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## DAYTRIPS



Fresh bay shrimp salad at New Moon Café in Nevada City.  
PHOTO BY ALLEN PIERLEONI

## Nevada City walk is worth the drive

Historic downtown  
offers an eclectic mix

**The best travel advice ever over-**  
heard: “Explore and discover.”

In that spirit, this monthly column will take  
off on accessible day-trips to towns small and  
large, with serendipity as its guide.

Let’s start with Nevada City, a 120-mile  
round trip from Sacramento. The town is  
all about tin roof buildings, brick walls  
and balconies, weather-washed wood and  
antique lamp posts.

Our recent walkabout centered in the  
16-acre downtown area, a National Historic  
Monument (download the walking-tour map  
of historic sites at [www.nevadacitychamber.com](http://www.nevadacitychamber.com)). Its rows of side-by-side 19th-century  
buildings are filled with a trove of antiques,  
fashion, eats and drinks.

Including coffee at **City Council** (233  
Broad St.), an airy space dramatized by  
sand-blasted brick walls and 19th-century  
iron doors. Join the laptop crowd at the  
gleaming refectory tables.

The motto at **Toad Hall Book Shop**  
(108 N. Pine St.) could be, “What’s old is

new again.” Among the classics are “Mrs.  
Wilkes Boardinghouse Cookbook” and the  
“Burgess Bird Book for Children.” You  
won’t do better.

We’d never heard of an “organic bed”  
until we cruised **Mama Madrone’s** (307  
Broad St.). The beeswax candles and botani-  
cal lotions fit the store’s vibe, but the artist-  
designed hemp shirts were show-stoppers.

The **New Moon Café** (203 York St.) is  
the local must-try, certified after our lunch  
on the shaded deck. One daily special was  
a fresh bay shrimp salad heaped on house-  
baked rosemary focaccia.

“We’re casual, but we know what we’re  
doing and we care about the food,” chef  
Peter Selaya says. All true.

The best thing about walking in to  
**Mountain Pastimes** (320 Spring St.) toy  
store is being overwhelmed by the 1,800-  
piece inventory. The second-best thing is the  
“orchestrian,” a colossal, hand-built “juke-  
box” filled with 45 musical instruments  
that play 2,000 tunes. What a concept - real  
music from real instruments.

To end the day, consider this: Is choco-  
late better than beer?

To find out, we went from the **Nevada  
City Chocolate Shoppe** (236 Broad St.)  
to award-winning **Ol’ Republic Brewery**  
(124 Argail Way). At the Chocolate Shoppe,  
hand-made truffles and a dozen flavors  
of fudge are a good start, with a side of  
chocolate-dipped cheesecake. The Ol’  
Republic Taproom was pouring 11 brews the  
day we visited.

So, is beer better than chocolate? Please  
let us know.

BY ALLEN PIERLEONI