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ALL YOU NEED TO PLAN YOUR PERFECT TRIP

MikeBehnken

Best of San Francisco Outdoors

Mill Valley, San Francisco, Point Reyes Station, 1 Day

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Guide Description

AUTHOR NOTE: San Francisco is the perfect destination for outdoor enthusiasts. Not only does the city boast a treasure trove of green spaces, beaches, and outdoor activities, but it also serves as a launching point for amazing nature attractions in its environs, many of which are under an hour away by car. In the city, explore the wonders of Golden Gate Park, take in unparalleled views of the Golden Gate Bridge and Marin from Baker Beach, or surf killer waves at Ocean Beach. Links lovers can enjoy the adjacent Harding and Fleming golf courses. Head north of the city to Marin for hiking trails galore at Mt. Tamalpais State Park; the Dipsea Trail is a challenging yet popular route, extending from Muir Woods National Monument to Stinson Beach. Further north, Pt. Reyes State Park offers seaside hikes, an abundance of wildlife, and serene camping spots.

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Itinerary Overview

things to do
restaurants
hotels
nightlife

Day 1 - San Francisco, Mill Valley, Point Reyes Station

Golden Gate Park
1,000+ acres of green retreat in the heart of the city

Mount Tamalpais State Park
Bay Area icon

Point Reyes Lighthouse Visitor Center
Look for migrating whales

Muir Woods National Monument
Redwood forest refuge

Baker Beach
Presidio beach with views of the Golden Gate Bridge

Harding Park Golf Course
Scenic public links--Park Merced

Ocean Beach
San Francisco's largest

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Day 1 - San Francisco, Mill Valley, Point Reyes Station

QUICK NOTE

contact:
tel: (415) 831-2700
fax: +1 415 581 2540
http://www.sfgov.org/

location:
Stanyan & Fulton Sts
San Francisco CA 94118

1 Golden Gate Park

http2007

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:
You can pedal a boat around Stow Lake, but a better bet is to rent a bike at the boathouse there and pedal around the park. On your way, check out the historic herd of bison (That's right, big shaggy buffalo) in their paddock near the lake.

DESCRIPTION: Spanning three miles from the edge of Haight-Ashbury all the way to the Pacific Ocean, Golden Gate Park contains so many mini-universes and attractions you'll want to (literally) stop and smell the roses on several occasions. Die-hard nature lovers can check out the Rose Garden, the Conservatory of Flowers, or the famous Japanese Tea Garden, featuring a classic pagoda, cherry blossoms, and landscaping straight out of the Land of the Rising Sun. Golden Gate Park's natural highlight, however, is the San Francisco Botanical Garden, which features a horticultural trip around the world (don't miss the redwood grove and succulents section). Don't miss Golden Gate Park's two world-class museums, the California Academy of Sciences and the De Young Museum. Both were completely rebuilt in their original locations in the past decade, and are worth a visit for their architecture alone. The park is also the perfect place to get active. There are tons of walking paths, several public tennis courts, an affordable pitch and put nine-hole golf course, sport fields, and picnic grounds. You can even rent a boat and head out for a delightful row on Stow Lake. Spring, summer, and fall bring a number of events to Golden Gate Park, including bluegrass, rock, and hip-hop concerts and Shakespeare in the Park performances. © NileGuide

contact:
tel: 415-388-2070
fax: (415) 893-1583
http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp

location:
7665 Redwood Blvd, Suite 150
Mill Valley CA 94941

2 Mount Tamalpais State Park

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:
While all Mount Tam hikes are exceptional, we are partial to those that begin at Pantoll Station, as they lead to the lushest parts of the mountain; the one considerable drawback of starting from there, and not East Peak Station, is missing out on mountaintop views.

DESCRIPTION: From its exposed 2,751-foot peak boasting panoramic views of the Bay Area to the redwood-, fir-, and oak-

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sheltered hiking and mountain biking trails meandering down to its base, Mount Tamalpais State Park is a paragon of Northern California natural beauty. Home to over 73 native plant species and a host of wildlife, Mount Tam is the ideal place to bask in the great outdoors. After all, visitors can not only hike or bike, but also go horseback riding or camping; overnight cabins are onsite and two quaint inns are nearby to provide more comfort to those who aren't crazy about tents. Although nature is the main attraction at Mount Tamalpais State Park, locals also hike in with a picnic to attend the annual springtime open-air Broadway revival performance at the Mountain Theater, which has natural-stone amphitheatre seating. © NileGuide

contact:
tel: (415) 464-5100
fax: (415) 663-8132
http://www.nps.gov/pore/

location:
Point Reyes Station CA 94956

3 Point Reyes Lighthouse Visitor Center

DESCRIPTION: This visitor center contains exhibits on lighthouses, wild flowers,geology and marine life. It is closed Tuesdays and Wednesdays. © NileGuide

contact:
tel: (415) 388-2595
fax: (415) 389-6957
http://www.visitmuirwoods.com

location:
Muir Woods Rd and Camino Del Cyn
Mill Valley CA 94941

4 Muir Woods National Monument

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:
We recommend visiting the park as early in the day as possible, as finding parking becomes more difficult the later you arrive.

