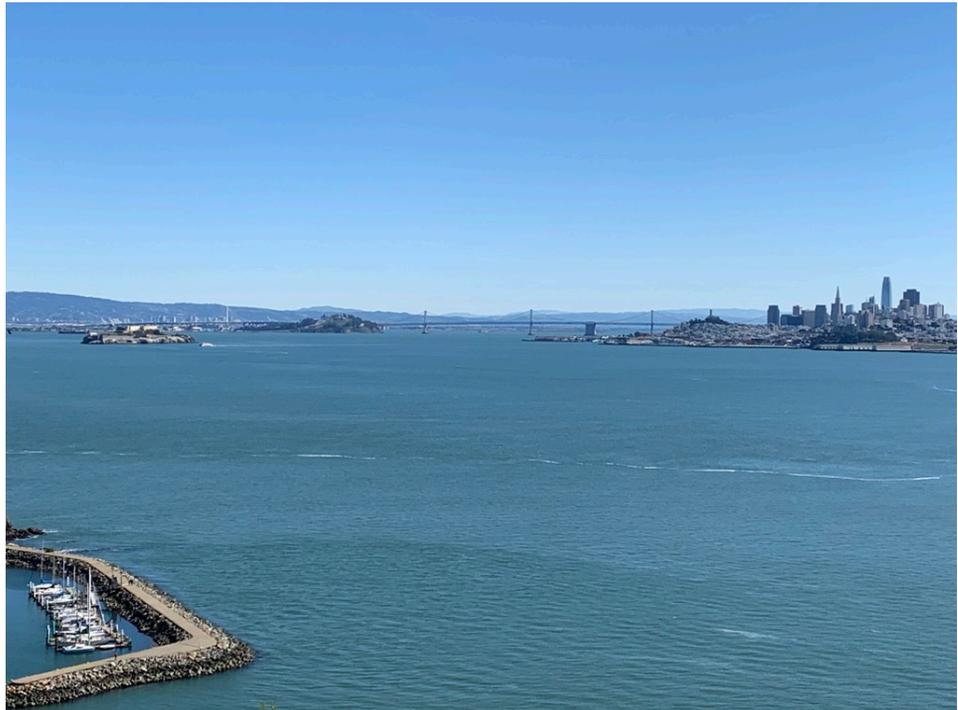


Trip 2 – Episode #40 – North of Frisco to Petaluma

Though we would love to have stayed longer in San Francisco, we had to move on ... but not without crossing the Golden Gate Bridge, of course.



With some last views of Alcatraz and the city.





And Jim helpfully pointing out where the bridge is.



We had hoped to visit Muir Woods north of the city, where there were reportedly old growth redwoods. But when we found out it would cost \$35 just to enter the park, and not being sure how long we'd actually be able to visit, it seemed exorbitant (especially after the double parking cost of the day before), so we decided to just take a scenic route north toward Wine Country.

And was it ever scenic! Unfortunately, I was driving, so there are no photos. (Jim was white-knuckling it beside me.)

But we stopped at Muir Beach and walked their trail to get a great vista.





Love this shot – especially the two ravens necking in the upper right corner. It also gives you an idea of the mountains we'd just driven through to get there. (Although the path you see is not the one we drove.)



From there, we were headed to Petaluma, one of the towns in wine country that was recommended by our friends in San Francisco.

It was a beautiful, more peaceful drive than the one we'd just experienced.



Even the cows were more laid back.



We didn't know what to expect of Petaluma, but we just loved it there! What a great little town! Right from the get-go, it was cool and quirky and fun. Not at all surprising to discover that American Graffiti was shot there. Although some of the 50s style is still in evidence, there's just so much more going on in this town.



Our first hint was when we drove up to the Petaluma Visitor Center, on the outskirts of town. The two women in the centre were very friendly and eager to tell us about how wonderful their town was. But we'd already figured that out.

Right next door was this outdoor display of giant teapots ... on wheels.



