

California and Hawaii

August 7-19, 2021

Saturday, August 7 – Sue and I finished packing and set off for the Holiday Inn & Express to check in for the night. We had made the reservations through [ParkSleepFly](#) and when we arrived, the desk manager informed us that we didn't have a reservation. Fortunately, after I provided proof that we did indeed reserve a room, everything cleared up quickly.

After dropping our luggage in the room, we headed toward Portland for our five o'clock reservation at [Scales](#). First though, we went to [Miccucci's](#) to get some olive oil and other condiments.

Since we were about thirty minutes early for Scales, I thought that we may be able to sit at the bar, especially since I had requested bar seating. However, they didn't open until five so we went to [Rí Rá](#) for a drink instead.

We finally got our seat at the bar in Scales and had a nice dinner beginning with oysters on the half-shell. We chose four each from Long Reach in Harpswell, Mere Point and Basket Island in Casco Bay. Next there was grilled octopus with a chorizo and hazelnut vinaigrette and crispy yucca. We then shared the special of the night: seared blue fin tuna in a sauce with corn and bacon.



It was delicious and we left feeling happy and ready to face tomorrow's long trip to [San Diego](#).

Sunday, August 8 – The hotel had a taxi waiting at five o'clock to take us to PWM for our 07:15 United flight to IAD. We checked our bags, went through TSA Pre✓ and waited in line at Starbucks for coffee. The flight was uneventful but we still needed to arrange with United to change my seat assignment. They had changed our flight earlier and we didn't check to discover that new seat assignments were made and, since we had made our reservations separately, we were no longer sitting together. However, we were able to resolve the problem and flew to SAN side-by-side.

I had a window seat and it was great to be able to see the middle states below after the clouds subsided, especially the desert lands. It had been a

long time since I had seen them and they were so beautiful with the variations in colors and topography.

We landed at SAN promptly at 11:45 PDT and picked up our rental car from Enterprise. Sue drove us to her friends Patricia and Bob Rice since she knew the way and I am unfamiliar with the San Diego area (in fact, she would continue to be the designated driver for the duration of our visit here). They welcomed us to their home and settled us into a private ensuite bedroom upstairs. We felt so comfortable and pampered.

After a short visit, we decided to have dinner at [Seasons 52](#), their favorite restaurant. It was in a shopping mall that Sue had known from her earlier days and had been expanded. It even had a Tesla showroom (Southern California was awash with Teslas).

Monday, August 9 – Sue drove us to [Carlsbad](#) for a visit with her niece Doreen and Mark, her husband. We met them near [Carlsbad State Beach](#) where we walked along the paved walkway while watching the surfers and various other beachgoers. We ordered lunch for takeout and ate in [Magee Park](#) at a picnic table next to an historic old barn. We had an enjoyable visit but they had to leave for an appointment at 14:30.



Sue offered to drive us back to San Diego via Highway 101 and Camino Del Mar where we stopped at [Torrey Pines](#) golf course for a drink at the [inn](#). It was fun to watch people at the putting green while we sipped our gin and tonics.

We arrived at Patricia and Bob's house and visited for a while. Sue and I wanted some Mexican food for dinner so we chose [Casa Guadalajara](#) in San Diego [Old Town](#). We enjoyed having some good Mexican food for a change.

Tuesday, August 10 – One of the things I’ve always wanted to do is visit the [San Diego Zoo](#), like a “bucket list” item. See link =>

We arrived at the zoo and decided to take the bus tour that would give us a quick view of the places we might want to see. Since it was already getting hot, many of the animals were either hiding out in the shade or just standing around trying not to move too much. We mostly concentrated on the aviaries, penguins, orangutans,



baboons, and monkeys since they were the most active. After all the walking (and the heat) we decided to take a break and have lunch at [Albert's](#) restaurant at the zoo. Afterwards, we walked toward the entrance and stopped in the Hummingbird Habitat and the Komodo Kingdom. The Komodo Dragon was also avoiding the heat so we could only see its tail.

Wednesday, August 11 – We said goodbye to Patricia and Bob, drove our rental car back to the airport, went to the United Club for a Bloody Mary and boarded the plane for our United flight to SFO. From there we flew to [OGG](#), picked up our rental car and drove to the condominium in [Kihei](#). This picture was taken from the lanai at the condominium.

After dropping off our luggage, we headed to [Pita Paradise](#) where we met Claire, her daughter Barbara, and Barbara's daughters Rachel and Emma. Claire was so happy to see Sue and to meet me for the first time. We had an enjoyable meal and a good visit.



Thursday, August 12 – We drove to Barbara's apartment to pick up Claire and the three of us went to have lunch at [Seascape](#) in the [Maui Ocean Center](#) in [Wailuku](#). Afterwards, we toured the various aquariums there and learned a lot about the history of Hawaii.



