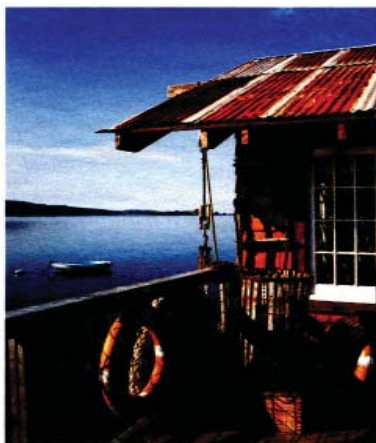


San Francisco

OUR IN-THE-MOMENT GUIDE TO...

Instant escapes

30 true getaways less than 2 hours from home



TOMALES BAY

Close to home, but well worth a weekend

I live in Marin County, in lovely Larkspur, so we go to Tomales Bay all the time—it's my favorite day trip. But recently, after staying overnight at the newly opened **Nick's Cove & Cottages** (nickscove.com), I had to rethink many hesitations I had about paying to sleep so close to home.

For one thing, you forget that you're close to home, thanks to restaurant-design king **Pat Kuleto**, who has magically cozied up this enclave of fishermen's shacks—especially the five rebuilt cabins jutting over the bay. With their worn wood floors and tongue-and-groove paneling painted creamy white, they feel more restored than rebuilt, as if someone has been living in them happily for years, but bought some really nice stuff—soft leather couch, kilim-type rugs, king-size bed with a fluffy duvet, claw-foot soaking tub—without getting all chichi about it. With the waves lapping under your private deck at high tide and a fire in the wood-burning stove, it's hard to tear yourself away.

Then again, **Blue Waters Kayaking** (bwkayak.com) launches its Tule Elk Tour from the boat ramp right next to Nick's. I've kayaked with this friendly, knowledgeable company for years, and its wildlife-rich trip from Nick's moves across Tomales Bay through oyster beds at Hog Island and within shouting distance of the Tule Elk Reserve at Point Reyes National Seashore—or, during its three-hour moonlit paddle, next to night herons caught against a big old moon and gleaming silver water. Wait—where do I live, again?

PAMELA FEINSILBER
PHOTOGRAPH BY ED ANDERSON