And there was other interesting outdoor art...



As Jim points out.

Oh, Jim.



As we drove into town, one of the first things we saw was the Pacific Gas & Electric Company building. You gotta love a town with this kind of a sense of humour.



Then in the "Historic Downtown" (it seems every town has one), there were beautiful old buildings, so well maintained.





There's a great old theatre, The Mystic.

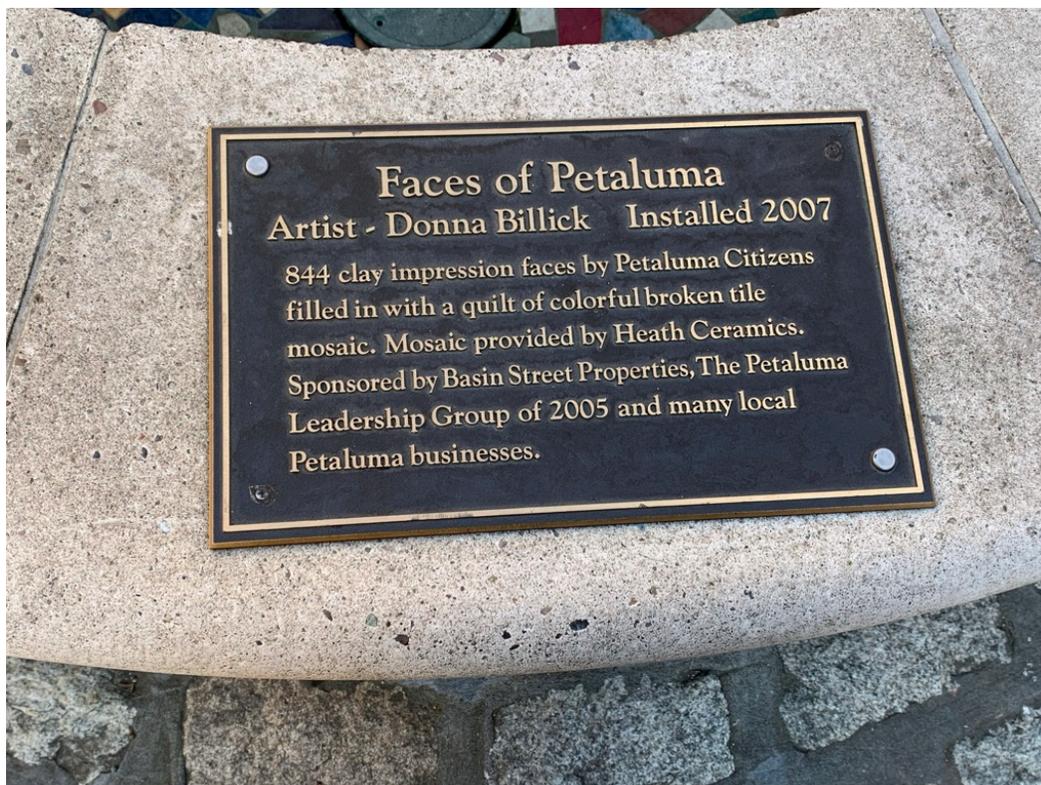


Welcoming little squares with fun shops and cafes...





This very cool fountain is made up of ceramic tiles with faces from the community.



A fabulous new and used bookstore...



The Petaluma River runs through town and there are restaurants and cafes along both sides of it – although because it was the middle of the week, many were not open.



However there were lots and lots of restaurants that were open. We had two dinners there, and both were excellent. Jim's always happy when he gets Brussels sprouts.



And this Peruvian restaurant was out of this world!
(Although the patio was a little chilly.)





We stayed in a KOA, surrounded by trees – some of which were redwoods (and we didn't have to pay \$35 to see them!).



All in all, we loved Petaluma. Yet another town we'd never heard of before we got there, and would highly recommend.

Next, our tours of Wine Country. And will you be surprised!