



Shelter Cove

BY MARC E. COOK

Shelter Cove is one of those delicious anomalies. Jutting from some of California's most rugged shoreline is a palm-sized chunk of smooth ground, almost defying the Pacific to take it away. And, perhaps just as incongruous, there's an airport right in the middle of this grassy plain, ringed by a small golf course and houses rising out of the coastal meadow. You'll find it in your GPS's database under 0Q5; see also the information in AOPA's *Airport Directory* (www.aopa.org/members/airports/). Shelter Cove was featured on the cover of the 1998 *Airport Directory*.

For general reference, think of Shelter Cove as about the midpoint along the shore between Mendocino to the south and Eureka to the north.

In the winter, Shelter Cove is often pelted by strong Pacific storms and, lacking an instrument approach, is not easily accessible by air. But come summer, the weather clears and the area becomes a seaside paradise, particularly for pilots from the parched Central Valley. But you must keep an eye on the weather here, even in summer, because a pesky stratus layer can form quickly. Often, when the winds are right, a low-lying cloud deck can form over just half of the airport, leaving the approach to one end of the runway clear. What's more, because there's no weather reporting on the field—indeed, it's not officially attended at all—you'll have to

get creative in building a mental picture of the conditions before you start out. At least there are several airports nearby to provide an out in case Shelter Cove is fogged in.

On days when it's brutally hot in the farmland of the Central Valley, Shelter Cove can be cool and breezy. For this reason and many others it is a seductive stop. Pilots love Shelter Cove as a relaxed lunch destination, an excellent overnight camping site, and a desirable vacation spot if your idea of roughing it includes walking along the beach and an excellent seafood restaurant.

Another real beauty of Shelter Cove is the ease with which you can reach all of the area's attractions once you land. You could arrive by air and never really need four wheels. Good thing, too: No rental cars are available, nor is there avgas on

Shelter Cove is part of California's so-called "lost coast," so named because the famous Pacific Coast Highway was built several miles inland.



The Shelter Cove Airport is situated on a grassy plain, ringed by a small golf course and houses on the coastal meadow.

Shelter Cove Information

Lodging

All addresses are in Shelter Cove, California 95589

Happy Landings, 1066 Lower Pacific Dr., 707-986-7034

The Lighthouse, 62 Seal Court, 707-986-7034

Mario's Marina Hotel 533 Machi Rd., 707-986-7595

Oceanfront Inn 26 Seal Court, 707-986-7002

Shelter Cover Beachcomber Inn 7272 Shelter Cover Dr., 707-718-4789

Shelter Cover Campground Store & Deli 492 Machi Rd., 707-986-7474

Shelter Cover Motor Inn 205 Wave Dr., 888-570-9676 707-986-7521

Shelter Cover Ocean Inn 148 Dolphin 707-986-7161

Homes for Rent

The Clam Court House Reservations 520-544-0764

The Pink House Ilse Garrett: 209-522-2104

Boat Charters

The Lucky One 707-986-1362

Annika's Sport Fishing 707-986-7836 or 916-686-1507

Food

The Cover Restaurant 210 Wave Dr., 707-986-1197

Cheryl's California Coffee Company Suite 104, 205 Wave Dr., 707-986-7634

Missing Links Pub 156 Lower Pacific Driver 707-986-7000