DESCRIPTION: Commissioned by President Teddy Roosevelt and named for conservationist John Muir, these woods are a tribute to the enchantment of redwood trees. For anyone who's encountered California redwoods, you know of what we speak. For those who haven't, Muir Woods National Monument is the perfect place to experience these majestic wonders for the first time. When you enter the park, you're treated to flat, paved walking paths that meander through the lush grove of towering redwoods, spiraling ferns, and other native plants, complete with historic and scientific explanations of the forest's features. We recommend taking this classic Muir Woods route and then ascending higher towards where you can choose from a variety of dirt hiking paths; that's where the magic truly happens. As most visitors stick to the easy ground-level path, hikers are treated to a truly serene experience the higher they climb, sometimes hearing almost nothing but delicate birdsong. Some trails originating in Muir Woods go all the way to Stinson Beach or to gorgeous parts of Mount Tamalpais State Park, or lead to very special local secrets, such as the Tourist Club, a German beer tavern. (Because what's better than a refreshing brew after some hearty physical exertion?) © NileGuide

wcities

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contact:
tel: +1 415 831 2750(Tourist Information)
http://www.nps.gov/prsf/places/bakerbch.htm

location:
Lincoln Blvd.
San Francisco CA 94121

5 Baker Beach

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:
You can't beat Baker Beach for views of the Golden Gate and Marin Headlands, or for accessibility to most of the city.

DESCRIPTION: Baker Beach is located inside the historic Presidio. If driving, consult a map for detailed directions, while Muni Bus #29 makes stops at the beach entrance. If you arrive in the middle of the day, you'll find a secluded beach, sheltered from the wind, with a great view of the massive cargo ships passing beneath the Golden Gate Bridge. Note that on a warm day it won't feel so secluded as the locals descend to soak in the sun. Also be aware that at the north end of the beach you might find some nude sunbathers. This is not a swimming or surfing spot as it has strong and dangerous rip currents. Arrive just before sunset and you'll think you stumbled upon the most beautiful beach in the world. As the sun is setting, get your cameras poised for a view of the ocean, the beach, and amazing view of the Golden Gate Bridge. © NileGuide

contact:
tel: (415) 664-4690 / (415) 750-4653
http://www.harding-park.com/layout9.asp

location:
Harding Rd & Skyline Blvd
San Francisco CA 94132

hours:
dawn to dusk daily

6 Harding Park Golf Course

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:
If you can only play 18

DESCRIPTION: A pretty, 18-hole, par 72 city-owned course around Lake Merced in the quiet Park Merced District, Harding is longer and flatter than other San Francisco courses. Tee times are usually available on a walk-up basis during the week; for weekend reservations, however, it is highly recommended to call a week in advance. © wcities.com

contact:
http://www.parksconservancy.org/visit/park-sites/ocean-beach.html

location:
Great Highway
San Francisco CA 94121

7 Ocean Beach

DESCRIPTION: The massive beach stretches the length of the city's Pacific Ocean frontage from Seal Rocks all the way down to Daly City. Popular with surfers, kite flyers and families, it's San Francisco's main city beach. Although it can often be foggy and/or windy, on sunny warm days it's a joy. Swimming isn't advisable, as currents and waves can be extremely rough. A trip to Ocean Beach at sunset, followed by dinner at Beach Chalet (make sure you have a pint of the beer they brew on site) is just about a perfect evening. Or, enjoy a bonfire on the beach after dark, per NPS regulations.
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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. TheTenderloin, San Francisco's skid row, borders sparkling and tourist-riddenUnion Square; the modishMission lies side by side with stroller-central Noe Valley; gritty Polk Gulch rubs rich Russian Hill; overlooked Western Addition nuzzles posh Pac Heights; blue-collarChinatown 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. TheHaight-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 ofNob 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 likeZuni Café,Range,Michael Mina, and newcomerProspect.

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

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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 of a World Series championship…just sayin'. It's obvious San Franciscans love their city, and when you visit, you probably will too.

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History

San Francisco: Miwok Indians to the north and the Ohlones to the south lived a peaceful existence before the coming of Europeans. The Kule Loklo Miwok village, re-created near the Bear Valley Visitors Center at Point Reyes National Seashore in Marin County, provides an insight into their daily life.

With an overland expedition by Don Gaspar de Portola, Europeans first laid eyes on the Bay in 1770. In March 1776, Captain Juan Bautista de Anza founded the Presidio and Mission of as-yet unnamed San Francisco. The Spanish presence at the Mission San Francisco de Asis(now Mission Dolores—completed in 1791; the oldest building in the city) and at the Presidio, three miles away, did not amount to much over the succeeding years. The Mexican revolution of 1821 led to the Secularization Act of 1833, ending the Mission Period. Mission Dolores fell into disrepair. Conversion and disease had done much to destroy the culture of the Miwoks and Ohlones; by the early 19th century, native tribes had effectively ceased to exist.

In 1792, British explorer George Vancouver, visiting San Francisco Bay, discovered a protected anchorage east of the Presidio, called Yerba Buena by the Spanish after the sweet smelling grasses growing around the base of what is now Telegraph Hill. Vancouver pitched and left a tent there, creating the nucleus of what became Yerba Buena, a small English-speaking community outside Spanish and Mexican authority. In 1846 with the Mexican-American war, the Presidio and Yerba Buena came under American control.

In 1847, Yerba Buena, with a population of about 1,000, changed its name to San Francisco. The next January, gold was discovered at Sutter's Mill, which created only a minor stir. It was left to newspaper publisher and merchant Sam Brannan, trying to drum up trade for his Sacramento Street hardware store, to really trigger the Gold Rush. He brandished a bottle of gold pellets in Portsmouth Square and shouted,"Gold! Gold! Gold from the American River!" Within a year or two, Brannan was a millionaire. 100,000"forty-niners" came to San Francisco from all over the world within the next year. Brannan's announcement practically emptied San Francisco of its citizenry in 1848, and most forty-niners stayed only long enough to get picks and shovels before they were off to the hills.

