

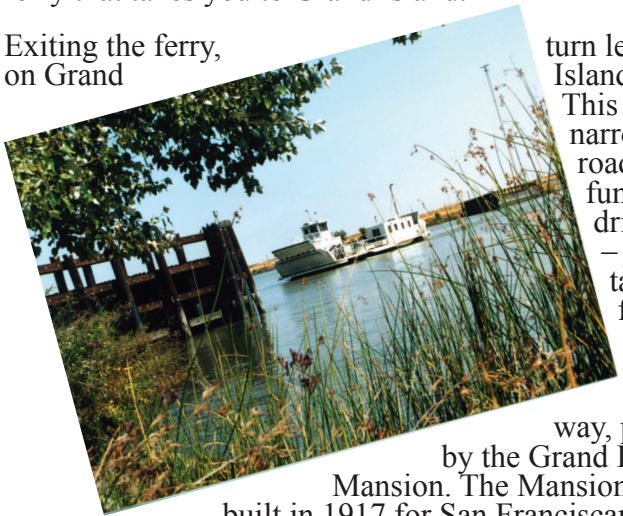
Magical Delta Road Trip

Story and Photos by Jan Vick

The Delta is a magical place to explore. There are miles of levee roads, sloughs, farms and wetlands. It's fun to just drive and take any road that catches your fancy. To give you a glimpse of the possibilities, here is a short tour you can do in a day or an afternoon.

Begin in downtown Rio Vista. Go north on Front Street, under the bridge and turn right on Highway 84, also known as River Road. Continue through town along-side the river until you come to the Real McCoy II Ferry landing. The ferry is free, and is run by Caltrans. It runs about every 20 minutes to Ryer Island. Ryer Island is largely agricultural, with a marina and a small resort. Turn right off the ferry and proceed around the bottom of the island. You come to another ferry, the J-Mack, which is a cable ferry that takes you to Grand Island.

Exiting the ferry, on Grand



turn left Island. This is a narrow road, but fun to drive – just take it fairly slow. On the way, pass

by the Grand Island Mansion. The Mansion was built in 1917 for San Franciscan Louis Meyers and his wife Audrey, daughter of Lubin of the Weinstock Lubin departments' stores in Sacramento. This beautiful showplace is now an event center, but offers Sunday Brunch to the public. (See grandislandmansion.com for more information.)

As you continue around Grand Island you pass many well-tended mansions, both old and new. Journey past fields of pears, corn, grapes and many other agricultural products, which illustrates the importance of Delta agriculture. When you come to a stop sign, turn left across Steamboat Slough. You are now on the Sacramento River.



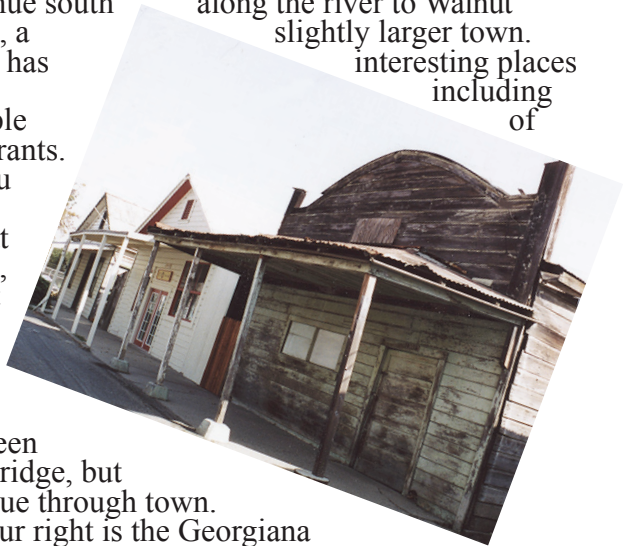
Continue north until you reach another bridge across the river – this is the Paintersville Bridge. Cross and turn right to go south along the river.



Several miles down the road lies the tiny town of Locke. During the early 20th century, Chinese immigrants were prohibited from owning land. The town was built by and for Chinese on land leased from George Locke. Take a break from your trip; park the car and walk the main street. There is a small but interesting museum, several galleries, and Al the Wops (or Al's Place). This old watering hole is a glimpse into the slow Delta lifestyle. Go in to look at all the dollar bills on the ceiling (and have one of their delicious hamburgers).

Continue south along the river to Walnut Grove, a slightly larger town. It also has interesting places to see, including a couple of restaurants. As you leave Walnut Grove, do not cross the river on the green drawbridge, but continue through town.

On your right is the Georgiana Slough Bridge; cross it and turn right. This places you on the east side of the river,



which has less traffic than Hwy 160 on the other side. Continue along the river to the stop sign sign at the Isleton Bridge where you meet up with Hwy 160. Continue straight to Isleton. Wander the old part of town where there are stores, restaurants and a newly-restored Tong building.

As you leave Isleton, continue along the river until you come to the Rio Vista Bridge. Turn right and you are back where you started, having enjoyed your

magical Delta road trip!