We returned to the condominium, weary from all the walking and driving. Claire was so tired that she just wanted to go back to her apartment. So, Barbara picked her up on her way home from work.

Sue and I decided to explore the neighborhood where we discovered a natural food store named [Hawaii Moons](#) (more on that later). We would have shopped for something to take back to the condominium but they were closing when we arrived. We walked back toward the condo and found a cozy little place called [Maui Thai Bistro](#) where we sat at the bar and had a light dinner. On the way back to the condo, we noticed a bakery just across the street called [Maui Bread Company](#) that had a variety of fresh baked goods, including croissants, Sue's favorite. We made a note to go there the next morning for some breakfast goodies.

Friday, August 13 – We assumed that if we got to Maui Bread Co. by 07:30 (it opened at 07:00), we should be among the first ones there. However, there was an extensive line and we had to wait almost twenty minutes to get in. It was worth the wait though. The croissants were great and we decided to come back tomorrow to try their savory pastries for breakfast, although we'll arrive just before they open.

We decided to see the [Īao Valley State Park](#) which is known for Kuka'emoku (a.k.a. the [Īao Needle](#)), an erosional feature which rises abruptly 1200 feet from the valley floor. It is near Wailuku so we found a café there, [808 on Main](#), for lunch. Afterwards, we drove to the valley but found that it required a hefty fee to enter. We didn't think Claire would be up for the walk so we started driving to [Lahaina](#) instead. About halfway there we encountered a traffic jam. After waiting a while, the traffic started moving but we realized that it was getting late and we were still about half an hour away from Lahaina so we decided to turn back to the condominium in Kehei.



We had hoped to have Claire and Barbara stay for dinner but Claire was feeling too tired so they left for home. Sue and I were not too hungry so we walked to Hawaii Moons to get some sandwiches and fresh squeezed orange juice for Sue's breakfast. We also got a fresh pineapple from Hawaii.

Saturday, August 14 – I got up early and cut the pineapple into chunks to share with our breakfast. After a quick taste, we walked to Maui Bread Co. and were the first in line this time. We got two Bacon Cheese Twists, a plain croissant (for Sue) and a pain au chocolat (for me) which was an elegant breakfast with fresh orange juice and pineapple.

Barbara had suggested that we join her and Claire at the beach across the street from our condominium. She was teaching a water aerobics class there so we donned our swimsuits and headed for the beach. She had mentioned that we would find them near the second lifeguard tower. However, Sue was convinced that it was the first one we saw and we proceeded to walk far down the beach until it was obvious that there was not another lifeguard tower to be found. We backtracked to the actual second tower where we found Claire sitting happily in a beach chair. Although hesitant at first, Sue and I decided that, since we were in [Maui](#), we should go into the water. At first, it was a bit cool, but it shortly became extremely comfortable and we had a fun time.

Around lunchtime, we invited Claire and Barbara to have lunch with us at a little restaurant called [That's A Wrap](#) across from our condo. We had some really good wraps and a short visit then said goodbye and went back to the condo to get ready for our dinner at [Morimoto Maui](#).

We arrived a bit early for our reservation to discover that the restaurant was located deep in the resort via a long flight of stairs past multiple swimming pools. When we got there, we were shown to a small table in a hot outdoor room with no view because the blinds were closed to keep out the sun so I asked for seats at their bar. We started with a taste of aged sake (Morimoto '10 year') and a cold appetizer of fish carpaccio. Then we had a hot appetizer of rock shrimp tempura and a carafe of Morimoto ginjo sake followed by sushi. We had [toro](#), [kinmedai](#) (nigiri), and tamago, saba, tobiko, hotate, unagi (sashimi). An elegant Japanese dinner to end our Maui trip.

Sunday, August 15 – We packed and drove to the airport for our trip from OGG to SFO. The flight was nice. We were served breakfast which consisted of one of the best dishes I've ever had on an airplane. It was an egg dish, like quiche, with kale, tomato, and Parmesan cheese.

We arrived at SFO on time and picked up our rental car. It took an hour to get to our apartment in [San Rafael](#). We stopped on the way at the United supermarket between 2nd and 3rd streets in San Rafael to stock up on breakfast items, then met the owner, Elise, and settled into the apartment. Since it was getting late, I suggested that we have dinner at [Royal Thai](#), one of my favorite restaurants in San Rafael.

