

# The Flying Gourmet

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Ever feel that there is a giant conspiracy against you when it comes to weather and reserving an aircraft days in advance? I certainly do, it is almost a guarantee that if I schedule an aircraft the weather will change for the worse and I will have to cancel. Studying the weather patterns and prognostications doesn't seem to help me since one day the fog will persist and the next day, under seemingly identical conditions, no fog!

The other day the forecast was for partly cloudy conditions and blustery winds neither which manifested themselves, much to my surprise, though I did encounter other problems. A friend of mine and I drove down to the nearest gate only to find that the gate code from the previous day will not open the vehicle gate at 6 a.m. the following morning. I tried two gates until I accepted the fact that we would have to park my car and walk to the Ahart line.

Flying early in the morning to enjoy the smooth air and no traffic was worth the added frustration. Our destination was Hollister and the most direct route would be under Class B airspace down the eastern side of San Jose and over Gilroy. DUATS informed me that Hollister was clear even though I could see that the Bay Area fog was just over the ridge at the Dublin grade. Instead of sandwiching myself between the top of the fog and the bottom of Class B I decided that I would take the longer route down the San Joaquin valley across the San Luis reservoir. When we got to San Luis the fog again seemed to be filling the valley to the west but AWOS reported that the visibility was 9 miles and the field was clear of clouds so I change course and bumped up my altitude another thousand feet. After a brief stint of VFR on top, I found Hollister indeed clear.



It has been a couple of years since I last visited Hollister and I have always found it rewarding since you never know what kind of rare bird you might see. I have seen a T-33, a Paris Jet, a P-51, and even a F-86 in the past! This time was no exception there were Mi-2 helicopters, a Magister and a Delfin jet on the ramp and a Grumman Goose, T-28, and Stearman in the **Vintage Wings and Wheels LLC** hangar that they were so nice to let us view.

The **Ding-A- Ling Café** is still there, under new ownership, with fresh paint and a new



menu. What a great place for breakfast: eggs over medium, hamburger steak, hash browns, English muffin and coffee for under \$10.00.

The locals know a good thing when they see one and several tables were filled with regular

customers. There are a number of small businesses that located on the field including a Sky Diving School and a Glider Club. For all of them the Ding-A-Ling offers a good breakfast and lunch at a reasonable price.

If you are lucky enough to visit Hollister when the Hugh's Museum is open you will be able to see an absolutely beauties. Unfortunately



immaculate P-51 and several other we had to depart before it opened.