.

10 District office:

4575 Alpine Road,
Portola Valley
pvsd.net

10 Corte Madera School (4-8)

4575 Alpine Road,
Portola Valley
cms.pvsd.net

11 Ormondale School (TK-3)

200 Shawnee Pass Road,
Portola Valley
ormondale.pvsd.net

**RAVENSWOOD CITY
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

The district serves elementary students in East Palo Alto and parts of Menlo Park.

12 District office:

2120 Euclid Ave.,
East Palo Alto
ravenswoodschools.org

13 Belle Haven Elementary School

415 Ivy Drive,
Menlo Park
bellehaven.ravenswoodschools.org

**REDWOOD CITY
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Though mainly serving Redwood City, the district also serves some elementary students residing in parts of Atherton, Menlo Park, San Carlos and Woodside.

14 District office:

750 Bradford St.,
Redwood City
rcsdk8.net

15 Adelante Selby Spanish Immersion School

170 Selby Lane,
Atherton
adelanteselby.rcsdk8.net

**SEQUOIA UNION
HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Operates high schools and a Middle College program in partnership with Cañada College for students living in the southern and central portion of San Mateo County.

16 District office:

480 James Ave., Redwood City
seq.org

17 Menlo-Atherton High School

555 Middlefield Road, Atherton
mabears.org

18 TIDE Academy

150 Jefferson Drive, Menlo Park
tideacademy.org

19 Woodside High School

199 Churchill Ave., Woodside
woodsidehs.org

**WOODSIDE ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

20 District office:

3195 Woodside Road, Woodside

20 Woodside Elementary School (TK-8)

3195 Woodside Road,
Woodside
woodsideschool.us

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A group of walkers from Avenidas practice using walking poles during an outing. Photo courtesy Jayah Faye Paley.

The Filoli estate in Woodside. Courtesy Gretchine Wilson/Filoli.

Following the just-for-seniors trail



A guide for exploring Midpeninsula activities and programs tailored for residents 55 and older

From guided hiking excursions to monthly concerts and drop-in art classes to day trips to the San Francisco ballet, the Peninsula has no shortage of programs tailored for older adults. These programs, many of which are free or offered at discounted rates, provide the opportunity to explore the area beyond the boundaries of one's community, learn a new skill or connect with people who share similar interests. Here's a list of programs and activities to help you get started.

GET OUT AND HIKE

Tuesday Trekkers

► *Peninsula trails, local parks, regional preserves and beyond*

1 Explore local parks and open space preserves with the **Tuesday Trekkers**. The group meets at 9:50 a.m. on Tuesdays for 2-3 mile hikes on flat, mostly paved surfaces at various parks along the Peninsula, including places like Shoreline, the Baylands and Arastradero Open Space Preserve. Hikes are free, but participants must be a member of Avenidas. Annual memberships for the nonprofit senior services agency start at \$70. *For more information, go to avenidas.org (search "Tuesday Trekkers" under events).*

IF YOU WANT TO LEARN ABOUT LOCAL FLORA, FAUNA AND HISTORY WHILE HIKING ...

Bay Area Older Adults offers guided hiking excursions at open space preserves and parks throughout Santa Clara County for those who want to learn about local flora, fauna and history while exploring waterfalls, wildflowers, earthquake faults, farms, the Baylands and more. Excursions range from easy 2-mile "strolls" to moderate hikes. The daylong events include transportation and lunch. Cost is typically \$25 for nonmembers and \$20 for members. Upcoming outings include an "insect" stroll at McClellan Ranch Preserve (Oct. 8), "Pumpkins & Adobes" (Oct. 14.) and "Native Plants Walk" (Oct. 22). *For more information, go to bayareaolderadults.org.*

