

Turtle Rocks Oceanfront Inn 3-Day Itinerary

Day Three and extended stay itineraries/north

The Trinidad area and the greater Redwood Coast offer seemingly endless special things to do. One could spend weeks doing only nature hikes and still not do all of them. Here are a few more of our favorite things to do north of the Turtle Rocks:

Far north redwoods excursion: exit Turtle Rocks parking lot turn left and head north on Patrick's Point Drive two miles and intersect Highway 101 and go north. Continue on 101 through Orick and across the magnificent **Klamath River** (second largest river in California). This is an approximately 40-minute drive north of the Turtle Rocks Oceanfront Inn. A few miles north of the **Klamath river bridge** on the west side of the highway is the **Klamath Jet Boat Tours** business. This is a well-run boat excursion business that this writer has enjoyed several times. The jet boat operators are very respectful of the other boats on the river and overall not much "jetting" goes on. A few fun spins in the middle of the river are done when there are no other boats nearby. The operators are naturalists with a deep respect for the river and the environment who are very good at pointing out the **wildlife** all around you. My favorite package is their **end-of-the-day tour** up the Klamath River to an off the grid house owned by the jet boat company with their own pier. A dinner is served on their large outdoor deck overlooking the river in this pristine roadless wilderness area. This dinner trip takes you the farthest up the river. **Bald eagles, golden eagles, hawks** and huge **osprey** nests are common sights along the river. If you are lucky, you may see from the boat a **bear** and the **river minks** that live along the rocky outcroppings along the river.

Leaving the Klamath Jet Boat Tours, head due west on the Requa Road. A five-minute trip that winds uphill on a well-paved road finds you back in the Redwood National Park at the **Klamath River Overlook**. A paved parking lot with informational park signs, the overlook is about 1200 feet above sea level and has a soaring top-of-the-world sweeping view of the ocean north and south and the **mouth of the Klamath River**. There is a **ridge-top coastal trail** here affording exceptional views.



Klamath River

Returning on Requa road east, head north up Highway 101 another 5 minutes finds you at the very large commercial development known as the "**Trees of Mystery**" on the east side of the highway. After miles of forested highway, it is startling to come upon a business of this size. Don't let the very large paved parking lot and the gigantic **Babe the Blue Ox and Paul Bunyan statues** put you off. This place is well worth some exploring. You find yourself in a very nice gift shop immediately after entering the main building. Here you can buy a ticket to ride the new **gondola "Sky trails"** that takes you up through the **forest canopy** for a unique redwood experience. You can get off the gondola on one end and explore a **vista point area** and then get back on the gondola for your return.



Paul Bunyan and Babe the Blue Ox statues at Trees of Mystery



Trees of Mystery Trinity Tree



Trees of Mystery



Gondola At Trees Of Mystery

Returning to the main building, as you wander through the gift shop, you will discover a wonderful surprise: one of the finest privately-owned **Indian museums** anywhere. Enclosed in museum glass cases, you wander from room to room of beautiful **Indian art and artifacts** of the three indigenous tribes of the area: the Yurok, Karuk, and Hupa tribes, as well as collections from tribes throughout North America. Incredible basketry, jewelry, tools, canoes, and weaponry are among the wonders of this impressive collection.



Indian Museum at Trees of Mystery



Indian Museum at Trees of Mystery

Leaving Trees of Mystery, go right heading north another five miles to the **Lagoon Creek** rest area. Wonderful **water lilies** here and a short trail leads north to a mini-cove at **Wilson Creek**. A quick-hitter stop but a magical little place. Well-maintained public restrooms.

Leaving Lagoon Creek head south on Highway 101 and return to the Turtle Rocks Oceanfront Inn (about a forty-minute drive) using the Patrick's Point Drive exit off the highway. Enjoy afternoon inn-baked desserts available on the kitchen counter from 3 pm to 8pm, fresh mostly organic fruit, organic teas, coffee, or possibly a cold beverage out of the antique Kelvinator refrigerator. Stroll the grounds, relax in your spacious room, go out on your room deck, check out the sea lions on the Turtle Rocks, offshore rocks, and enjoy the Pacific ocean waves hitting the shore... pelicans in flight, a sea lion bark echoing over the water... unwind... breathe in the sea air... listen to the ocean... you're here... the peace and quiet of the Turtle Rocks.