By 1854, the gold fields had been exhausted, and San Francisco sank into an economic depression from which it would not emerge until the early 1860s with the discovery of the Comstock silver lode in western Nevada. It was this boom, richer and longer-lived than the California Gold Rush, which began to make a real city out of San Francisco, and millionaires out of some of its citizens. Comstock"bonanza kings" like James Flood, whose home is now the elegant Pacific Union Club, built mansions on Nob Hill. Fabric merchant Levi Strauss created a clothing empire by sewing pants for miners out of his leftover tent canvas.

The wild and woolly Barbary Coast roared through the ups and downs of San Francisco. The city gained a justly deserved reputation for vice of every sort. Brothels, gambling halls, and Chinese opium dens were everywhere on the city's eastern waterfront, and unwitting patrons were frequently"shanghaied" into service as sailors. The remnants of the Barbary Coast's scandalous"dance" revues can be seen in the slowly declining strip joints along Broadway in North Beach.

Early in the morning of April 18, 1906, an earthquake with an estimated magnitude of 8.1 on the Richter Scale ripped through San Francisco, destroying hundreds of buildings. As gas mains ruptured, a fire spread through the city, causing far greater damage than the quake itself. 500 or so were killed, but an estimated 100,000, who were left homeless, either fled in ferries and watched their city burn from the Oakland hills or joined a tent city of 20,000 in what is now Golden Gate Park.

The city quickly rebuilt itself after the earthquake and fire, like the phoenix rising from ashes on the San Francisco flag. Celebrating civic triumph over adversity, San Francisco hosted the Panama Pacific International Exposition in 1915, a glittering architectural fantasy built on 635 acres of what is now the Marina District. A great success, the Exposition's steel-reinforced plaster buildings were bulldozed shortly after it closed, leaving only the domed pavilion of the Palace of Fine Arts(site of the Exploratorium).

Throughout the 1920s, plans were put forward for bridges to connect San Francisco with the East Bay and Marin. Finally in the early 1930s, work began on the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge, which opened in 1936, and the Golden Gate Bridge in 1937.

Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac, Gary Snyder, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, and other young writers and thinkers of what was to be known as the Beat Generation established themselves in the cafes and bars of North Beach, continuing the city's literary, bohemian tradition, albeit with a dreamy, druggy, jazz-inflected twist. Rising North Beach rents forced beatniks(a term coined bySan Francisco Chronicle columnist Herb Caen) out to the Victorians of Haight-Ashbury, where their boundary-breaking prose had already inspired a new movement of long-haired young cultural mavericks.

Derisively dubbed"hippies" by the beats, who saw them as junior beat wanna-bes, the hippies took their cultural and psychic explorations to different extremes, aided by LSD, a synthesized hallucinogen. Bands like the Grateful Dead and Jefferson Airplane came up with the soundtrack to"tune in, turn on, and drop out," and the 1967 Summer of Love drew over 100,000 young seekers to the Haight.

Flower Power began to manifest itself more and more stridently with political

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unrest as demonstrations and even riots became a feature of life at San Francisco State University and, even more so, at the University of California, Berkeley."Peace and love" began to turn into a bad trip.

San Francisco's gay community began to assert itself with greater confidence and urgency in the 1970s, electing Supervisor Harvey Milk as the nation's only openly gay politician. Milk was killed in 1978, along with Mayor George Moscone by former Supervisor Dan White. White's subsequent conviction on a mere manslaughter charge prompted riots and the burning of police cars by angry gays and their supporters in front of City Hall on"White Night."

During the 1980s, the gay community reeled under the onslaught of the AIDS epidemic. Though incidences of the disease have leveled off and more effective drugs prolong the life of those afflicted, the Castro has drawn even more tightly together to promote awareness of the disease and to support those whose lives have been affected by it.

In 1989, just as the Bay Area was sitting down to watch the San Francisco Giants and Oakland Athletics play each other in the third game of the World Series, it was rocked by the 7.1 Loma Prieta Earthquake. The legacy of the quake can be seen in the sometimes nightmarish San Francisco traffic, caused by irreparable damage to important sections of freeway.

Today San Francisco is a a city of extremes. The magic of a thriving downtown business sector, explosive dot-com businesses South of Market, and a real estate boom in the southern corridor does not seem to be enough to dispel concern over an ever-rising homeless population and intractable problems with San Francisco's public transportation system, Muni. Despite these issues and economic swings, it would be hard to dim the luster of the abundant charms of, as Herb Caen put it, the"Baghdad by the Bay."

San Jose: Before the silicon chip, before Dionne Warwick("Do You Know the Way to San Jose?,") and well before the Spanish gave it a name, San Jose was home to scattered settlements of Ohlone Indians. The Ohlone("The People") were hunter-gatherers who had lived around the San Francisco Bay since the end of the last Ice Age. The southern end of the Bay, where bustling San Jose now stands, provided the Ohlones with a particularly felicitous mix of mild climate, redwood forests, acorn-filled oak groves, and creeks and bay wetlands abounding with fish and wildlife.

On November 6, 1769, Gaspar de Portola walked into the Ohlone's peaceful world by mistake. Portola was looking for Monterey Bay, discovered(in 1602), and subsequently described with wild inaccuracy, by Sebastian Vizcaino. It would take Portola two expeditions to find it. On this first mission, he became the first European to lay eyes on San Francisco Bay, and on the Ohlone. Portola set up camp to the north under a tall redwood, a place he called el palo alto. The tree, and its namesake city, are both thriving today.

In 1775, Juan Batista de Anza arrived in the area with a number of Spaniards intent on settling the territory of Alta California, and civilizing the Ohlone. In two years, a mission was built on a site close to the Guadalupe River, dubbed Mission Santa Clara de Asis(after Saint Claire of Assisi). The area around the settlement came to be known as Santa Clara Valley.(Today, San Jose is the seat of Santa Clara County.) To maintain the mission, an agricultural outpost was founded nearby on November 29, 1777: El Pueblo de San Jose de Guadalupe, so called after St. Joseph, the patron saint of the territory. Because this was the first civilian lay presence in Alta California, San Jose can claim the title of the oldest city in the state. Spanish settlers planted vineyards and orchards and developed cattle ranches. The Ohlone learned agriculture, were absorbed into the burgeoning Spanish community, and ceased to exist as a distinct culture.

