

Port Walk #7



Going with the Flow

Twice a day, the moon's gravity causes water to surge in and out of San Francisco Bay. The vast size of the Bay estuary some 1,600 square miles and the narrowness of the Golden Gate create extremely powerful tidal currents. Imagine swimming against 25 million tons of water flowing up to seven miles an hour!



Living with the Tide

Is it high tide now? Low tide? Look at the pier pilings above the waterline. Are they wet? If so, it's not high tide. During low tide – about every 12 hours – you can see algae, mussels, barnacles, and small crabs that are usually underwater.

Tie Up with the Tides

The tide rises or falls sometimes as much as 8 feet in 6 hours. Since the docks at historic Fisherman's Wharf don't move, fishing boats moored here are tied with long ropes, so they can ride the tides.



Bob Miller, Fisherman

“...It can be hard to get into your slip at the Wharf... especially if the tide's running and there's a wind. If you're unloading at Pier 45 and the tide's going out, it can be difficult to tie-up to the pier – the tide pushes you away. And, if the tide's coming in heavy, it can be hard to get away from the dock – we have to try fancy maneuvers to get away.”