

## **Trip 5 – Episode #5 To Morro, and To Morro, and To Morro...**

Before we set out on this trip, there was only one booking we made: Morro Bay. We had been twice before, and we'd loved it both times.

So, we decided to plan on staying there for several days. We booked six, and then found out we could stay longer, so we booked for 11 days. The longest we've ever stayed anywhere in Charles.

And why do we love Morro Bay?

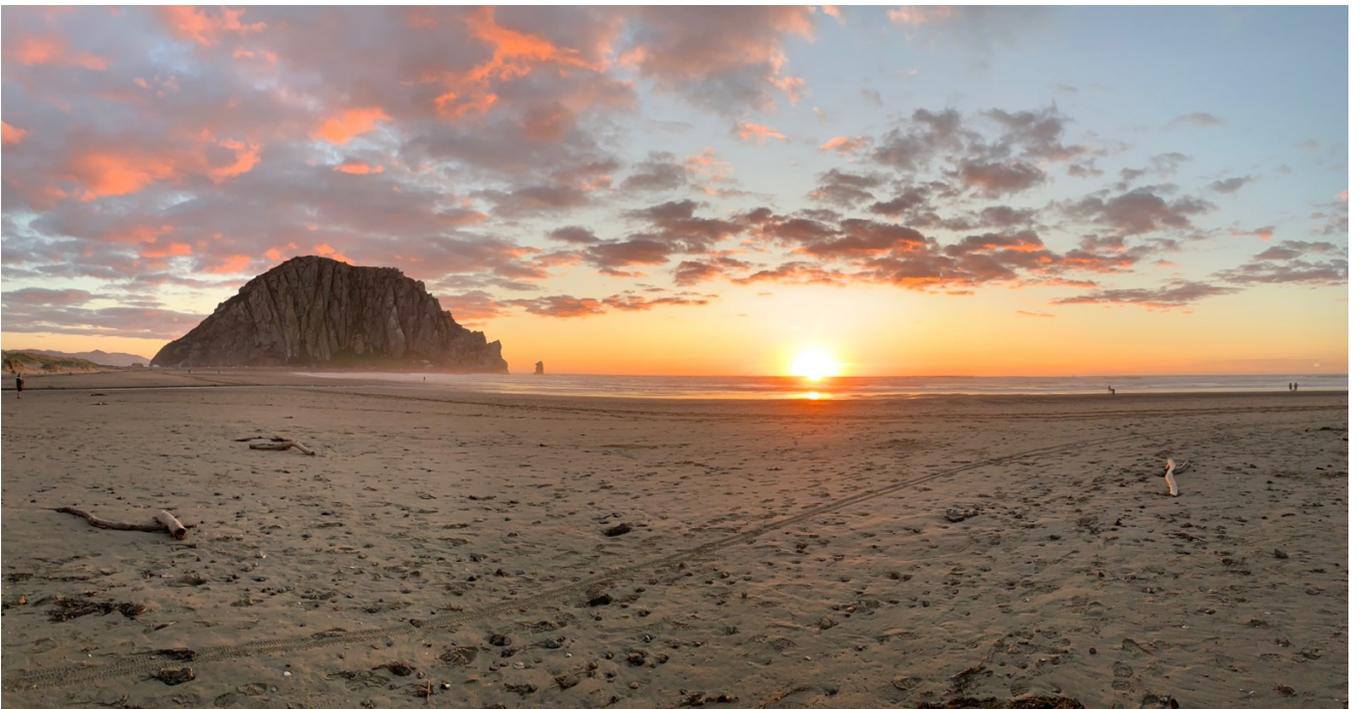
Well, there's this:



Also:



And we can't forget this:



I hope you don't mind, but you're gonna see a lot of photos of that rock.

The rock wasn't always here. Apparently it's part of the Pacific Plate in Earth's crust, and it travelled from Palm Springs to Morro Bay over a period of 25 million years (which is slightly longer than it took us to get there from Palm Springs.)

And it continues to move northwest about 2 inches a year. So, if you want to see it in Morro Bay, you'd better hurry.

When you drive into town for the first time, it literally makes you gasp.



The town of Morro Bay has lots of good restaurants, mostly serving fresh fish, and the ever popular clam chowder in a sourdough bread bowl.