The year 1821 marked the Mexican Revolution and a change in the administration of Alta California. A period of tension between Mexico and the United States followed, as the American frontier pushed ever westward, culminating in 1846 with the Mexican-American War. The Santa Clara Valley saw the only action between United States and Mexicans(or, more precisely Californios) in Northern California, in fact, at the Battle of Santa Clara.

The discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill in 1848 had a profound effect on San Jose and the Santa Clara Valley. While not a vein of the"mother lode" that ran far south, the Valley's western foothills were rich in cinnabar, an ore containing mercury and sulfur, both valuable minerals important for the refinement of gold and silver. The Valley's agricultural, industrial and mercantile resources, which fed and clothed miners up at the diggings, also played an important role in bringing prosperity to San Jose. In 1850, two years after the conclusion of the Mexican-American War, California won statehood; thanks in large part to the determined lobbying efforts of two local real estate promoters, and San Jose became the state's first capital. In its year in San Jose(a hard, rainy winter would drive the capital to Benecia, Vallejo, and finally Sacramento), the hard-living State Assembly was known as"the Legislature of a Thousand Drinks."

As the gold rush ran its course and gave way to the silver bonanza of the Comstock Lode, miners came by the thousands to settle in the pleasant climate and fertile land of Santa Clara Valley. As the state grew, so did the Valley's agricultural bounty of wheat, pears, apricots, cherries, plums, and finally, and most significantly, prunes. It was the prune industry that came to dominate Santa Clara Valley. San Jose's agricultural heritage has been largely plowed under by the demands of housing and the technology industry, but individual trees and small stands can be seen here and there within city limits.

Farming and the railroad increased both the population and the ethnic diversity of San Jose. Germans played a key role in city government and civic life, and a local German band was the nucleus for what is now the San Jose Symphony. French immigrants helped shape the fruit industry with expertise and cuttings from the French countryside. And by 1870, more than a third of the city's population was Chinese.

Santa Clara Valley continued to prosper quietly throughout the rest of the 19th and early 20th centuries, with the occasional disturbances of the 1906 San Andreas earthquake and the Great Depression. In 1891, railroad baron Leland Stanford's largesse made possible the opening of Stanford University in Palo Alto. The town —in Santa Clara County —actually sprang up in the shadow of the university, and was subsequently named for Portola's redwood.

Stanford quickly became a leading center of education and research, particularly in the development of new technologies. In 1909, Stanford engineering graduate

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Cyril Elwell, funded with$500 of seed capital from the university's president, began work in wireless technology that would result in the founding of the Federal Telegraph Company in Palo Alto. Also in 1909, Stanford researcher Charles Herrold broadcast the world's first commercial radio broadcasts from atop San Jose's Garden City Bank building. Stanford graduates William Hewlett and David Packard started a small audio-oscillator business in their garage in the 1930s and are popularly credited with fathering what we now know as Silicon Valley. In truth, the South Bay's high-tech industry was the legacy of a number of brilliant engineers and technologists associated with the university and Palo Alto business community.

After World War II, tens of thousands of veterans made San Jose their home, displacing agriculture and changing the nature of the city, a change that would become even more dramatic with the wartime technology that followed. The exigencies of war had sparked the accelerated development of vacuum tube, radio, and radar technology, and led to the founding of the Stanford Research Institute. In far off Pennsylvania, the birth of the world's first electronic computer, ENIAC, led to IBM building a$53 million disk drive plant in San Jose. Lockheed, GTE, General Electric, a more mature Hewlett-Packard and Shockley Semiconductor Laboratory(whose founder, William Shockley, had invented the transistor) soon followed. By the late 1950s the area was the center of the nation's technology industry.

Disaffected Shockley employees founded Fairchild Semiconductor, which developed the first practical integrated circuit, or silicon chip as it came to be known. In 1968, refugees of struggling Fairchild went on to form the Intel Corporation, which, in 1971, came out with the microprocessor. In quick succession, video games(starting with Atari's Pong), PostScript printing technology, Cupertino's Apple Computer, the IBM PC, and Sun Microsystems helped to make up Silicon Valley as we know it today.

Having annexed numerous surrounding communities after the war, San Jose's population, helped by the returning GIs, quickly tripled in size.(City Manager A.P. Dutch Hamann directed the annexation campaign, helped by a ruthless staff derided as"the Panzer Division.") The expenditure of valuable municipal resources in the city's rapid expansion had a profound and negative effect on the city's center. By the late'50s, it started a not-so-gradual decline into urban blight, which was reversed only in the mid-1980s under the stewardship of Mayor Thomas McEnery. An extensive and expensive redevelopment of downtown San Jose saw the construction of several new museums, the HP Pavilion(home of the San Jose Sharks hockey team), first-class hotels, and the San Jose McEnery Convention Center, along with a light rail mass transit system linking downtown San Jose with surrounding suburbs and Silicon Valley cities.

San Jose declared itself"The Capital of Silicon Valley" in the late 1980s. It had become the 11th-largest city in the country. Having put itself back together after the Loma Prieta earthquake of 1989, San Jose now faces an economic tremor. The recent downturn in the suddenly old"New Economy," with its consequent shakeout in Internet-connected businesses, has of course had its impact. But the city's economic diversity including aerospace and diversified consumer electronics technologies, industrial manufacturing, and agricultural processing and distribution, has for the most part kept it a humming industrial engine.

