Oysters By the Bay

For a City by the Bay (and the Pacific Ocean), you might think San Francisco would have quite a selection of oyster bars, but I only know of about half a dozen, including the venerable Swan Oyster Depot (one of the oldest restaurants in the city) and one at the stunning Waterbar on the Embarcadero.

But now there's a new one on Fisherman's Wharf. At the flagship location of the Boudin sourdough bakery, there is a wide takeout selection of breads and other baked goods and a casual cafe downstairs. But upstairs, there is an impressive restaurant, Bistro Boudin, site of the new oyster bar. At the pretty, marble-topped bar, several raw (Drake's Bay, Hama Hama, Marin Miyagi, and Kumamoto) and two baked oysters (Rockefeller and barbecued), plus half a dozen specially-selected wines to pair with the oysters, are offered. A King Estate (Oregon) Pinot Gris was a lovely match for the Drake's Bay oysters from Point Reyes. A slight sweetness emerged when the wine blended with the briney shellfish.

The adjacent restaurant, with its classy decor and views of the bay, stands out among the mostly tired fish palaces of Fisherman's Wharf. If you are enticed to order further, consider some of Chef Misael Reyes' innovative specialities like Sourdough Tortilla Tacos with grilled Rock Cod, spicy grilled shrimp or Dungeness Crab and a Dungeness Crab and shrimp pizza.