



Waterfalls & Recreation

CATARACT FALLS

If you begin at the trailhead off Bolinas-Fairfax Road a half-mile from Alpine Dam, you will encounter an uphill trail that parallels the falls. The trail is almost 3 miles long and a little steep, and is part of the Marin Municipal Water District watershed. (415) 459-5267.

ALAMERE FALLS

While you will have to drive out to Point Reyes National Seashore to see this unusual 40-foot fall that runs off a bluff and onto the beach, it is worth it. If you head for West Marin and pick up the seashore in Bolinas, your hike begins on the Palomarin Trailhead (at the south end of the Coast Trail). From there it is a 8.4 mile round-trip hike that includes ocean vistas, lakes, coastal foothills and, of course, the falls. (415) 663-1092.

CARSON FALLS

This is a shorter hike than Alamere, but the falls are not as spectacular. The hike begins on Bolinas-Fairfax Road near Alpine Lake. Cross the road and climb about 400 feet on Pine Mountain Road until you arrive at the junction of Oat Hill Road. Go left about five or ten minutes then turn right onto a narrow steep trail marked by power lines. The trail leads down into Carson Creek Canyon and the falls. A 40-foot chute caps the series of falls. Carson is part of the Marin Municipal Water District watershed. (415) 924-4600.

STAIRSTEP FALLS

These falls are located in Samuel P. Taylor State Park in Olema. Take Highway 101 North to Sir Francis Drake Blvd., and simply follow Drake to the park. About one mile west of the park entrance, just across from the Devil's Gulch Horse Camp, the hike begins on a service road that gives way to a trail on your right leading into a canyon of redwoods. You cross a small bridge and turn left and hike to the falls, which is less than a mile. The falls themselves have three cascades over stepped landings. (415) 488-9897 or (415) 456-1286.

DAWN FALLS

This one is near Larkspur and pretty easy to reach. Since it is the most accessible of all of Marin waterfalls, it tends to be crowded on weekends. The 1.5-mile hike begins at the end of Madrone Avenue, off Corte Madera Avenue and takes you through a canyon filled with ferns and redwoods. (415) 499-6387.

CASCADE FALLS

A two-mile round trip hike into the Elliot Nature Preserve in Fairfax will put you next to Cascade Falls. A simple waterfall of just 15 feet, the beauty of this falls is how the water flies over a boulder and into a deep pool. The trailhead begins at the end of Cascade drive. For more information, call the Marin Open Space District at (415) 499-6387.

Notes

Let us know your off-the-beaten path recommendations so we may share them with other Joie de Vivre Hotels guests! Please return your suggestions to the front desk staff.
