



THE MANUAL

JOMO is real, and I found it on California's rugged Bodega Bay coast

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By Sarah Joseph - July 29, 2025



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JOMO, also known as the joy of missing out, is the feeling of contentment that you get from deliberately opting out of social events, trends, or other activities. Unlike FOMO (fear of missing out), [which causes anxiety](#) over missing out on experiences, JOMO embraces the freedom of saying “no” to social pressures. This is exactly what I experienced on my recent trip to Bodega Bay, courtesy of [Sonoma County Tourism](#), where I was able to escape the obligations of everyday life and reconnect with nature. From start to finish, the entire experience was magical. Here’s a full recap of my visit, as well as some top recommendations on things to do in Bodega Bay while you’re there.

Stay at The Lodge at Bodega Bay



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[The Lodge at Bodega Bay](#) is a luxury hotel that was voted the #1 hotel in Northern California and the #1 hotel in the world in the 2024 Conde Nast Traveler Readers’ Choice Awards, and after going there myself, there’s no doubt about it. With stunning views of the ocean, top-tier amenities, and spotless modern rooms, The Lodge is easily among the top five hotels I’ve ever visited.

Recommended Videos

My husband and I stayed in the Whirlpool Room, which is perfect for a romantic getaway and features a king-size bed, vaulted ceilings, a fireplace, and a whirlpool bathtub for two. We were impressed with the extra touches, such as the lavender bath fizz and the Bose sound system for playing music. The lighting was absolutely beautiful, and the bed was adorned with fluffy pillows and soft bedding.

During the evenings, we loved exploring the landscaped grounds, which had plenty of fire pits and seating alcoves for guests to enjoy, and even a Bocce ball court. They also offer a library, spa, dry sauna, fitness area with classes, and an infinity-edge hot tub and heated pool. Really, there's no better place to stay in Bodega Bay.

Where to eat in Bodega Bay

Drake's Restaurant



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During our stay, we dined at Drake's Restaurant once for dinner and twice for breakfast. Kelsey, our waitress, was very knowledgeable and helpful over the different menu items and helped us choose a delicious dinner of fresh local oysters, New England clam chowder (which, as someone born in New England, I can tell you this is New Englander-approved),

Pan-seared Black Cod, and Tomales Bay Manila Clams. Everything was so fresh, flavorful, and visually stunning.

Breakfast didn't disappoint, either. We tried the eggs Benedict, steak and eggs, and the French toast. For me, the highlight was definitely the French toast, which had a crispy cornflake crust and was served with real maple syrup. All tables were equipped with single-serving glass jars of Dickenson's honey, orange marmalade, strawberry jam, raspberry jam, and blueberry jam.

Fern Bar



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For our second dinner, we visited [the Fern Bar](#), a charming spot located at The Barlow in Sebastopol, which was formerly an apple cannery. These days, it's been transformed into a high-end shopping center with plenty of delicious food and cute shops for keepsake finding. Right now, they have a brand-new Happy Hour Crawl, which will take you through six of their favorite eateries for samples.

The Fern Bar was a happy surprise. The decor is fresh and lively with fern plants, stained glass windows, flexible seating options, and even a piano. The star of the show here is definitely their drinks menu, a highlight being the Smoke n' Mirrors. Since we were there for

dinner, though, we enjoyed their Lamb Skewers and the Numb Num chicken wings, which were both a burst of flavor with a Sichuan peppercorn kick. We also ordered the stuffed cabbage, which was served beautifully plated on a bed of quinoa and greens.

Things to do in Bodega Bay



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Bodega Bay is full of adventurous activities, so it was a real pleasure to come out here and try a few. We happened to be in town for the weekend of the Apple Blossom Festival, so that was certainly a highlight, but we also explored Sonoma Zipline Adventures, Gold Ridge Organic Farms, Highway 1, Bodega Head, and the Armstrong Redwoods State Natural Reserve.

[Thriller fans may recognize](#) some of the buildings around the downtown of Bodega Bay as being from Alfred Hitchcock's 1963 film, *The Birds*. The Potter Schoolhouse on Bodega Lane was a prominent location in the film, as well as the St. Teresa of Avila Church and The Tides Warf & Restaurant. If you want to stay a night at the Valley Ford Hotel, you still can. I'll just stick with The Lodge, thanks...

Sonoma Zipline Adventures



Sonoma Zipline Adventures / Sonoma Zipline Adventures

Speaking of the [good kind of thrill](#), [Sonoma Zipline Adventures](#) was a favorite activity of mine. We arrived just in time to do their Tree Tops Tour through the redwoods, which took our party through seven ziplines, two sky bridges, and finished with a 45-foot rappel. This tour features one of the longest ziplines in California, measuring approximately 1,500 feet in length and situated about 250 feet above the forest floor. Exhilarating!

Our guides, Simon and Dolton, educated and entertained us throughout the tour with puns and jokes. While normally I might have been nervous about being 250 feet in the air, Simon and Dolton kept us so safe that I didn't even get butterflies until the rappel at the end. And even then, we were focused on having a great time.