Monday, August 16 – Before we left Maui, I had discovered that my suitcase had a broken zipper which I temporarily fixed to get it to San Francisco. However, I didn't think it would be able to make it on the trip back to Maine. So, at Sue's suggestion, we found a TJ Maxx store in San Rafael and I was able to get a new suitcase. Then we drove into central San Rafael and parked the car several blocks from [Taqueria San Jose](#), where we were to meet my friend Pete for lunch. Since we were a little early for lunch, Sue and I walked around town to



check it out on our way to the restaurant. When we arrived and met Pete and his friend Lana, we had a lovely lunch. Lana had to return home for work but Sue, Pete and I drove to [Rodeo Beach](#). Later, we drove to the Marin Headlands overlooking the [Golden Gate](#) bridge. Then we drove through [Sausalito](#) and north to [China Camp State Park](#), an old fishing village used for shrimping by the Chinese immigrants in the late 1800's. Finally, we returned Pete to his home in [Terra Linda](#) where we said goodbye to him and Lana.

When we returned to the apartment, we considered going to [Buckeye Roadhouse](#) in Mill Valley but I thought that [Left Bank](#) in [Larkspur](#) would be a better choice for dinner. Sue had soupe a l'ognion and I had escargot followed by moules-frites. It was reminiscent of Paris.

Tuesday, August 17 – Sue's friends Tom and Jane drove from [Morro Bay](#) to San Francisco to visit with us. We planned to take the ferry into San Francisco to meet them. When we parked our car at the [Larkspur Ferry Terminal](#), We had a slight problem dealing with the parking situation because they had begun charging for parking but their app didn't work for us and we had to abandon it to board the ferry (long story but ended OK). Anyway, we got into the [Ferry Terminal](#) and met Tom and Jane there. We hoped to have lunch at [Hog Island Oyster Co.](#) but it was closed. We took a stroll around the building and found that many of the stores there had closed due to the pandemic. It

was incredibly sad to me since I had hoped to see some of the businesses that were there when I lived in the area. We walked over to the [Grand Hyatt](#) hotel on Union Square, where Tom and Jane were staying, and they took us to their room on the ninth floor. It was spectacular with the Bay Bridge and the old Southern Pacific Railroad building (to the left in the picture) in view. Union Square had always been a busy place but it was completely empty because of the pandemic.



I suggested that we have lunch at [Tadich Grill](#) on California Street (about three blocks away from the hotel). It too had changed because of the pandemic and the menu was different than before. It was very disappointing to me since I had often gone there for lunch of their fried shrimp.

After lunch, we decided to drive to [Muir Woods](#) in their Tesla, which was parked at the hotel. When we arrived, we were told that we must have a reservation and we had to make them through their website. Because we had no cell phone reception, we could not access the site and were told to proceed to [Muir Beach](#) just down the hill. When we did gain access to the site, we learned that it would cost \$8.50 to park and \$15.00 each to enter Muir Woods. Since it was getting late and the cost seemed excessive, we just took a walk on Muir Beach instead.

They drove us back to the car park at the ferry terminal and we were pleasantly surprised that our car was still there. We said goodbye to Tom and Jane and went back to our apartment. We went to [Andy's](#) market on the way to pick up some salads for dinner. We watched the ending of the Giants baseball game where they beat the New York Mets.



Wednesday, August 18 – We had planned for a visit to Steve and Karen Cooper's house in [Santa Rosa](#) this afternoon but Karen was not feeling well and didn't think we should go there. We arranged to meet Steve and Bill Dunkerly at [La Hacienda](#) in [Novato](#) for lunch instead. We had a nice lunch and a long visit then Sue and I drove to my old job site at San Marin. It was sold to a developer and they are now trying to get approval to tear down the old buildings and replace them with residential housing (it is now gone).

When we returned to our apartment, we decided to go for a walk to the rocky beach nearby (the picture shows the [Richmond-San Rafael](#) bridge in the background). We continued our walk to discover that the road took us along the San Rafael canal and would also take us to Second Street and stairs back to the apartment.



We found a Japanese restaurant in the [Montecito Mall](#) on Second Street called [Kamikaze](#). They had a good sushi menu that included amaebi (raw shrimp) which came with the heads fried tempura style, something I haven't been able to find anywhere since I used to go to [Kabuto](#) in San Francisco. It was incredible.

When we returned to the apartment, I was able to watch the end of the Giants game against the New York Mets. It had started in the afternoon but was tied in the eleventh inning. The Mets went ahead in the top of the eleventh but the Giants came back and tied it again but were unable to go ahead. Then the Mets bats came alive and they scored four more runs and ended up beating the Giants.

Thursday, August 19 – We packed up and drove the rental back to SFO and boarded the plane for IAD. We were served a good lunch and had a pleasant flight. We arrived at IAD on a rainy day. We used our last two United Club passes to relax before our flight to PWM and to have a snack since we would be arriving late that night.

We arrived at PWM, called a taxi to take us to the car at Holiday Inn Express and drove home in heavy rain. It was after 22:00 when we finally got to bed, tired from the long day of traveling but glad to be home.