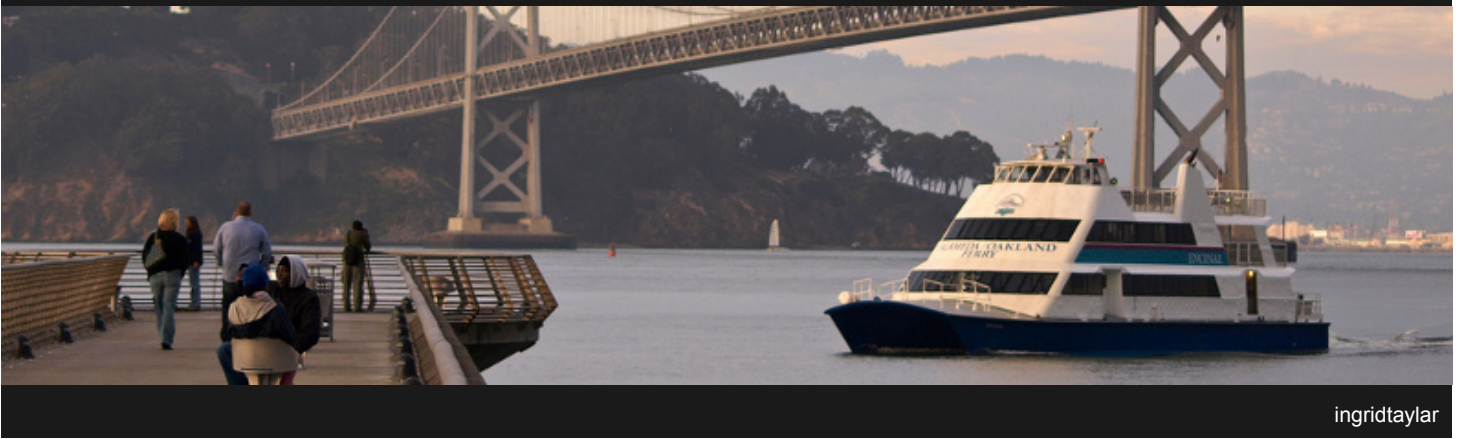




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ALL YOU NEED TO PLAN YOUR PERFECT TRIP



ingridtaylor

Ode To Oakland

San Francisco, Oakland, 3 Days

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Guide Description



AUTHOR NOTE: The great outdoors, art, and gondoliers meet urban life in a city whose residents affectionately call "The Town."

Itinerary Overview

things to do
restaurants
hotels
nightlife

Day 1 - Oakland

DAY NOTE: Before you hit Jack London Square, stop off for brunch at the Fat Lady. During Halloween, this one-time brothel (and its wait staff) is decorated in all manner of spooky gear. After mimosas, follow the “wolf tracks,” which lead to historical points of interest, including Heinold’s First and Last Chance Saloon (in operation since 1883). After a good dose of California-centric art and natural science, work your way back to the Washington Inn Hotel, which is conveniently located near your next stop: Preservation Park, an architectural museum of Queen Anne, craftsman, and Italianate-style homes, all of which have been painstakingly restored. Then it’s dinnertime. Doña Tomas, located in Oakland’s Temescal Neighborhood, has a picture-perfect patio suited for a leisurely evening of drinking and eating.



Oakland Museum of California

California history museum & gardens



Camron-Stanford House

Historical home at Lake Merritt

Day 2 - Oakland

DAY NOTE: After exploring the cosmos at the Chabot Space & Science center, get your feet back on the ground by exploring some of the Anthony Chabot Park’s 5,067 acres. End your day with a meal at A Cote and window-shopping in the upscale neighborhood of Rockridge.



Anthony Chabot Regional Park

Trails galore

Day 3 - Oakland

DAY NOTE: Today is all about the Oakland jewel known as Lake Merritt. Walk around it, paddle in it, or let a gondolier do the work. Totally central, the Lake is the perfect jumping off point for exploration in neighborhoods such as Piedmont, Lakeshore and Chinatown.



Lake Merritt

Fun recreation in the heart of Oakland



Gondola Servizio

Shakespeare in love!