San Jose's ethnic diversity is even more striking, with large and vital Latino, Indian and Southeast Asian populations(who are making increasingly significant contributions to the high-tech industry). A tour through San Jose's neighborhoods reveals a rich mosaic of culture and cuisine. San Jose's museums and performing arts have become some of California's finest as the city's cultural influence rises to match its economic stature.
©

Hotel Insights

San Francisco is a city with accommodations to suit all budgets. If money is no object, theRitz Carlton,Four Seasons,Fairmont,InterContinental Mark Hopkins,St. Francis Drake,Clift, or thePalace(the latter has a killer lobby bar) are all great bets. For something a bit more unique, try a San Francisco boutique hotels: theHotel Triton has a different decorative theme in each room, while thePhoenix Hotel has a distinct retro-chic vibe with its'50s motel set-up around a courtyard pool. The city also has many well-appointed hotels in the medium-to-high price range, including theSF Marriott,Hyatt Regency, theW San Francisco, theHotel Nikko, and theSt. Regis. For more affordable accommodations that are anything but basic, try thePetit Auberge for European-style charm,Hotel des Arts for rooms featuring the works of local artists, or theHotel Diva for sleek decor that makes the price feel like a steal.

Of course, where you stay may have as much to do with your budget as your location preferences. Luckily, the neighborhoods with the highest concentration of hotels--Union Square,SoMa, andDowntown--are the most convenient to public transportation lines, many top attractions, great shopping, and marvelous dining, and also happen to be within easy walking distance from other areas of the city worth visiting.Nob Hill is a good area to stay if you've got a sizable budget(your payoff is a posh hotel with jaw-dropping views), while staying inFisherman's Wharf, despite its proximity to many family-friendly attractions, may make you feel a bit geographically isolated, as the neighborhood is all the way at the northeastern end of the city.

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Restaurants Insights

San Francisco takes food seriously--perhaps a bit too seriously, as its obsession with the latest epicurean crazes and insistence on local, humane food sources can border on elitism. However, that focus on excellence--coupled with award-winning chefs and cuisines from around the globe--makes for a city bursting with top-notch eats. Indeed, the city pleases diners of all tastes. It's probably best known for pioneering many trends in health-conscious eating, boasting some of the country's first gourmet vegan and raw foods restaurants as well as a number of wonderful farmer's markets, especially the one at theFerry Building Marketplace(which is a food palace-cum-tourist attraction in and of itself). However, SF isn't just for wheatgrass lovers. On his TV show, brazen chef Anthony Bourdain decried San Francisco as a vegetarian wasteland, but then did a

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complete 180 after discovering the city had plenty of carnivore-friendly treats to spare.

The must-try foods of San Francisco are many, so come with an appetite! First and foremost, the city's Mexican cuisine is unbeatable. You've never had a burrito until you've had one in California--after all, it's where the burrito was invented, contrary to popular belief that the dish originated in Mexico. TheMission's myriad taquerias--we especially lovePapalote, Pancho Villa, and Taqueria Cancun--turn out burritos as big as a baby's arm and several types of salsa to add kick. The city also pays tribute to its diverse Latin population with sublime Salvadorean pupusas atPanchita's 3, Peruvian delights atLimon, and the Brazilian meat Mecca ofEspetus Churrascaria. Second, San Francisco's Asian flavors beg to be sampled, from top-notch dim sum atYank Sing andTon Kiang, some of the country's best sushi(trySushi Zone,Ozumo, orKabuto A&S), fusion done to perfection at Vietnamese-inspiredSlanted Door, plus amazing Thai, Indian, and more. Third, lest we forget San Francisco's oceanside location, it's all about seafood here--particularly atFisherman's Wharf, where it pays to know where to go ahead of time(Scoma's andAlioto's will not disappoint) as many of the restaurants are overpriced and geared towards tourists. And SF's sourdough bread claim to fame? The bread itself is nothing special, but when it's enjoyed in bread-bowl form with a steaming ladle-full of clam chowder inside? Perfection on a foggy day. Last but not least, when it's time to indulge your sweet tooth, you'll find sensational ice cream at Bi-Rite Creamery(the salted caramel is to die for), gourmet chocolates at Recchiuti Confections, preciously-presented treats at Miette, and the city's best desserts, hands down, atCitizen Cake.

For those seeking the ultimate in deluxe dining,Fleur de Lys,Gary Danko,Michael Mina,Boulevard, andAcquerello are consistently touted as the city's finest. No visit to the Bay Area would be complete without a foodie detour to Berkeley and Alice Waters' famedChez Panisse, the birthplace of California cuisine. However, you don't need to splurge to enjoy a fantastic meal. San Francisco has tons of excellent restaurants in the medium price range, particularly inRussian Hill, Hayes Valley, and theMission District. Favorites in the latter part of town includeRange for top-notch new American cuisine,Delfina for rustic yet elegant Italian,Andalu for creative small plates, andCharanga for pan-Latin deliciousness. Speaking of dining neighborhoods, a word to the wise: whileNorth Beach does have a ton of Italian eateries, many of them are mediocre and cater to tourists. Stray off Columbus Avenue for higher-quality options.

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Nightlife Insights

San Francisco isn't truly a late-night city, but it certainly has exceptional nightlife to suit all tastes. For culture vultures, the city'ssymphony,opera, andballet are fantastic. While the local theater scene certainly isn't as grand as on Broadway, playgoers can enjoy nationally-touring musicals, big theatrical productions, avant-garde shows, and cabaret-meets-dinner theater atTeatro ZinZanni.