It's picturesque from all angles, at just about any time of day in any kind of weather.



The three towers are what's left of a huge power plant, built in the 1950s. There are talks about converting it to a Battery Energy Storage System, which will involve tearing down the towers by 2028.



This sculpture, "Those Who Wait", is dedicated to those lost at sea in the fishing industry.

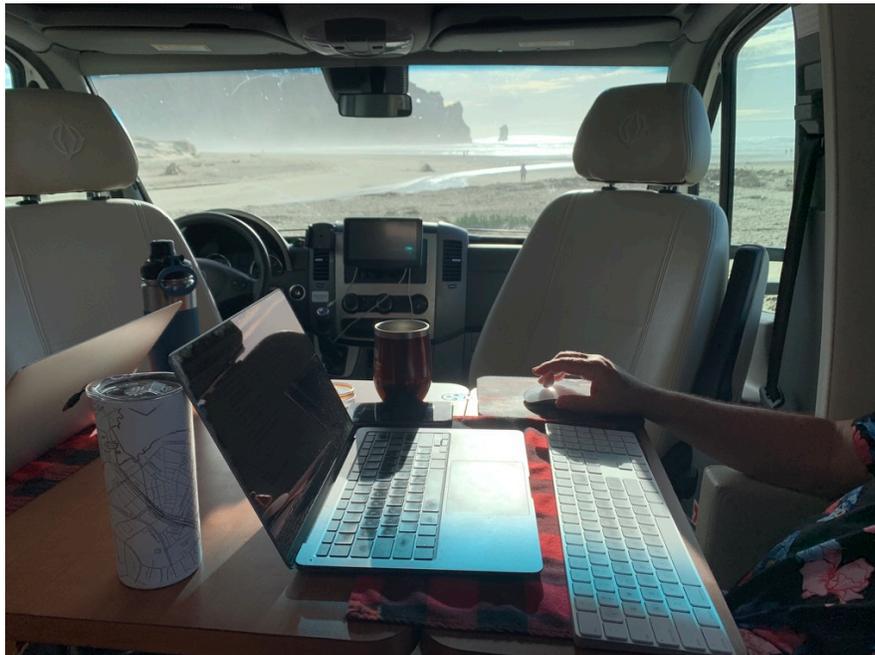


Best of all, we can walk into town from our campsite in Morro Dunes RV Park.



Although you can't see the ocean from the campground, it's literally a one-minute drive to the beach, where we could park all day. Which we did almost every day.

There, we would write, watch the surf and the surfers, go for walks, people-watch, and just shake our heads at how lucky we were to find this place.



Morro Bay was one of the areas hit by the torrential rains a couple of months ago, and the evidence was still there – branches and stumps and tree trunks still strewn across the beach.



But most of the beach was clear, and although it was never crowded, there were always a few people there. Some were brave enough to go into the water, which was about 62F or 16C. Some were in bikinis! Lots of surfers in wetsuits. (That's what those black dots in the water are.)



One day, it was *very* windy. Too windy for surfers. So, naturally, the windsurfers came out.





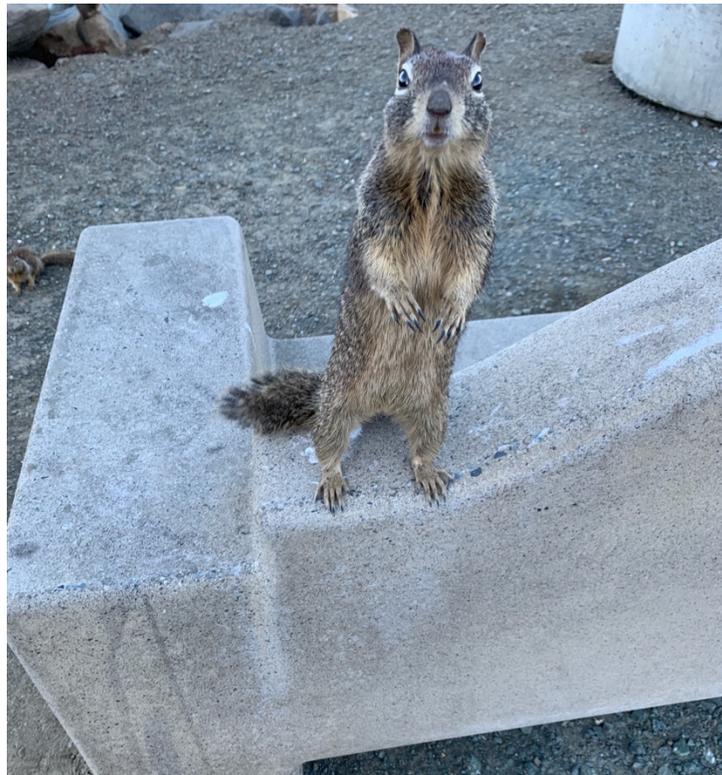
In one area, added entertainment came from the ground squirrels, which, along with the seagulls, had learned that people totally disregard all the signs telling them not to feed the wildlife. So, they wait around till someone comes along with a bag of chips or cheesies they're willing to share. (If you look closely, you'll see some squirrels amongst the rocks, on the lookout for possible handouts.)



