

The Great Tide Pool

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



WHO'S ON FIRST STREET

In honor of Abbott and Costello's "Who's on First?" routine (named Best Comedy Sketch of the 20th Century by *Time* magazine 25 years ago), I offer an homage to the (sometimes confusing) streets of Pacific Grove:

"So, tell me about your hometown."

"Pacific Grove? It's a paradise - we call ourselves America's Last Hometown."

"Last? Meaning most recent?"

"Oh, not at all. It dates back to 1875. It's more of a geographic reference."

"Ah, on the edge of the continent. Right along the Pacific Coast Highway."

"Well, not exactly."

"But the PCH goes right through Pacific Palisades."

"Sure, but that's five-and-a-half hours south of a here."

"And it leads right to Pacifica."

"Uh-huh. A couple hours north."

"But Pacific Grove..."

"We're on the tip of a breathtaking peninsula, so..."

"The Pacific Grove Peninsula?"

"Well, no. The Monterey Peninsula."

"Is the city of Monterey entirely located on the peninsula?"

"Nope."

"Okay..."

"To get to PG, you just drive a couple of miles toward the coast from the coastal highway."





"That sounds impossible."

"Nope, it's easy. Just curve along Highway 68."

"Oh, the same Highway 68 that leads to the airport?"

"Yes. Sort of. The stretches of the highway are actually about three miles apart."

"Um, alright..."

"Of course, Highway 68 becomes Forest Avenue when you get to PG."

"Ah, Forest Avenue. A drive through the trees."

"Er, no. Mostly businesses and residences."

(Scratches head) "How about the other streets in town..."

"Well, among them we have streets that range from 1st to 20th."

"Okay, now we're simplifying things. All in order, right?"

"Right. Well, no. Caledonia Park separates 19th and 20th streets. And Caledonia Avenue runs alongside the park. Actually, on both sides..."

"You're saying there are two Caledonia Avenues?"

"Basically. And there are some streets in between the other numbered streets: Grand, Fountain, Carmel, Monterey..."

"There are streets named Carmel and Monterey in Pacific Grove?"

"Yup."

"Confusing. Is there a Pebble Beach Street?"

"No, but the famous 17-Mile Drive that weaves through Pebble Beach actually starts in Pacific Grove. It goes right past Short Street."

"Oh, don't tell me..."

"Yeah, Short Street is nearly a mile long."

"Of course."

"There's also a Miles Avenue... but it's pretty short. Anyway, there's no Pebble Beach Street. But we do have a Beach Street."

"That must run along a sandy beach."

"Uh-uh."

"Well, if there's a Carmel Street and a Monterey Street, surely there's a Pacific Grove Street..."

"Strangely, no. But we do have Grove Acre Avenue. And Grove Street. And Pacific Street..."



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"Ah, that must run along the Pacific Ocean."

"No, actually... kind of perpendicular to it. We do have beautiful Ocean View Boulevard, though."

"Okay, now we're getting somewhere. A coastal road?"

"Yup."

"Along the ocean?"

"Well, yes and no. Technically, most of it runs along Monterey Bay."

"Shouldn't they have named it Bayview?"

"Oh, that's inland, a couple of blocks away."

(sighs) "You know, I think there's only one way I'm going to understand all this."

"Oh? How?"

"I need to visit PG."

"You're always welcome. But I warn you: Once you understand the place, you may not want to leave."



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