The city's thriving music scene is evident in its myriad venues. For rock, head to the legendaryFillmore,Warfield,Great American Music Hall, and indie-favoriteBottom of the Hill. Blues and funk are always on tap at theBoom Boom Room, whileYoshi's boasts phenomenal jazz.

Ready for cocktails? TheMission has a high concentration of bars that attract twenty and thirtysomethings; head toZeitgeist,Kilowatt,Laszlo,Beauty Bar, or simply walk along Valencia and Mission streets and you'll find a lively watering hole. Whilethe Financial District is typically only a drinking destination for office workers during happy hour, the advent of Rickhouse, with its multi-page menu of inventive elixirs, has put the neighborhood back on the cocktail map. Is beer your thing?Toronado in the Lower Haight offers the biggest variety of microbrews in the city. Love wine? San Francisco is surely an oenophile's city, what withNapa and Sonoma so close. To sample Wine Country's best inside the city limits, head to Bacchus in Russian Hill, Press Club in SoMa, andEOS in Cole Valley--wine bars with excellent bottles and service.

Nightclubs galore can be found inSoMa. While some are bridge-and-tunnel gathering places(like1015 Folsom), others attract solid local DJ's and nationally touring electronic acts(tryMezzanine,DNA Lounge, andShine).

TheCastro is, unsurprisingly, the epicenter of gay nightlife.Badlands and Toad Hall feature raucous dance floors, while the quieterHarvey's and Blush! Wine Bar are better bets for intimate conversation. Bernal Heights, particularly on Cortland Avenue, has several lesbian bars.

Take note: WhileNorth Beach is a popular dining destination, it's also the city's adult entertainment capital. It's a shame that one of the most culturally-rich neighborhoods gets a bit sleazy after hours, so it's best to skip out of this part of town once you've finished dinner.

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Things to Do Insights

From amazing museums to outdoor adventures aplenty, it's a challenge fitting all that San Francisco has to offer into one visit. One of the top attractions--and one you shouldn't miss--is walking across the iconicGolden Gate Bridge towards scenicMarin County. Just be sure to pack some warm layers so you don't wind up shivering in the fog like most tourists. Chinatown andNorth Beach, while also big tourist draws, are also worth visiting for their rich history and fantastic ethnic cuisine. And it may seem hokey, but riding aCable Car is a super fun way to see several neighborhoods on the tourist circuit, as two of the lines travel fromUnion Square all the way toFisherman's Wharf. Plus you get to go up and down some of the city's steepest hills without suffering muscle fatigue.

The city's many art museums--including theSF MoMA,Asian Art Museum,de Young, andYerba Buena Center--will not leave you starved for aesthetics, while theExploratorium andCalifornia Academy of Sciences will score huge points with the little ones. Speaking of family fun, there's lots to be had inFisherman's Wharf, home of many unique museums, a stellaraquarium, and the ferry departure point forAlcatraz. But take note: the area is chockablock with souvenir shops and attracts a special breed of street wanderers(don't worry, they're harmless, if not a bit eccentric). If souvenirs aren't your thing but you're in the mood for a shopping expedition, head toUnion Square for elegant department stores, malls, designer shops, and national

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chains. Cool boutiques featuring local designers can be found in Hayes Valley and theMission. Save some time to explore San Francisco's eclecticneighborhoods. From the city's hippie legacy inHaight-Ashbury, to theMission's murals and Latin flavors, to gay culture in theCastro, each area offers unique insight into what makes the city tick.

San Francisco and its environs will delight the active traveler. You don't even have to leave the city to enjoy the best of the outdoors. The expansiveGolden Gate Park offers tons of picnic spots, walking trails, and unique attractions, including two museums(thede Young and theCalifornia Academy of Sciences),Strybing Arboretum& Botanical Gardens, theConservatory of Flowers, theJapanese Tea Garden, and more. Land's End, a hiking trail that hugs the northwestern corner of the city, offers resplendent views of the ocean, bay, andGolden Gate Bridge. Several beaches, four golf courses, and many small parks add to the city's considerable green spaces. However, for Northern California nature in all its glory, head north toMarin County, where killer hikes onMt. Tam and exceptional wildlife viewing atPoint Reyes will get your blood pumping.Muir Woods' majestic redwoods are also a sight to behold, although the park attracts big crowds--get there as early in the day as possible.
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Travel Tips

San Francisco:

Getting There

Air

San Francisco International Airport(SFO)+1 650 821 8211http://www.flysfo.com/

SFO is located 13 miles from San Francisco and provides service to the following airlines:

Air Canada(+1 800 776 3000/ http://www.aircanada.ca/) Air China(+1 800 986 1985/ http://www.airchina.com.cn/en/index.jsp) Air France(+1 800 871 1366/ http://www.airfrance.com/) American Airline(+1 800 433 7300/ http://www.aa.com/) British Airways(+1 800 247 9297/ http://www.british-airways.com/) Continental(+1 800 525 0280/ http://www.continental.com/) Delta(+1 800 221 1212/ http://www.delta.com/) Southwest(+1 800 435 9792/ http://www.southwest.com/) Northwest(+1 800 225 2525/ http://www.nwa.com/) United(+1 800 241 6522/ http://www.ual.com/) US Airways(+1 800 428 4322/ http://www.usairways.com/) Virgin America(+1 877 359 8474/ http://www.virginamerica.com/) Virgin Atlantic(+1 800 862 8621/ http://www.virgin-atlantic.com/) JetBlue(+1 800 538 2583/ http://www.jetblue.com)

Airport Parking: PCA(Park'N Fly)(+1 800 763 6895/ http://www.pnfnetwork.com/)

From the Airport

Nile Expert Note:Renting a car isn't necessary to navigate San Francisco proper. The city's neighborhoods and points of interest are accessible by public transportation, and with the exception of some areas with seriously steep hills, the city is fairly walkable. Furthermore, parking is tough in most neighborhoods with ample dining and nightlife. However, if you do want to explore beyond the city--namely, Marin County, Berkeley and Oakland in the East Bay, or the Wine Country--then we recommend renting a car. Many hotels offer parking(for a price).

