

For Immediate Release

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Cavorting California Sea Lions Return to Monterey's Old Fisherman's Wharf

July 22, 2023. Monterey, CA. For all of us who enjoy seeing California Sea Lions up close, a group of cavorting, barking California sea lions have returned to the cove directly across from Paluca Trattoria and Candy World at Monterey's Old Fisherman's Wharf.

Although it's very important to keep a safe distance from this group of wild marine mammals and not climb onto the rocks near them, both children and adults alike will delight in seeing them interacting and cavorting afternoons and evenings in the water. It's fun to watch the sea lions break off in pairs and start swimming around with each other, splashing and doing water acrobatics.

It's hard to predict how long these pinniped visitors will be there for viewing at Old Fisherman's Wharf but many hope they'll be staying for the upcoming Car Week in August.

For more information or to report an animal in much distress, call The Marine Mammal Center's hotline at 415-289-SEAL (7325). Their experts will monitor the animal and, if necessary, send trained responders to rescue it safely. For more information about Old Fisherman's Wharf, go to www.montereywharf.com.

About California Sea Lions

California sea lions often live close to people. They gather in shallow waters, beaches, and manmade structures like docks, buoys, and jetties on the western coast of North America, along the Pacific Ocean.

These marine mammals from the seal family, or pinnipeds (meaning "fin-footed" in Latin), can be identified by their ear flaps, large front flippers, and strong rear flippers that rotate under their body, allowing them to "walk" on land. You'll also hear them—they gather in herds and bark like dogs.

Adult females and pups are slender-bodied and are lighter in color (blonde to tan), while adult males are generally larger and mostly dark brown to black. These sea lions are intelligent and trained easily, which is in part why they're commonly seen in zoos and aquariums.

California sea lions eat a variety of prey found in coastal waters, including squid, anchovies, mackerel, rockfish, and sardines. California sea lions are very social, gathering in groups. They

like to rest packed on top of each other on beaches, docks, and jetties, but will also float together in the ocean in groups called “rafts.”

They’ve even been seen interacting with other pinnipeds, like harbor seals and Northern fur seals.

The animals return to their rookeries (breeding grounds) in central and south California annually, where females give birth to pups in early summer. Mothers carry pups for around nine months, like humans. Each mother will usually give birth to only one pup.

Newborns weigh 13 to 20 pounds and stay with their mother for about a year to nurse and learn how to swim and find food. Mothers and pups identify each other through smell and vocalizations.

(Source: Nationalgeographic.com)

California sea lions are known for their intelligence, playfulness and noisy barking. Their fur color ranges from chocolate brown seen in males to a lighter, golden brown seen in females. Another key difference between males and females is that male sea lions are much larger—reaching up to 600 to 850 pounds and 7 feet in length. Females grow to 200 to 250 pounds and up to 6 feet in length.

These sea lions have a dog-like face, and starting at 4 years old, males develop a bony bump on top of their skull known as a sagittal crest, which is fully developed by 7 years old. The top of a male sea lion’s head often gets lighter in color with age.

As a member of the otariid or “walking seal” family, California sea lions have large flippers that they use to walk on land. Another distinctive physical characteristic is their external ear flaps.

(Source: Marinemammalcenter.org)

About Monterey’s Old Fisherman’s Wharf

Old Fisherman's Wharf in Monterey, California has a rich history as a waterfront district that has been a hub for fishing and trade for over 178 years. Built in 1845 for regular passenger and freight service, Old Fisherman’s Wharf is conveniently located near Downtown Monterey, right off of the Monterey Recreation Trail.

The Wharf is home to ten outstanding restaurants, four fish markets, and seven gift shops that showcase the area's cultural heritage and local seafood cuisine. Enjoy award-winning dining, family-friendly special events, seeing an array of marine life, and strolling leisurely in a gorgeous setting overlooking the Monterey Bay. Featuring both al fresco and indoor dining options, visitors can take in views of the beautiful Monterey Harbor or enjoy “people watching” while dining.

Savor delicious cuisine at a myriad of fabulous restaurants featuring stunning views and award-winning Italian food, sustainable seafood, steaks and pizza, including the region's famous clam chowder and calamari. Sample many flavors of salt water taffy, homemade chocolates, caramel apples, cotton candy and many other yummy treats at three candy shops and Old Fisherman's Wharf in Monterey, California has a rich history as a waterfront district that has been a hub for fishing and trade for over 178 years. Built in 1845 for regular passenger and freight service, Old Fisherman's Wharf is conveniently located near Downtown Monterey, right off of the Monterey Recreation Trail.

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In addition to dining and shopping, there are several attractions on Old Fisherman's Wharf, including four whale watching tour companies with knowledgeable marine biologists and naturalists, two fishing charters, sailing, and glass-bottom boat rides, which provide a unique glimpse into the underwater world of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary.

As a top destination for visitors from across the globe, Old Fisherman's Wharf is known by many as the "Whale Watching Capital of the World" and attracts around 4 million visitors per year. Old Fisherman's Wharf was also a main location for the filming of the hit HBO series, Big Little Lies, Season 1.

Whether it's enjoying award-winning dining, viewing marine life up close, or strolling in a gorgeous setting overlooking the Monterey Bay, Old Fisherman's Wharf is a must-visit destination for anyone traveling to Monterey, California.

There is ample parking in the adjacent parking lot.

For more information, visit www.montereywharf.com or call (831) 238-0777.