# Things to Do in San Francisco: The Ultimate Local's Guide

Alright, so you're heading to San Francisco (or thinking about it), and you're wondering—what the heck should I actually do there? Not just the stuff every tourist blog regurgitates, but the real-deal, can't-miss, lowkey legendary stuff. I've been there, done that, and yep—I've eaten way too much sourdough bread in the name of research. So let's talk about the best **things to do in San Francisco** without making you feel like you're stuck on a school field trip.

## **Explore Fisherman's Wharf (But Don't Linger Too Long)**

Okay, so yes—**Fisherman's Wharf** is basically Tourist Central, and normally I'd tell you to run. But there *are* a few gems worth checking out before you roll your eyes and move on.

### What's Worth Your Time:

- **Boudin Bakery** Their fresh sourdough bread bowls? Absolutely worth the carbs.
- Sea lions at Pier 39 Loud, smelly, and 100% entertaining. Kinda like your cousin's toddler.
- Musee Mecanique A vintage arcade museum filled with creepy old coin-op games that are weirdly addictive.

Just don't spend your whole day here, or you'll start pricing "I Love SF" hoodies unironically.

## Just Have Fun by Riding a Cable Car

I know. Riding a cable car sounds cheesy. But trust me, hanging onto the side while climbing a hill like you're in a '50s movie? **Peak San Francisco vibes**.

## **Quick Tips:**

- Take the **Powell-Hyde line** for the best views.
- Try riding early in the morning to avoid the mile-long tourist lines.
- Pro tip: Sit on the *right* side for photo-worthy views of the bay.

And FYI—no, it's not just a "trolley." Locals will roll their eyes at that.

## Golden Gate Park: Way More Than a Pretty Walk

**Golden Gate Park** is enormous—like, bigger than Central Park enormous. And it's got *way* more going on than just grass and trees.

#### Don't Miss:

• **de Young Museum** – Modern art with a killer observation tower.

- **Japanese Tea Garden** Cute bridges, koi ponds, and overpriced tea (but the vibes are immaculate).
- **Botanical Gardens** Yes, I got lost in here for an hour, and no, I'm not ashamed.

You could legit spend the whole day here and not even notice your phone's battery is at 3%.

### **Visit Alcatraz (And Get the Audio Tour, Seriously)**

This one? Totally lives up to the hype. Alcatraz Island is creepy, fascinating, and a little haunting. IMO, the best part is the self-guided audio tour narrated by former guards and prisoners. It's so detailed you'll probably feel like you're the one doing time.

### **Quick Pointers:**

- Book your tickets in advance—they sell out fast.
- Bring a jacket. It's windy. Like, slap-your-face windy.
- The night tour is next-level spooky (in the best way).

### Take in the Views from Twin Peaks

Ever dreamed of catching epic views without having to climb a mountain like Everest? **Twin Peaks totally delivers.** 

- Drive up, or hike if you're feeling spicy.
- Best views? Right before sunset. Get that golden hour glow, baby.
- Watch your hat—it gets *wild* windy up there.

It's basically nature's version of a drone shot, minus the risk of crashing into a seagull.

### **Wander the Mission District (Come Hungry)**

The Mission isn't just a neighborhood—it's a vibe. Graffiti-covered alleys, vintage shops, and some of the best Mexican food north of the border.

### **Top Picks:**

- La Taqueria Possibly the best burrito of your life. No joke.
- Clarion Alley Street art that'll make you stop, snap pics, and maybe question capitalism.
- Mission Dolores Park Grab a snack, find a sunny spot, and people-watch like a pro.

FYI: This is also where you'll meet the most stylish dogs in SF. Not even kidding.

## **Check Out Chinatown (It's Way More Than Just Dim Sum)**

San Francisco's Chinatown is the oldest in North America, and honestly? It's a sensory overload in the best possible way.

#### **Must-Dos:**

- Golden Gate Fortune Cookie Factory You get to see how they're made *and* taste the broken ones. Win-win.
- **Browse the herbal shops** Warning: some of the stuff smells like old gym socks. But hey, it might cure your hangover?

### **Let Your Inner Hipster Shine in Haight-Ashbury**

This is the birthplace of the '60s counterculture, and let's be real—it's still got some *major* flower power energy. Peace signs everywhere. Patchouli in the air. You get the idea.

### **Highlights:**

- **Vintage clothing shops** Find that ironic tee or '90s jacket you've always "accidentally" wanted.
- **Amoeba Music** Giant record store = music lover's paradise.
- Cool cafes where you can overpay for a latte but feel superior doing it.

Honestly? It's weird and wonderful, and you'll definitely leave with a story.

### Lombard Street: The Zig-Zaggiest of Them All

Lombard Street is one of those things you *have* to see just to say you did. Is it a little silly? Absolutely. But watching cars make tight turns like they're playing Mario Kart? Never gets old.

#### **Best View:**

Walk up the steps from the bottom for the best photo ops—and a mild calf workout.

Pro tip: Don't drive down it unless you enjoy brake anxiety.

# **Craving Nature? Head to Lands End**

Want gorgeous coastal views without driving out to Big Sur? Lands End has your back.

#### What Makes It Awesome:

- The trail is super walkable, but wear comfy shoes.
- Sutro Baths ruins Hauntingly cool and kinda romantic (in a post-apocalyptic way).
- Views of the Golden Gate Bridge that'll make your IG feed jealous.

It's a local fave for a reason—and no, you don't need hiking boots the size of a Prius to enjoy it.

# Final Thoughts: San Francisco Isn't Just a City—It's a Whole Personality

If you're still asking yourself, "What should I do in San Francisco?"—honestly, just start walking. This city oozes character from every crooked street corner, misty hilltop, and overpriced café. One minute you're sipping a turmeric latte in a tech bro cafe, the next you're staring at Alcatraz wondering what your Wi-Fi password is.

So whether you're into nature, food, history, or just love a good Instagram backdrop, San Francisco's got something weird and wonderful for you. Just make sure you bring layers, comfy shoes, and maybe—just maybe—skip the Segway tour.