



Painting courtesy Arthur Shilstone

A Little Place by the Sea

For nearly a century, Mori Point served as a haven for settlers, travelers, boot-leggers and diners. Today, after a generation of development battles, this spectacular place serves as a haven for walkers and wildlife and is a link to national parklands on Sweeney Ridge and Milagra Ridge along the San Mateo coast.

Ranch to Roadhouse

Stefano Mori and his family emigrated from Italy in the 1870s, starting a farm and building a ranchhouse on this land. The Mori family grazed cattle and horses, and raised brussels sprouts, cabbage and artichokes. A kitchen built to feed ranch hands and rooms built to house them eventually developed into the Mori Point Inn. The inn became a welcome roadhouse for travelers on the long road between San Francisco and Half Moon Bay.

When Prohibition banned alcohol consumption in the U.S. during the 1920s, Stefano's son Jack turned from tavern keeper to bootlegger, running Canadian scotch from smugglers' ships off the point. Mori's era as a speakeasy ended in 1923 when federal agents arrested Jack Mori and confiscated 24,000 cases of whiskey from his farm.

Stefano's other son Ray, and Ray's wife Marie, rescued the roadhouse in 1932, reviving it as a restaurant, hotel, and dance hall. The restaurant and dance hall kept its lively reputation until 1965, when it was condemned as a safety hazard, and its final owner, Doug Hart, was led away in handcuffs for refusing to abandon it. Shortly thereafter, Mori's burned to the ground.

"Down the long hall of the rambling 21 room farmhouse, one passes...a veritable Italian grocery store with cheeses, salami hung from the ceiling, shelves of necessary sauces and foods that go into the making of the Mori meals..."

The odor of cooking sauces, soups and meats drifts through the house...The bar itself is picturesque. Great barrels which carried rare wines from Portugal to San Francisco compose part of it and around their tops are brass rails."

—Ruth Thompson & Chef Louis Hanges
San Francisco News, 1937

"Historic old Mori's, not to be outdone by the wrecker's hammer, went out in a blaze of glory...the old landmark died the way she lived—in a bawdy and spectacular fashion."

—Pay Lynn, Pacifica Tribune 1966



Mori Point Inn, circa 1950s

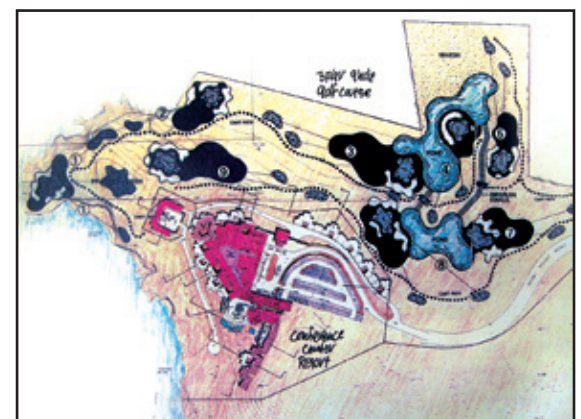


Finding Your Way

Mori Point is located in Pacifica just west of Highway 1, and directly south of Sharp Park Golf Course. Trailheads are found at the south end of Bradford Way and at the southwest corner of Sharp Park, near the south end of the levee protecting Sharp Park Golf Course.

Point of Contention

Since the early 1900s, real estate developers have been promoting coastside homes within an easy commute to San Francisco. After the Mori Point Restaurant was destroyed, developers had many visions for Mori: a seven story conference center, a golf course, a sixty-home housing development and a card gambling club. In the 1970s, highway planners proposed an extension to Interstate 380 through Mori Point. For nearly twenty years, Pacificans wrestled over protection of Mori Point. They wrote letters, and formed Pacificans for Mori Point, Friends of Pacifica, and the Pacifica Land Trust. Finally, in September 2000, Congress enacted legislation to purchase and add Mori Point to the Golden Gate National Recreation Area.



Proposed Mori conference center and golf course. WZMH Architects

Protecting the Point

At least two rare species—including the threatened red-legged frog—find protection in Mori Point’s native coastal prairie vegetation. Wildlife at Mori Point, especially its endangered species, rely on the efforts of volunteers to ensure their sur-

vival and ongoing health. Volunteer efforts organized through the Site Stewardship Program offer drop-in volunteer workdays and special projects. Call (415) 561-3067 for directions and a calendar of events.

Enjoy a Safe Visit

Please continue to protect Mori Point by staying on trails and picking up litter. Dogs on leash are welcome. Please protect yourself from the elements. Spring and Fall offer the

best weather, but fog may appear year-round, so wear layered clothing and bring sunscreen and water.

For More Information

Pacifica Visitor Center
 (650) 355-4122
www.pacificachamber.com
Presidio Visitor Center
 (415) 561-4323
www.nps.gov/prsf

Site Stewardship Program
 (415) 561-3067
www.parksconservancy.org
 For disabled access call
 (415) 556-8371