

The Great Tide Pool

TALES OF PACIFIC GROVE, CALIFORNIA
by local award-winning author, [Brad Herzog](#)

KEEPING UP WITH THE QUIRKY



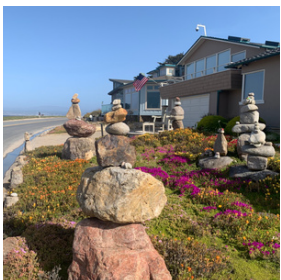
I have a good friend back in Chicago who used to live in a housing development where it was hard to discern one home from another. I commented on it one day, and he simply shrugged and said to me, “That’s what I like about it. I want my house to look like all the other houses around me.” I found that to be a stunning revelation, one that diverged considerably from my own perspective.



I think that’s why I live in Pacific Grove.



Sure, there are the crashing waves and the rocky coastline and the pink coastal frenzy that blooms in the spring. Yes, it offers wonderful walkability and sincere smiles along the way. Of course, there’s the Victorian charm that fuels a throwback vibe. And there’s a happy balance between tourism and community that allows locals to feel like we’re sharing our slice of paradise but not losing its character.



But I also love the fact that, residentially speaking, most anything goes.



The Midwestern suburb in which I was raised was a wonderful environment to grow up in. But (and this may just be my personal bias) it has always felt to me like a keep-up-with-the-Joneses kind of place. Do as others do. There’s a comfort in it, for sure, but also a sameness.

Not so in Pacific Grove. There are no Joneses here, in a manner of speaking, at least from my point of view. One need only look at the array of houses, side by side, each different in design and décor, color and character, size and overall sensibility. People project their own personal vibes in the form of front yard ornaments and magnificent gardens and flags waving from balconies and gnome villages conjured up around bushes or tree stumps.



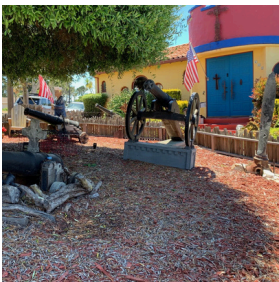
There's the residence along the ninth hole at the PG Golf Links, its dead front-yard tree reanimated in the form of a giant octopus, thanks to a talented chainsaw artist. And the house on Locust Street with a mermaid scene painted on its garage, the work of a creative friend from Moss Landing a dozen years ago. And the place, on Mermaid Avenue, named "Honallie" and topped with a dragon running the length of the roof and peering over the front edge.



The Butterfly House on 9th Street - adorned in too many flutterers to count - is locally famous. The house at 403 Gibson - with its back-alley "Blue Garden" brimming with the likes of Bigfoot, Pegasus, and Thomas the Train - is more off the beaten path, but no less fanciful. Nor, frankly is the house at 614 Granite Street, its front yard festooned with sculptures of a horse, a moose, and a giant bullfrog.



At the intersection of Hillcrest Avenue and Hillcrest Court, a not-so-humble red-blue-and-yellow abode is fronted by a wood-carved patriotic sailor and four cannons. At the other end of town, along Ocean View Boulevard, a huge, rusting ship's anchor decorates a front yard along Ocean View, just a few houses down from a yard featuring a series of stacked rock sculptures.



It's been said that your home should reflect who you are and what you love. I like to think that my hometown - and the homes within it - do that for me.



*The Great
Tidepool*