



## Mad Maps



Western San Mateo County has something for everybody, from a rickety old bar in the country to a posh hotel on the coast. Not to mention a goat farm, and spectacular scenery in between.

Some folks say that motorcycles are the best vehicles for exploring this country.

"You're living it. You're breathing it. You're feeling it. It's an invigorating sensation. It makes you feel alive," says Jenny

Lefferts. Jenny creates Mad Maps, which feature fun trips along back roads, and include plenty of tips about interesting places to stop along the way.

"Right now we've done about 80 loops in California on our four part series. Now we're going across the country. But the loop we're doing today is the very first loop we came up with when we started this company back in 1999," explains Jenny.

Jenny leaves her kids with her parents, and we get ready to ride. We leave Mad Maps world headquarters in San Francisco and head down the Great Highway.

We're going to explore part of the Peninsula, from Skyline Boulevard to the sea. We'll stop at Apple Jack's bar in the town of La Honda, Harley Farms in Pescadero and the Ritz-Carlton in Half Moon Bay.

We climb up the crest of busy Highway 92, and when we turn south onto Skyline, we're in a different world. We leave the traffic... and our cares behind.

Jenny exclaims, "It's all about finding the less traveled, more scenic back road."

At longtime landmark Alice's Restaurant, we turn west onto windy La Honda Road. From there, the landscape gets decidedly more rural, until we roll into La Honda itself, and Apple Jack's Bar.

Jenny says, "In the late 1800's, this was a major logging area, and there were six bars in La Honda. And this is the remaining bar. And during Prohibition in the thirties, it was actually a speakeasy.

Today Apple Jack's has a pretty relaxed atmosphere, with peanut shells on the floor, license plates on the ceiling and Foosball and pool tables for some friendly competition.

La Honda Road leads to the hamlet of San Gregorio and its eclectic General Store. We turn south on the old Stage Road, one of the most picturesque thoroughfares in these parts. Pretty soon we arrive at Harley Farms in Pescadero.

Harley Farms makes award winning goat cheese. Owner Dee Harley gives us a goat milking and goat anatomy lesson.

"So you have to slowly touch their udder, and make sure that they feel comfortable with you," she explains, "And with your thumb and forefinger, nip the top, kind of like a valve. And then with your bottom three fingers, squeeze the milk that's in the bottom part of the teat. Let go and do it again."

Dee makes it look easy, but it's hard for us amateurs. My technique is so bad, my goat finally puts her foot down, right in the milk bucket!

Dee sees a lot of mediocre milkers at her farm. She invites visitors to sign up for group tours that include the opportunity to milk a goat, a chance to make cheese

and a cheese tasting upstairs in the barn.

Some Harley Farms cheeses are decorated with edible flowers. So besides being delicious, they're works of art. They're sold in the farm's gift shop and many other places.

Dee adds, "What's amazing is when -- friends of mine go across the country and they'll go into a store. Like a friend just went to Houston, Texas and went into this nice store. She says, 'I saw your cheese and it said Pescadero on it!'"

Dee started with six goats in 1990; now she's got nearly 300.

Getting to know people like Dee, and having experiences like we've had on her farm, are exactly what Jenny envisioned when she started Mad Maps.

Jenny says, "The world just opens up, and you start meeting -- I don't know, I love it. Yeah, it's my dream. It's my -- it's Bay Area Backroads in a map. You know. I love your show!"

And we love Jenny's maps.

We've got one more stop as we leave Pescadero, about fifteen miles to the north, at the upscale Ritz-Carlton Resort in Half Moon Bay. The Ritz has a golf course and a spa, but you don't have to spend any money to visit. The paths along the coast are open to the public.

When we arrive, we're greeted with hot chocolate and some Harley Farms Cheese. We're also greeted by bagpiper Tom Harvey, who leads us to a lovely view of the sunset over the ocean.

The company, the setting, the music, and some smores by the fire make for a wonderful end to a wonderfully diverse day, just a small sampling of what the backroads have to offer.

For more information about Mad Maps, log on to [www.madmaps.com](http://www.madmaps.com) or call 415-221-1232. For information about Apple Jack's Bar in La Honda, call 650-747-0331. For more about Harley Farms in Pescadero, check their website: [www.harleyfarms.com](http://www.harleyfarms.com) or call 650-879-0480. And for more about the Ritz Carlton in Half Moon Bay, go to [www.ritzcarlton.com/resorts/half\\_moon\\_bay](http://www.ritzcarlton.com/resorts/half_moon_bay) or call 650-712-7000.

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