Gold Ridge Organic Farms



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Not to be outshone, [Gold Ridge Organic Farms](#) exceeded our expectations. Nestled in the Petaluma Gap, this farm grows over 70 varieties of organic fruit. Farmer Brook Hazen is the visionary behind this haven, and he personally gave us an inside look through a bookable walk-through tour.

Right now, Gold Ridge is transitioning from market to direct-to-consumer to help build community through reconnecting with food, which is a literacy Farmer Brook believes to be in woeful decline. They do this through events, classes, and by showcasing other small businesses in their gift shop.

This vision of community gives Golden Ridge a special heart and soul, and that also translates to the quality of their harvest. Gold Ridge Organic Farms produces several award-winning olive oils, which they press on-site in a room adjacent to the gift shop. The Picholine blend ranks 4th in the nation and 14th in the world.

Apple Blossom Festival



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As I mentioned, we were lucky enough to be around for the 79th Apple Blossom Festival in Sebastopol. The town was packed with locals and visitors alike who were eager to snag a spot on the main street for the parade. Needless to say, parking was a challenge, but once we found a spot, it was easy enough to find the festivities, which included food, live music, booths, and more to celebrate the apple blossoms.

Bodega Head



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If you are into wildlife watching, there's no better place to do that than Bodega Head. It's not far from The Lodge, and if you happen to be staying there, borrow the binoculars from your room and you'll thank me later! Bodega Head has a rich environment suited to many kinds of seabirds, shorebirds, and waterfowl. You also might have the chance to see whales off the coast. We hung out near the Bodega Bay Trailhead, but unfortunately, we didn't see any whales. We did see some California sea lions, though, which splashed playfully for hours.

Highway 1



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You can't visit Bodega Bay and not take a scenic drive [along Highway 1](#). This coastal drive needs no introduction, with its windy roads and cliffs that plunge into the ocean. We stopped at several pull-outs along the way [towards San Francisco](#), and we probably could have stayed there forever among the hills of wildflowers. I definitely felt a sense of JOMO as we breathed in the sea air.

Scenic hikes at Bodega Bay



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[Reconnecting with nature](#) is one of Bodega Bay's largest opportunities, so here are a few scenic hikes to try out while you visit.

- **Pioneer Nature Trail:** This is an easy 1.6-mile hike under the shade of a redwood canopy at the Armstrong Redwoods State Natural Reserve.
- **Pinnacle Gulch Trail:** This is a half-mile path close to The Lodge that leads to a beach of tide pools and distinctive rock formations with picturesque views of the bay.
- **Coastal Prairie Trail:** At just over a mile long, this trail is perfect for a leisurely walk or even a bike ride. The Lodge has complimentary bikes available on a first-come, first-served basis for guests.
- **Pomo Canyon to Shell Beach Trailhead:** If you want a hike that's a bit more moderate, try this stretch of 7.2 miles, which is near Occidental. With prairie and coastal views, you'll be able to spot plenty of wildlife.
- **Tomales Point Trailhead:** This is a dog-friendly, 9.4-mile trail near Marshall. Even though it's a little bit of a drive, the ocean views are worth it, and you can see all kinds of wildlife, including elk.

Ultimately, Bodega Bay offers a chance for every weary soul to reconnect with themselves and their loved ones. In the serenity of the California coast, it's a natural process to pursue JOMO and the healing that nature can bring. No matter who you are, Bodega Bay is a retreat for thrill-seekers and relaxation alike, and I can't wait to visit again.



American Airlines AAdvantage members can now use their miles to make inflight purchases on all flights, a new policy that went into effect this week. From Tuesday, the airline expanded the program to all regional flights, with the option now available network-wide. Prior to the change, members were restricted to making purchases with miles on mainline flights.

What you can purchase in-flight with AAdvantage miles

[Read more](#)



If you're looking to unplug and recharge, Colorado Springs, Colorado has just been named the best U.S. city for a digital detox, according to a new study from Upgraded Points. The report ranked 100 park-rich cities across 14 criteria such as internet speed, 5G coverage, hiking access, off-grid Airbnbs, and wellness resources, to find the most screen-free destinations.

Colorado Springs claimed the top spot with an ideal mix of nature and limited connectivity. The city has slower internet (145 Mbps), just 64% 5G coverage, and 56 trail miles per 100,000 residents. It also boasts nearly double the national average of off-grid Airbnb listings, with strong guest ratings (4.92 stars) and a high number of wellness centers. Popular activities include hiking Garden of the Gods or escaping to a cabin near Pikes Peak.

[Read more](#)

If you're gearing up for an international trip, you've probably heard the terms passport and visa thrown around. They both play a big role in global travel, but they're not the same thing, and confusing the two can lead to some frustrating surprises at the airport.

I used to think having a passport was all you needed for international travel. It wasn't until I started planning trips that I learned about visas and how they can be just as important.