Day 1 - Oakland



QUICK NOTE

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contact:

tel: (510) 238-2200
fax: (510) 238-2258
<http://www.museumca.org/>

location:

Oakland CA 94607

hours:

Vary

1 Oakland Museum of California

DESCRIPTION: This East Bay museum is an architectural work of art and is filled with a variety of educational exhibits, permanent and temporary, that touch many aspects of California history. The permanent displays include a gallery of California art, a simulated journey through California’s diverse ecosystems, and exhibits on the history of the state’s multicultural populations. Many people visit the museum just to stroll through its amazing sculpture garden. © wcities.com



Day 2 - Oakland



QUICK NOTE

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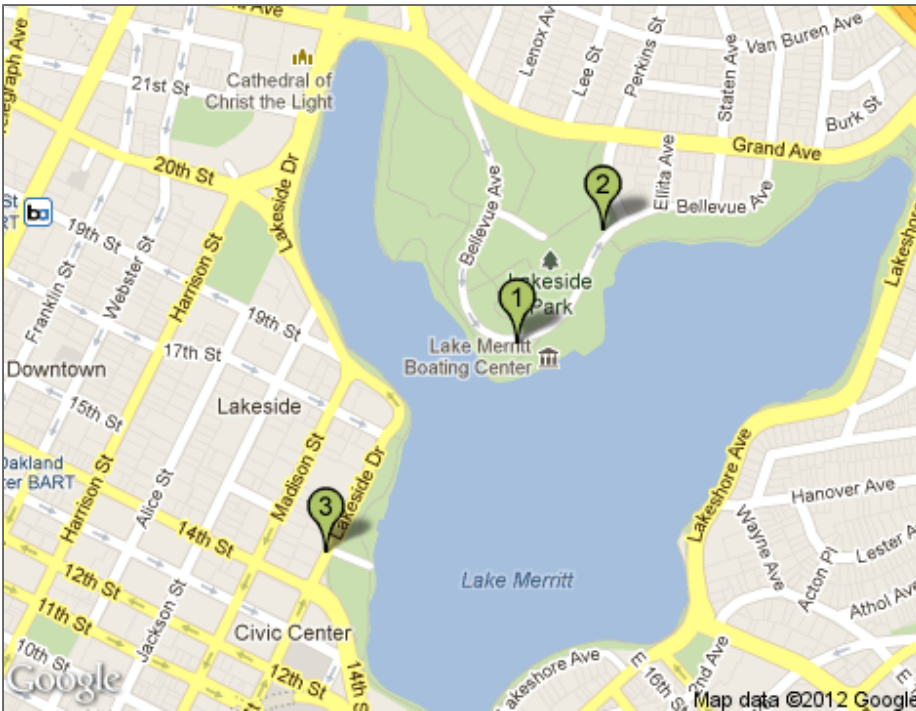
contact:
tel: (510) 562-PARK
<http://www.ebparks.org/parks/anchabot.htm>

location:
Redwood Road
Oakland CA 94605

1 Anthony Chabot Regional Park

DESCRIPTION: Camping, fishing, and a wealth of other outdoor activities are available only 20 minutes from downtown Oakland at the 4,972-acre Anthony Chabot Regional Park. © NileGuide

Day 3 - Oakland



QUICK NOTE

DAY NOTE: Today is all about the Oakland jewel known as Lake Merritt. Walk around it, paddle in it, or let a gondolier do the work. Totally central, the Lake is the perfect jumping off point for exploration in neighborhoods such as Piedmont, Lakeshore and Chinatown.

contact:

tel: (510) 238-7275
<http://www.oaklandnet.com/parks/parks/>

location:

At the corner of Bellevue and Grand avenues
Oakland CA 94610

1 Lake Merritt

DESCRIPTION: This shallow, 195-acre lake in downtown Oakland provides a variety of recreation activities to the city and its people. Pedal boats, sailboats, canoes, and rowboats are available for rent at a boating center that is open daily from 9am to sunset. Many local sports and environmental clubs congregate here. On any given day you might witness joggers, cyclists, or a boat race. It's also a place to view more than 29 species of local and migratory birds. The lake features an adjoining park equipped with picnic facilities and a storybook children's park, Children's Fairyland. © wcities.com

contact:

tel: (510) 663-6603 / (866) 737-8494
<http://www.gondolaservizio.com/>

location:

Hatt Market
Oakland CA 94617

2 Gondola Servizio

DESCRIPTION: Wish to be transported to Renaissance Italy? Couples, take a ride in a Gondola and hold hands - you would notice how the the atmosphere turns magical, as romance fills the air. Go on enjoy. Shakespeare himself must have written Romeo and Juliet, while pinning away in these romantic boats. © NileGuide



Photo courtesy of Gondola Servizio

hours:

1-a-2p M-F

contact:

tel: (510) 444-1876
fax: (510) 874-7803
<http://www.cshouse.org>

location:

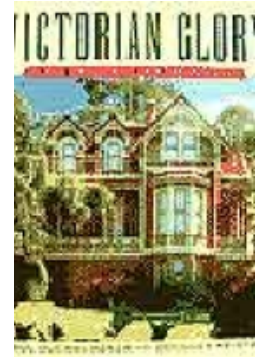
1418 Lakeside Drive
Oakland CA 94602-4307

hours:

Tours: 11a & 4p 2nd and 3rd
W, between 1p & 5p 3rd Su

3 Camron-Stanford House

DESCRIPTION: This historic Victorian mansion is the last of its kind at Lake Merritt in downtown Oakland. Built in 1875, it was once the home of one of Oakland's wealthiest residents. The beautifully restored Italianate gives a good glimpse into Oakland's rich and colorful history. Afterwards, take a walk around Lakeside Park or rent a paddleboat on Lake Merritt. Guided tours are available. Cash only. © wcities.com



My List

contact:

tel: (510) 444-2187

fax: (510) 444-7120

<http://www.pardeehome.org>

location:

San Francisco CA 94607

hours:

Guided tours are scheduled for every W, F, and Sa at noon, 1p, 2p and 3p

1 Pardee Home Museum

DESCRIPTION: This is considered one of the greatest historical landmarks in Northern California. Built in 1868, the house is an Italianate villa that once belonged to Enoch Pardee and his family, all of whom made a great impact on local and state politics in the late-19th and early 20th centuries. The estate is attractive both architecturally and historically and features authentic carriage and tank houses. It is known as the centerpiece of Oakland's Preservation Park Historic District. © wcities.com



contact:

tel: (510) 632-9525

<http://www.oaklandzoo.org/>

location:

Oakland CA 94605

hours:

10a-4p M-Su

2 Oakland Zoo

DESCRIPTION: The Oakland Zoo is home to more than 440 exotic and domestic birds, mammals, marsupials, and reptiles. Some of its attractions include a park with picnic facilities, an educational wildlife theater, a childrens' petting zoo, a carousel, a chair lift ride, and a miniature train. The zoo also offers group tours and a lecture series for adults in the spring. © wcities.com

contact:

tel: (510) 562-7275

<http://www.ebparks.org/parks/sibley.htm>

location:

6800 Skyline Boulevard
Oakland CA 94611

hours:

5a-10p M-Su

3 Round Top Loop

DESCRIPTION: The Bay Area tourist may be surprised to learn that volcanoes once roared in the Oakland Hills. This preserve, maintained by the East Bay Park and Recreation Department, features the Round Top, a peak made of 10-million-year-old lava and volcanic debris that is one of the highest points in the Oakland Hills. A visitor center at the park shelves self-guided tour brochures so guests can stroll the park and learn of its historic significance at their own leisure. The hike starts just west of here and follows the Round Top Loop. © NileGuide



Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve

San Francisco Snapshot

Local Info

Sun and fog, grandeur and blight, hipsters and suits, relaxed and industrious... San Francisco's juxtapositions are infinite. Arguably the most beautiful city in the United States, the city by the bay is also the most un-American city, in attitude as well as looks. Old Victorian homes blend with modern, shiny skyscrapers, and the skyline is neither wholly gray concrete nor red brick like its East Coast sister cities.