If you opt to not rent a car, the cab ride from SFO to San Francisco will cost$40-$50, depending on where you're going. Taking an airport shuttle is a more affordable option(and may even be free if your hotel offers complementary shuttle service), and taking BART into the city is not only cheap($8.50 one way) but also super easy. Take the AirTrain in the airport terminal to the BART stop, exit the train, buy your BART ticket, and descend to the BART platform. BART trains depart for the city about every 10-15 minutes, and the ride takes about 25 minutes. Once in San Francisco, BART makes several stops along Market Street, within easy walking distance from Downtown, SoMa, and Union Square hotels.The reverse trip from the city to the airport on BART is just as simple.© NileGuide

Shuttle: AirTrain shuttle will take you from your terminal to the rental car center 24 hours a day. It also services the parking garages and the BART station connection at the airport.

Car Rental: Alamo(+1 800 327 9633/ http://www.alamo.com/) Avis(+1 800 831 2847/ http://www.avis.com/) Budget(+1 800 527 0700/ http://www.budget.com/) Dollar(+1 800 4000/ http://www.dollar.com/) Enterprise(+1 800 325 8007/ http://www.enterprise.com/) Hertz(+1 800 654 3131/ http://www.hertz.com/) National(+1 800227 7368/ http://www.nationalcar.com/) Payless(+1 800 729 5377/ http://www.paylesscarrental.com/) Thrifty(+1 800 367 2277/ http://www.thrifty.com/) BLS Limousine Service(+1 800 843 5752/ http://www.blslimo.com/)

Shuttle: Airport Express(+1 415 775 5121/ http://www.airportexpresssf.com/) USD 14-USD 17. Bay Shuttle(+1 415 564 3400/ http://www.bayshuttle.com/) USD14 adult, USD8 child, and USD65 per van.

Public Transit: BART Rapid Rail to northern San Mateo County, San Francisco and the East Bay from the airport. The SFO BART station is located on the Departures/Ticketing Level(Level 3) of the International Terminal, on the Boarding Area G side of the terminal near the Berman Reflection Room.(http://www.bart.gov/)

Caltrain rail service between San Francisco and San Jose, with weekday commute-hour service to Gilroy. BART connects SFO to the Caltrain rail system at the Millbrae Station.(http://www.caltrain.com/)

Samtrans 24-hour service connecting SFO to San Mateo County and parts of San Francisco and Palo Alto. SamsTrans buses stop at Terminal 1, 2, and International. (http://www.samtrans.org/)

Useful Products: PocketBay- A convenient and useful credit-card sized map of San Francisco and its public transportation that fits in a wallet so that users can access the essential information on the city at all times. (http://www.pocketbaymaps.com/)

If you're internet savvy, check outhttp://www.hopstop.com/ for the quick and easy route, via public transportation, to get you where you want to go.

Train

Amtrak services two San Francisco stops daily from nationwide locations(+1 800 872 7245/ http://www.amtrak.com/).

Bus

Greyhound(+1 800 231 2222;+1 512 458 4463/ http://www.greyhound.com/) accesses San Francisco daily.

Car

San Francisco can be reached via I-80, I-280, and I-101.

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Getting Around

When you have a transportation query, you can pick up a phone and dial 511, or visit 511.org. Whether you're driving, taking public transportation, or looking into carpool options, 511 has all the information you need. It's available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Bus

The Muni Buses service the entire city(http://www.sfmuni.com/) and is San Francisco's main transportation system.

Bart rapid transit services downtown San Francisco as well as Oakland, Pittsburg, Fremont, and other Bay areas.(http://www.bart.gov/)

Ferry

For ferries to Alcatraz Island, use Alcatraz Cruises, departing from Pier 33.(+1 415 981 7625/ http://www.alcatrazcruises.com/)

Taxi

Bayshore Cab(+1 415 648 4444) Luxor Cab(+1 415 282 4141) Yellow Cab Cooperative(+1 415 282 3737) Green Cab(+1 415 626 4733)

Traffic Information

To find out city traffic information go tohttp://www.traffic.com/

If traveling overseas, take the safety precaution of registering your trip athttps://travelregistration.state.gov and for helpful, practical advice about traveling technicalities and safety standards check outhttp://travel.state.gov/.

San Jose: **Getting There**

Air

Mineta San Jose International Airport(SJC) (+1 408 501 7600/http://www.sjc.org) is located only three miles north of downtown San Jose. Its two terminals accommodate over 11 million passengers a year.

The following major airlines touchdown and take-off from its runways:

Alaskan Airlines(+1 800 252 7522/http://www.alaskaair.com) American Airline(+1 800 433 7300/http://www.aa.com) Continental(+1 800 525 0280/http://www.continental.com) Delta(+1 800 221 1212/http://www.delta.com) Frontier Airlines(+1 800 432 1359/http://www.frontierairlines.com) Horizon Air(+1 800 547 9308/http://www.horizonair.com) Mexicana(+1 800 531 7921/http://www.mexicana.com) Northwest(+1 800 225 2525/http://www.nwa.com) Southwest(+1 800 435 9792/http://www.iflyswa.com) United(+1 800 241 6522/http://www.ual.com) US Airways(+1 800 428 4322/http://www.usairways.com)

From the Airport

Car Rental: Alamo(+1 800 327 9633/http://www.alamo.com) Avis(+1 800 831 2847/http://www.avis.com) Budget(+1 800 527 0700/http://www.budget.com) Dollar(+1 800 4000/http://www.dollar.com) Enterprise(+1 800 325 8007/http://www.enterprise.com) Hertz(+1 800 654 3131/http://www.hertz.com) National(+1 800 227 7368/http://www.nationalcar.com) Payless(+1 800 729 5377/http://www.paylesscarrental.com) Thrifty(+1 800 367 2277/http://www.thrifty.com)

Taxi: Yellow Cab(+1 408 293 1234) operates out of Terminal A United Cab(+1 408 971 1111) operates out of Terminal C. Yellowcab(+1 408-245-5222/http://yellowcabca.tripod.com/index.html) Rides to downtown average USD13, while rides to San Francisco approximately cost USD100.