And dinner on a third night, try the **Sunset Restaurant** (especially the seafood fettucine). Exit the Turtle Rocks parking lot, go right and head south four miles on Patrick's Point Drive to the village of Trinidad. After the stop sign, go straight through the intersection and continue south one mile to the **Cher-Ae Heights Casino** (see "restaurant reviews" on this website).

Day Three itinerary/south

Exit the Turtle Rocks parking lot, head south on Patrick's Point Drive two miles to Seawood Drive. Go left and head east on Seawood Drive and take the south entrance to Highway 101. Go south leaving Trinidad travelling along **Clam Beach** to the west. About eight miles south of the Turtle Rocks, exit Clam Beach exit and drive west to a large public beach parking lot. Clam Beach is a huge sandy beach that affords a beautiful view to the north of **Trinidad Head**. (see "beaches" on this website) Clam Beach is in **McKinleyville** which is also home to an excellent **18-hole public golf course** called **Beau Pre**. Continue south from Clam Beach on Highway 101, take the Airport Road exit, head east past the **Eureka/Arcata airport** (in north McKinleyville!) and go to the end of Airport Road to the stop sign. Take a right on Central and then a quick left on Norton Road and drive a quarter mile east to the Beau Pre golf course.

Leaving the Beau Pre golf course, go west on Norton Road and make a left turn and head south on Central Avenue. This is the main road through the town of McKinleyville and as you drive south you will find supermarkets, several shopping centers including a Big Kmart store and the **Mill Creek Cinema theatre complex**. The south end of Central Avenue has a small; hilltop area known as Bella Vista. There is an area of shops here and the excellent **Six Rivers Brewery** bar and restaurant that serves appetizers and dinners and has a live music venue and a really good ambience in its hilltop location.

Exiting the Six Rivers Brewery, turn left on Central Avenue and head south down the hill connecting with Highway 101 southbound. You cross the **Mad River Bridge** on 101 and enter **Arcata**. Three freeway exits south on 101 (just past the Highway 299 east interchange), exit the freeway at the main Arcata /Humboldt State University exit. You follow the road straight (you are on G Street) and it leads you into the heart of this creative vibrant university town.

Where G Street crosses 13th Street, on your left is the excellent **Wildberries Market** that takes up a whole city block. Very nice ambience. Lots of organic everything here with this writer's favorite deli (great sandwiches), a juice bar, and a Ramone's Coffee Shop serving mostly organic coffees and espressos, hot and cold beverages, and very tasty desserts made in their own bakery. There is a very nice enclosed deck with tables that have a superb view of much of Arcata and a distant view of **Humboldt Bay** for those who choose to eat their food there.

Leaving Wildberries turn left on H Street and head four blocks south to the **Arcata Plaza**. This is the center of the city of Arcata and is a classic town square. Find a parking spot here (which is often difficult) and get out and wander the **shops and restaurants** lining the plaza. The **Jacoby Storehouse** sits on the southwest corner of the plaza and is its predominant building. Arguably the two best restaurants in town are found in this beautifully restored historical treasure of a building. The **Plaza Grill** is on the second floor and has a high-ceiling with lots of windows and oak paneling. There is also a bar. Very nice atmosphere with excellent food.



Arcata Plaza



Jacoby Storehouse on the Arcata Plaza

In the basement of the Jacoby Storehouse is an excellent Italian restaurant called **Abruzzi**. Old brick interior walls and a candlelight atmosphere with only a few half basement windows create an intimate dinner house feel.

On the southeast corner of the Arcata Plaza you will find the beautifully decorated **Plaza Design**, a wonderful store where you can buy postcards, a wide assortment of locally-made crafts, and custom high-end furniture some of which is made by local artist craftsman.

After exploring the Plaza continue heading south on the one-way H Street four more blocks to the intersection with Samoa Boulevard. Turn right and take the first left on I Street. Head south on I Street a half-mile and you enter the **Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary**. Hiking trails abound here on the north end of Arcata Bay (which is really the north end of greater Humboldt Bay). A serene place with excellent bird watching and hiking trails...