The second most densely populated city in the U.S., San Francisco is more akin to Europe than to America. The city has 63 miles of bike lanes within its seven-by-seven square miles, with some 40,000 residents cycling to work every day. On Sundays in the spring and summer, some streets are closed to car traffic and open to the public for biking, rollerblading, and just hanging out. Plazas attract farmer's markets, protests, and coffee-sipping denizens. San Francisco has always been iconoclastic, from the early Gold Rush Days, to the 1967 Summer of Love, to the legalization (and subsequent prohibition) of same-sex marriage, a movement which pushed five other states to do the same. Flanked on the east and west side by its beloved bridges, the metropolis could be easily perched next to the Mediterranean Sea. It's no wonder it attracts the third-highest number of foreign visitors in the U.S. each year.

San Francisco isn't so much a city as a collection of neighborhoods, each with its own character and micro-climate, which is why the city can have sun, fog and drizzle at the same time on the same day. In all, there are 27 distinct neighborhoods with dozens of sub-neighborhoods that mesh together like puzzle pieces.

Often only a block or two separates one from the other, one world from the next. The Tenderloin, San Francisco's skid row, borders sparkling and tourist-ridden Union Square; the modish Mission lies side by side with stroller-central Noe Valley; gritty Polk Gulch rubs rich Russian Hill; overlooked Western Addition nuzzles posh Pac Heights; blue-collar Chinatown kisses the corporate Financial District.

The characters who inhabit these communities are a paradox as well – Jimmy Choos pound the pavement

alongside friendly bums, and white-collar workers take the same bus as fuzzy boot-clad street performers. To label San Francisco's citizens as eclectic is an understatement. It's also an understatement to call them "unique." Don't be surprised if you find yourself amongst an impromptu pillow fight along the Embarcadero, a naked bike parade up Market Street, or a flash dance party on public transit.

Despite the stereotype, California does not a hot, sunny destination make. Most visitors underestimate the fog's chill, which is felt most strongly between 4-8pm, after which the wind tends to calm down. San Franciscans are a practical bunch; you'll rarely see a local without a spare scarf, hat, or long sleeves. They also shy away from wintry black and gray wardrobes; color plays a huge part in street fashion, and nobody looks twice if somebody dons a purple velvet suit while walking their dog or if a bride wears red instead of white to her wedding. San Franciscans also know that when it's hot, you take advantage of it, whether it's in November, March, or May. Beach days and mild nights do happen, but they are few and far between, and they are rarely enjoyed in the summer.

San Francisco boasts festivals nearly every weekend, from the largest Chinese New Year's Parade outside of China, to Pride, the oldest of the world's gay pride parades. Much of the population turns out for the annual Bay to Breakers run as well as the three-day Outside Lands concert in Golden Gate Park, both of which make San Francisco a party destination on par with New Orleans, Berlin, Austin, and Miami. Chances are high that you'll be in town for some event like the Stern Grove free concerts, Cinco de Mayo, Treasure Island Music festival, Carnaval, Fillmore Street Jazz festival, or the dozens of film festivals which descend upon the most cultured of cities yearly. Don't forget the Haight Street, Folsom Street, Union Street, North Beach, and Japantown neighborhood street fairs. And the list goes on...

Yet, even with endless fun at their fingertips, San Franciscans are a diligent bunch. It's no coincidence that the city is home to online powerhouses Twitter, Craigslist, Zynga, and Yelp, and only a few miles away you'll find Paypal, Google, and Facebook. San Francisco seems to be

experiencing a second boom to the dot-com era with hundreds of tech start-ups invading SOMA, Potrero Hill, and the blighted 5th street and Market corridor (Twitter recently got a tax break for moving here versus retreating to blander Silicon Valley).

Since the first dotcom boom in 2000, newfound wealth has made an obvious impression on the city. Old SOMA warehouses have turned into condos; decrepit Dogpatch industrial spaces have been transformed into airy live/work lofts; and just wait until 2017, when the "Grand Central Station of the West" opens. The new Transbay Transit Center project will add three 1,200 foot skyscrapers and 10 additional towers to the San Francisco skyline. Lest we forget, the highly anticipated eastern span of the Bay Bridge, with its single self-supporting suspension tower, is slated to finally open in 2013.