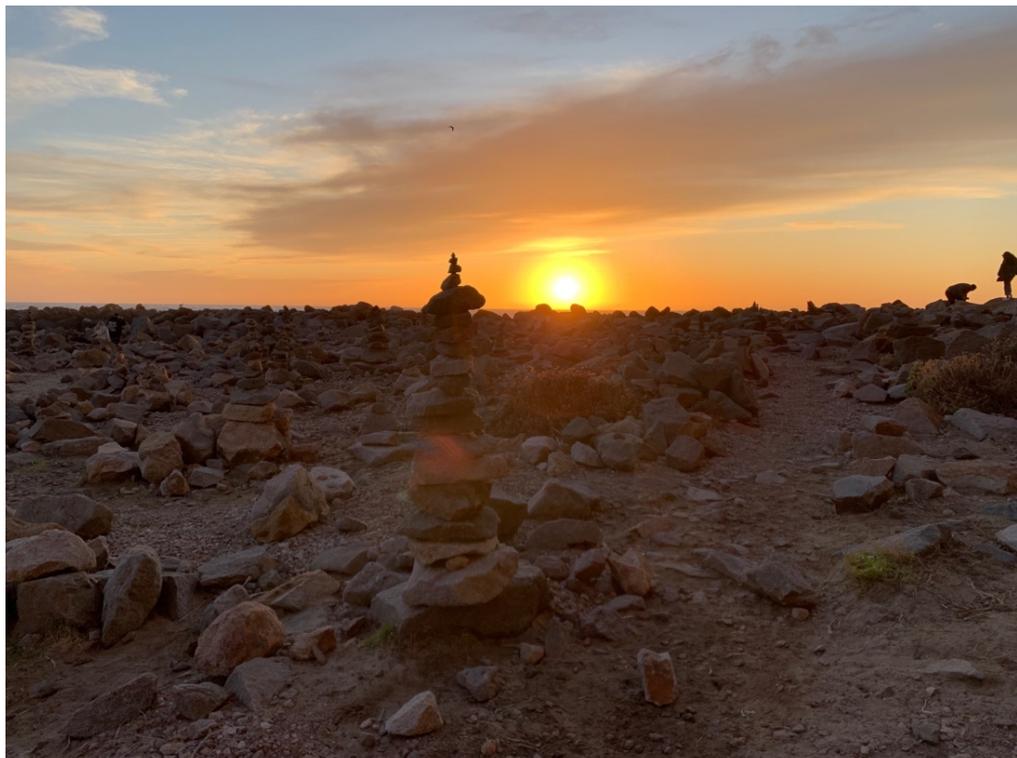
The seagulls swarm and squawk and fight for position. But the ground squirrels usually get most of the goodies.

