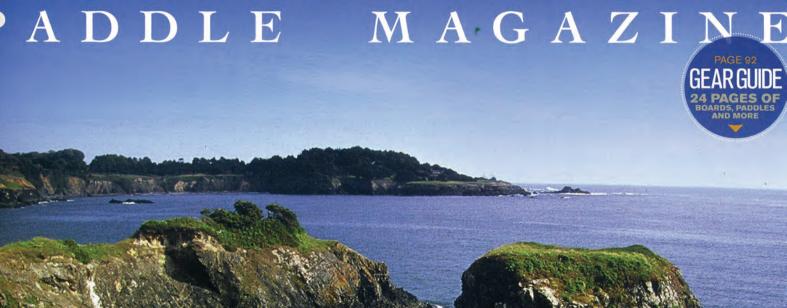
STANDUP PADDLE MAGAZINE



Meandering in Comments of the Comments of the

> Flatwater Freedom on the Rivers and Sea



+ GOOD TIMES
in the
Virgin
Islands

+ PROTECT YOUR Blade Board Body

+ 16 DAYS OF WHITEWATER in the Grandes of Canvons







About two hours north of San Francisco, the quiet seaside town of Mendocino is a great escape from city life where time slows to a crawl along serpentine flatwater rivers that flow to gaping mouths on the coast like veins running down a forearm. Its mere 900 residents share Mendocino County with more than 80,000 others savoring redwood forests, America's greenest wine region, a host of microbreweries and liberal views on cannabis. (It is estimated that roughly two-thirds of the economy is based on the cultivation of marijuana.)

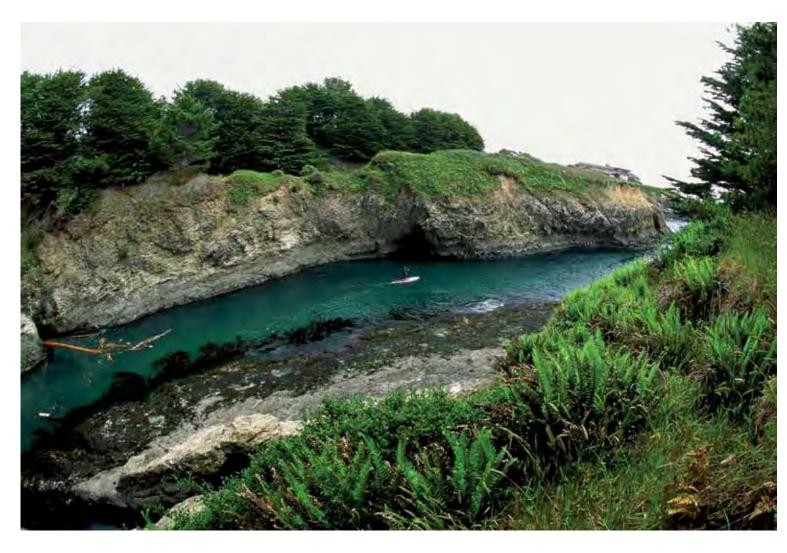
Mendocino was one of California's original counties. Following the wreck of the *Frolic* in 1850, Harry Meiggs, a San Francisco lumber dealer, sent Jerome Ford on a salvage mission. While Chinese ginger jars, bolts of silk, camphor and lacquered trunks were nowhere to be found, Ford did discover thick groves of redwood and Douglas fir trees in the region. A year later, Meiggs erected a sawmill at Big River. So began both Mendocino and the lumber industry in Northern California.

The fabled Pacific Coast Highway winds along the Mendocino

coastline, hugging the edge of sea-battered bluffs and crossing rivers cloaked in redwood forests. It's almost as if Mendocino was made for SUPers. Paddle beneath quaint Pacific villages atop rugged cliffs where knobby sea stacks endure ferocious waves. Much of the shoreline is honeycombed with toothy sea grottos in various features, and there are many deep coves protected from the elements providing easy access to rock gardens and surging channels.

Nearly ten percent of Mendocino County consists of water, with a total of ten rivers flowing one way or another. Eight of those reach the ocean, and all are flat water. SUPers can experience the best of both worlds, choosing either the craggy coastline or the serenity of redwoodladen runnels. Black bear, osprey, river otter and mule deer are readily seen along the banks of the Albion, Navarro and Big River. One of the more interesting paddles is upriver on the Albion toward several floating cabins. River otters pop up on the decks, and rows of posts used 160 years ago to collect logs floating down the river are still standing.

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Another paddle is an eight-mile roundtrip from Mendocino to the Point Cabrillo Light Station, built in 1909. Weave between giant sea Stand Up Paddle Mendocino stacks over crystal-clear water while ducking in and out of tranquil (707) 937-0700 coves and dank sea caves. The station stands by itself overlooking the standuppaddlemendocino.com headlands, and on a clear day its flashing light can be seen 15 miles away.

Moody's Organic Coffee Bar 10450 Lansing St. (707) 937-4843 moodyscoffeebar.com

When the ocean and rivers are a cool 49 degrees, it's nice to know 44591 Ukiah St. there's a cup of hot chocolate, coffee or latte waiting for you just up the (707) 937-2436 trail. With an adjoining art gallery and internet café, this is a great place frankiesmendocino.com to hang out and thaw out.

Lessons and tours are presented at Van Damme State Beach, just off Pacific Coast Highway, in a deep, tranquil cove hugging one of California's most scenic coastlines. Nearby are many sea caves, narrow channels and rock gardens with curious harbor seals, pigeon guillemots, ospreys and common murres.

Frankie's Pizza and Ice Cream Parlor











In the village of Mendocino, Frankie's is the ideal place to pick up a
If you choose not to paddle up to the light station, you can enjoy a quick nosh or linger over a tasty meal following a paddle. This familyowned and -run eatery serves up pizza, falafel and local ice cream, plus other menu items featuring organic, sustainable, local products. You'll weekly.

Point Cabrillo Light Station State Historic Park 13800 Point Cabrillo Dr. (707) 937-5804 parks.ca.gov

leisurely stroll there in a tranquil nature reserve, where browsing mule deer and northern harriers frequent the sweeping grasslands of the Mendocino Headlands. The Point Cabrillo Light Station is the beacon also find espresso drinks, tea, beer and wine, along with live music of the headlands, and a trip there is a great way to learn about the history of Mendocino. Guided tours are offered each Sunday. If you time your visit for March, you can check out the annual Whale Festival.



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