To some, all of this development has meant San Francisco has lost its counter culture character. Ridiculously high rents have driven many of the "hippies" out. Those that remain are finding it less hospitable. The Haight-Ashbury neighborhood has been populated with vagabonds ever since the Summer of Love and business owners are finally taking a stand against their loitering. The controversial Sit/Lie Law, which bans sitting or lying on sidewalks between 7 a.m. and 11 p.m., was just passed by voters.

Next to its cable cars and hills (you'll never forget your first ride over the crest of Nob Hill) San Francisco is known as epicurean heaven. Boasting around 3,600 restaurants, San Francisco has fantastic ethnic cuisine—sushi, Vietnamese, Thai, and Chinese, to name just a few. The large Hispanic population contributes dozens of popular taquerias; most are concentrated in the Mission district. The birth of California cuisine, pioneered by Alice Waters of the world famous Chez Panisse, turned the entire country on to fresh, local ingredients, a movement which is reflected across the board in San Francisco eateries like Zuni Café, Range, Michael Mina, and newcomer Prospect.

San Francisco's stunning beauty and easy access to nature make it a paradise for outdoor-lovers. There are over 50 city, state, and federal parks within the city itself, including the crown jewel: Golden Gate Park. Gorgeous golden beaches are mere

San Francisco Snapshot continued

minutes from downtown, mountain biking was born in the Marin hills just north of the Golden Gate Bridge, and the Golden Gate National Recreation Area covers close to 75,000 acres, including 59 miles of bay and ocean shoreline.

You won't find that kind of space in any other major American city. More

community-focused than Los Angeles, milder than Boston, more relaxed than New York, more focused than Miami, San Francisco is a destination of dreamers and achievers- people don't just talk the talk, they put their plans into action and aren't afraid to fail. Just look at the San Francisco Giants- even a baseball team

deemed "a bunch of rag tag misfits" can pull off a World Series championship...just sayin'. It's obvious San Franciscans love their city, and when you visit, you probably will too.

© NileGuide

Oakland Snapshot

Local Info

Everyone knows the Gertrude Stein quote about her hometown of Oakland: "There is no there there." Whatever it means (most likely she was talking about her return to find that her childhood house was gone) the negative connotation has attached itself to the city. Well, we have a motto for modern-day Oakland: "So there!" The city today still has its gritty (read: crime-ridden) areas but it also has a lively historic downtown area, a diverse population, the charming restaurant-and-shopping district of Rockridge and some of the priciest homes in northern California. It has popular Lake Merritt in the city center. It has far more pleasant weather than San Francisco. In all, visitors will find a great many attractions to enjoy here. (Or there.)

Sights

Jack London is another famous Oakland resident and the eponymous Jack London Square is now a thriving shopping, entertainment and residential district-- and

one of the most popular destinations for tourists in the know. It has London's old Yukon cabin, brought in and reassembled and, next door, the very cool old Heinold's First and Last Chance Saloon. It also has FDR's yacht, the USS Potomac, which is open for tours. City museums worth checking out include the Oakland Museum of California and the African American Museum and Library downtown. Take the kids to the Chabot Space and Science Center, where they can view the universe through refractor and reflector telescopes, and to Children's Fairyland, where kids' literature comes to life in shows and in scenes recreated from famous children's books. The Oakland Zoo and the historic district of Preservation Park should be on your itinerary as well.

Dining

San Francisco has the reputation for world-class restaurants and, while Oakland has fewer, it has a handful that match any you'll find across the bay. For cheap, good Asian food, head to Chinatown, where

you'll discover delicious Japanese and Vietnamese fare too. Piedmont Avenue is home to a number of rising culinary delights, International Boulevard has famous taco trucks that foodies and locals flock to. Rockridge has many crowded cafes and high-end restaurants as well. Stop in at Rockridge Market Hall for some of the finest grocery and deli selections anywhere in the U.S.

Shopping

Craft jewelry, gourmet sweets, clothing boutiques and other trendy gems can be found in the family-friendly atmosphere along College Avenue. Rockridge is the upscale shopping area and Jack London Square also has numerous shops and boutiques to slake the shopaholic in you. For a fancy a hat, head to the Hat Guys on Broadway-- which boasts of having the largest hat collection on the West Coast. Downtown Oakland has shops and other miscellaneous stores that offer great buys.

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