VISIT A LOCAL TOURIST DESTINATION

JCC day trips

► *Theater & ballet performances, museum exhibits and historical landmarks*

2 The **Oshman Family Jewish Community Center** (3921 Fabian Way, Palo Alto) offers a variety of day trips to museums, special exhibits, theater performances, historical landmarks and nature preserves in and beyond the Bay Area for adults 65 and older. Days trips have included exploring Botticelli drawings at the Legion of Honor in San Francisco, touring the U.S.S. Hornet and taking in matinee performances at the San Francisco Symphony. All

of the trips are during the day, and seniors can leave their driving worries behind, boarding a comfortable 56-seat charter bus for the trip. Outings include lunch or some kind of get-together before or after. Those with walkers and canes are welcome, as the bus drops off participants right at the door of their destinations. Field trip participants hail from throughout the Midpeninsula, and events are open to everyone. *For more information, go to paloaltojcc.org/travel.*

IMMERSE YOURSELF IN MUSIC

Music in the Afternoons

► *Local and international musicians*

3 Oshman Family Jewish Community Center offers monthly Tuesday concerts for seniors through its **Music in the Afternoons** program. Concerts are held in the Albert and Janet Schultz Cultural Arts Hall (E. Charleston and San Antonio roads, Palo Alto) at the center's Palo Alto campus and feature a variety of styles, including classical music, Argentine Tango, New Orleans jazz and Brazilian Choro music performed by local and international musicians. Cost is \$15 in advance and \$25 at the door. *Check the center's website for upcoming shows at paloaltojcc.org ("adult programs").*

EXPLORE YOUR CREATIVE SIDE

Art classes at Palo Alto Art Center

► *Ceramics, painting and more in a group setting*

4 The **Palo Alto Art Center** (1313 Newell Road, Palo Alto) offers classes in ceramics, painting, metalsmithing, fiber arts, mixed media and more tailored just for adults as part of



Mads Tolling, left, is a two-time Grammy Award-winning musician and composer, who has performed at the Oshman Family Jewish Community Center. Photo courtesy Kevin Raymond.

its Adult Studios program. Classes are offered quarterly and are open to everyone — Peninsula and non-Peninsula residents. Registration is required, and there is a class fee. Registration for winter classes begins Dec. 4. *For more information, go to bit.ly/46lp190.*

IF YOU PREFER A DROP-IN SESSION ...

The Adult Studios program offers a variety of drop-in sessions, including life drawing, collage, printmaking and jewelry. *For more information, go to bit.ly/3Sh5qHL.*

VOLUNTEER

Museums & historical landmarks

► *Exhibits, tours and more*

Many museums and historic landmarks along the Midpeninsula provide volunteer opportunities for those interested in assisting staff with various exhibits and activities

5 **San Mateo County History Museum** (2200 Broadway, Redwood City), which features exhibits detailing the history and development of the county, offers various volunteer opportunities from gallery monitors to museum docents who lead tours or assist with children's activities. *For more information, go to historysmc.org/support-us/*

6 The **Filoli estate** (86 Cañada Road, Woodside), which features an interpretive museum inside the main house and gardens that contain a huge and diverse collection of plants, offers single-day and long-term volunteer opportunities, including assisting the horticultural staff with maintaining the garden, helping with art exhibits and classes, event planning or serving as a docent in the property's gardens or home. For upcoming single-day volunteer opportunities, go to filoli.org ("Service Learning"). *To inquire about long-term volunteer opportunities, email volunteer@filoli.org.*

7 **Elizabeth F. Gamble Garden** (1431 Waverly St., Palo Alto) offers opportunities for volunteers to introduce children and families to the plants, garden critters and other wonders at the historic garden. Volunteer garden guides are responsible for leading interactive, inquiry based horticultural tours of the garden for small school groups on field trips as well as during Second Saturday events for families. Volunteers are asked to commit to six events annually. An understanding of horticulture is not required. There also are other volunteer opportunities available ranging from single-day assistance at special events to biweekly and monthly help with activities and programs at the historic property. *For more information, go to gamblegarden.org/support-us/volunteer-areas.* ■

—Information compiled by Linda Taaffe



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