Ride Shares: Atlas Express(+1 888 467 0000) Bay Express Shuttle(+1 408 243 8205) San Jose Express(+1 800 773 0039) Silicon Valley Airporter(+1 800 400 2365) South and East Bay Airport Shuttle(+1 408 559 9477) Most fares average USD15.

Rail: The VTA Airport Flyer(+1 800 894 9908/http://www.vta.org) ushers passengers to the Santa Clara CalTrain Station(+1 800 660 4287/http://www.caltrain.com), which provides access to the Metro Light Rail Station, which services San Jose, as well as train service to San Francisco. The Flyer exits the airport every 10 minutes on weekdays and every 15 minutes on weekends. It operates 5:30AM-midnight daily. Rides are free.

Train

Amtrak(+1 800 872 7245/http://www.amtrak.com) chugs into San Jose's train station at 65 Cahill Street on a daily basis. The Capitol Corridor Line makes 22 daily runs between San Jose and Sacramento, California's state capital. And the impossibly scenic Coast Starlight Line hums into San Jose daily while making runs between Seattle and Los Angeles. CalTrain(+1 800 660 4287/http://www.caltrain.com) is a local train line that connects San Jose with San Francisco. Rides last 90 minutes and cost USD5.25.

Bus

Greyhound(+1 800 231 2222/http://www.greyhound.com) operates out of San Jose's bus station at 70 South Almaden Avenue. Buses continually arrive from all points of the compass.

Highway

San Jose's crisscrossing network of Interstate highways makes it extremely car accessible. Interstate 880(Nimitz Freeway) streams into San Jose from Oakland to the north and turns into Route 17 as it continues south into Santa Cruz along the coast. Highway 101(Bayshore Freeway) enters from San Francisco in a southeast direction before persisting south to Los Angeles. And Interstate 280(Junipero Serra Freeway) also wanders down from San Francisco, bending along San Jose's southern edge before connecting with Interstate 680(Sinclair Freeway) which drifts in from Concord and Walnut Creek from the northeast.

Getting Around

Car

Driving in San Jose can be a tedious process if unfamiliar with its mesh of one-way streets. Parking and then using the Downtown Area Shuttle to maneuver through San Jose is strongly recommended. The Interstates, especially the Bayshore Freeway, would frighten most NASCAR drivers during morning and afternoon rush hours. When not gummed with traffic most cars zoom along at terrific speeds and harbor no patience for out-of-town drivers cautiously seeking their mapped out exit.

Taxi

Taxi's are readily available and can be easily found at most major hotels. A small list of cab companies include: Checker Cab(+1 408 293 1199) Yellowcab(+1 408-245-5222/http://yellowcabca.tripod.com/index.html) Deluxe Cab(+1 408 441 9600) Golden Star Cab(+1 408 573 7777) Rainbow Cab(+1 408 271 9900) Veterans Cab(+1 408 946 2227) Airport Car Service(+1 650 254 1230)

Train

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The Metro Light Rail System(+1 408 321 2300) features almost 29 miles of track with 33 stops. Trains attend each station every 10 minutes on weekdays, every 15 minutes on weekends, and every 30 minutes during evenings. Tickets cost USD1.25 and are good for two hours.

San Jose's historic trolley car service operates from early April through early October. It features nine popular downtown stops such as the Civic Center, the San Jose Convention Center, and Japantown.

Bus

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority, or locally known as VTA(+1 800 894 9908/http://www.vta.org), stands as San Jose's main source for public transit. Its fleet of 520 buses services all of downtown and the surrounding area with connections to other bus lines that link with Santa Cruz and San Francisco. One-way fares start at USD1.50.

DASH(Downtown Area Shuttle) is a free service that wanders through downtown M-F 6:15a-7p. Stops include the San Jose Convention Center, San Jose State University, and the Children's Discovery Museum.

Foot

San Jose's downtown is refreshingly compact making it extremely conducive for walking. San Pedro Square, the Center for Performing Arts, the San Jose Museum of Art, the convention center and many other prime attractions are all within several blocks of each other.

Plenty of bike routes and bike trails make San Jose extremely bike happy.
©

Fun Facts

San Francisco

State: California

Country: United States

San Francisco By The Numbers:
Population: 789,600(city); 7.2 million(metropolitan)

Elevation: 128 ft/ 39 m

Average Annual Rainfall: 20.4 in/ 52 cm

Average January Temperature: 51°F/ 11°C

Average July Temperature: 60°F/ 16°C

Number of Hills in SF: 47

Quick Facts: Major Industries: Oil, Electronics, Computers, Tourism, Higher Education, Biotech

Electricity: 110 volts, 60Hz, standard two pin plugs

Time Zone: GMT-8; Pacific Standard Time(PST)

Country Dialing Code:+1

Area Code: 415& 650

Did You Know?

San Francisco is one of the most popular tourist destinations in the United States. Each year, more than 17 million visitors from around the world make the City by the Bay a destination on their vacation or business itinerary.

Irish Coffee was invented in San Francisco.
©

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