Arcata Marsh

To the west are the **Manila and Samoa dunes** and the ocean. Vast sand hills undulating seemingly forever north and south. Often windy and especially cool here but a unique ecosystem with its own special beauty.

To the east of highway 101 and north is **Humboldt State University**. This is one of the most beautiful campuses in the nation with truly special landscaping everywhere with specimen plants abounding. If you are interested in horticulture, this is highly recommended. The rhododendrons in the Spring are dazzling and brilliantly laid out in groupings of same color plants. The university's expansive grounds back up into the **Arcata Redwood Park** and its network of hiking trails.

South of the university, the **Baywood Golf and Country Club** in the Bayside area of Arcata at the base of the redwood-studded Fickle Hill is arguably the finest overall golf course in this writer's opinion. (check a map for directions on this). The setting is gorgeous and the weather is favorable. This is a private club but they do exchanges if you are a club member somewhere else. The Baywood is only a twenty-five minute drive from the Turtle Rocks.

Heading south from Arcata, Highway 101 wraps around the east side of Humboldt Bay. Entering **Eureka**, Highway 101 is now called Fourth Street. The cross streets start at the bottom of the alphabet at "Z" and go upward as you head south through the small city of Eureka. Take a right at M Street and go west two blocks to Second Street and you will see one of the finest and most ornate Victorian mansions in the United States. The **Carson Mansion** is now a private club and only club members and their guests may enter. But it is a sight to behold and photograph.

Eureka in general does not get the recognition for the sheer number of **beautiful Victorian homes** it has all over the city many of which have been lovingly restored to the original glory.

Head south down Second Street to F Street. This is the heart of the **Old Town** area of Eureka. A nice plaza area with a large **fountain** feature combine with **Victorian shops** to create a charming time warp feel. You may even see a horse drawn carriage here Walk one block west on F Street to the new promenade along the bayfront. Sometimes there is live music here and there is a beautiful view across the bay to the boat harbor at the **Woodley Island Marina**. Getting panhandled here is also a possibility. Old Town Eureka is also the main

center of the street people and homeless in the county and is home to a well-run rescue mission on the south end of Second Street near C Street

There is a little boat called the **Madaket** that does a trip that putts around Humboldt Bay. Between strolling the Old Town and the boat trip, several hours can be pleasantly spent here .

Southeast of the Old Town area in a nice residential area of Eureka you will find the beautifully maintained **Eureka Municipal golf course**. This a public golf course in a very nice setting (see a map for directions). This is only about a thirty-five minute drive from the Turtle Rocks.



Carson Mansion Eureka



Eureka – Pink Lady



Eureka – Old Town Shops



Eureka – Fishermen Memorial

A last option would be to drive another twenty minutes south on Highway 101 to the Victorian village of **Ferndale**. This is a pastoral setting with mostly flat farmland surrounding the village. The **main street** of the town is all **Victorian stores and small shops** and has an old charm to it that holds my attention for an hour or so and is probably worth the trip to see it. It is similar to the Old Town area of Eureka but is smaller and without the bay and harbor setting of Eureka. Ferndale lacks the amazing spectacular raw scenic beauty of the Trinidad coast and the Redwood National Park so I recommend a short stop here on your way south to San Francisco or the Wine Country or on your way up from those destinations.

The southern redwood parks of Humboldt County are much further south and also recommended as a stop on your way to San Francisco or other points south. The **Avenue of the Giants** has a compelling name and is a wonderful road to drive along as it roughly parallels Highway 101. The Avenue of the Giants, however, is narrow strips of old growth trees where you often can hear Highway 101 nearby and does not compare to the vast pristine expanses of the Northern Humboldt redwood parks and their amazing collection of hiking trails.

The **Humboldt Redwoods State Park** is large but much of it is very steep and inaccessible.

Return to the Turtle Rocks Oceanfront Inn, gaze over the Turtle Rocks sea stacks out to sea to your next door neighbor to the west (the northern islands of Japan) sip a cup of coffee or organic tea, and reflect on your third day on the Redwood Coast. Create new memories at the Turtle Rocks.