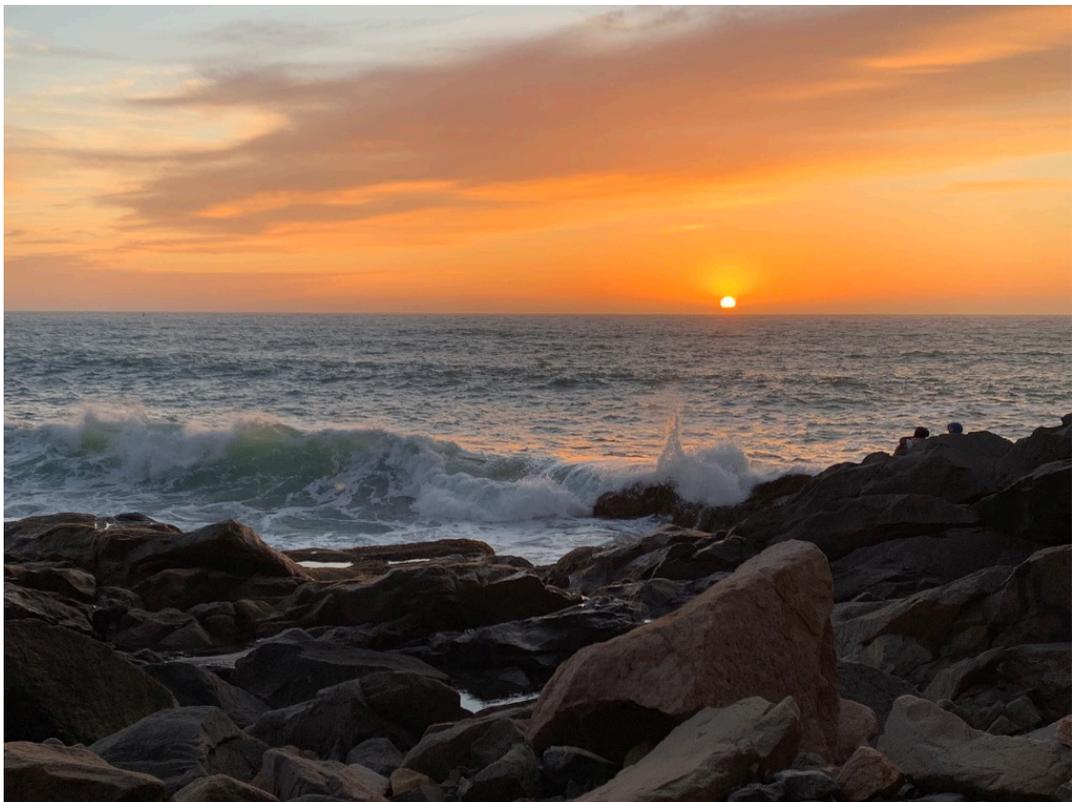


Really, who could resist a face like this?



On the town side of the rock, there's a rugged breakwater where the waves crash spectacularly. We ventured around to that side and clambered over the rocks a couple of times. Totally different and totally breathtaking both times.











One day, we took a drive up the coast a bit to see what was there. We found a nice beach with a fabulous house overlooking it. (Off to the right, you can see Morro Rock.)



It was a nice combination of sand, rock and sea. We saw some different birds, and Charles looked handsome next to those flowers.



But we were happy to get home to this.



Our campsite neighbour told us about Montana de Oro State Park south of us, so one day we went there. It was an interesting trip – the longest drive we'd done in days.





We passed through an area that looked like it had also suffered from the extreme rains. Lots of trees down.



We got to Spooner's Cove, and it was pretty impressive.





After exploring the beach, I went for a walk out to the farthest point overlooking it. It was a great walk.





I got out to the very tip and it was an amazing view – in all directions.



When I looked north, I could see ... yup. Morro Rock. And the towers.



And looking back at the shore, I could see a tiny little Charles. (Jim says he waved, but I only have his word for it.)



On the way back, we got another reminder of just how significant that old rock is.



We were glad we went to Montana de Oro. It was a lovely drive and a couple of great walks. And when we got back, there was this.



You can understand why we didn't feel the need to go anywhere else. And so, we mostly just hung out there, and took in the views.













Every time we walked into town, we'd hear seals barking in the distance, but we never saw any. And we'd see otters floating on their backs in the bay, but they were never close enough to get a decent photo.

On the morning we left, we stopped in town to buy some warm cinnamon buns and fresh clams before we continued north.

And then, I heard the very loud barking of a very close seal. I looked over the rail into the harbour and there, as if to ensure that our visit was perfect, was this guy, posing for me.



And then, a few metres away, there was a mother otter, floating with her babe.



We left two days ago. And we plan to go back ... To Morro.



Can you blame us?