

Visiting San Francisco on a Budget

❖ San Francisco Neighborhoods

There is such a variety of neighborhoods and lifestyles to see. Take a look at this map: <http://www.onlyinsanfrancisco.com/neighborhoods/> to check out the various SF neighborhoods and see what interests you.

❖ Food & Groceries

San Francisco food costs are generally higher than many other cities (except perhaps New York and other like cities), so factor that into your budget, no matter how you go for food. Nearby grocery, pharmacies and fast food options: <http://tinyurl.com/5pny75>

❖ Sightseeing & Transportation

SF has a great public transportation system that includes the MUNI and BART. To get schedules, plan out a route to your destination. http://tripplanner.transit.511.org/mtc/XSLT_TRIP_REQUEST2?language=en

1. SF WATERFRONT

The waterfront includes a variety of more tourist-oriented, but fun and enjoyable (even for this bay area raised girl!) experiences. Personally, I love going to Pier 39 and walking around, seeing the seals lounging nearby, seeing the street artists and vendors. Fisherman's Wharf, Pier 39 and Ghiradelli Square are some of the most popular sights to see. Expect crowds, but that's part of the fun. (Where else can you "take a picture with a freak?")

Their website: <http://www.pier39.com/>

A PDF map of the pier (Print this out, take with you, then you won't have to buy one):

http://www.pier39.com/UserFiles/File/PIER39_web_directory_2008.pdf

2. Palace of Fine Arts

http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Image:Palace_of_fine_arts.jpg

3. Golden Gate Park

<http://www.sfgate.com/traveler/guide/sf/neighborhoods/ggpark.shtml>

See a visual interactive map here:

<http://www.lighttight.com/GGP/GGPmain.html>

<http://www.sftravel.com/ggpark.html>

The park is over 1000 acres and offered a ton of sites and things to see. Includes: CA Academy of Sciences
Conservatory of Flowers (\$5.00 cost to get in)
Garden of Shakespeare's Flowers

Japanese Tea Garden
M.H. de Young Museum
SF Botanical Garden at Strybing Arboretum

(Please note cars are not allowed on Sundays for some time, so plan to walk or bike.)

4. City Hall

The city hall dome is a replica of the one crowning St. Peter's Basilica. (And Joe Dimaggio and Marilyn Monroe were married there.)

5. Cliff House

Spectacular ocean views, sea lions, beach walks. They offer a Bistro for the more budget-minded.

6. Yerba Buena Gardens - a free excursion, and within walking distance of the hotel

<http://www.ybgf.org/GetHere.php>

7. City Lights Booksellers

Famous bookstore founded and still owned by Beat Generation poet Lawrence Ferlinghetti.

<http://www.citylights.com/>

8. The Haas-Lilienthal House

Would you like to see a true SF Queen Anne-style home?

This house was built in 1886, and offers tours. Tours for this are \$8.00 per person, and open on Sundays, Saturdays and Wednesdays.

<http://www.sfheritage.org/house.html#tours>

9. Fort Point National Historic Site (vantage point that overlooks the Golden Gate bridge. PERFECT for pic opps.)

<http://www.nps.gov/fopo/> || By public transportation, to get there:

By public transit, San Francisco Muni 28 and 29 bus routes stop at bridge toll plaza. Follow trail signs northeast of plaza area to Fort Point at base of bluffs.

- Strybing Arboretum/SF Botanical Garden, located in Golden Gate Park

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

10. Cable Car Museum

1201 Mason Street

Located at Mason Street at Washington

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

*the best way to get here is Cable Car. Street parking is next to impossible and the nearest parking lots are a distance away. You can also take MUNI - bus lines 1 and 30.

11. The Gold Rush Trail

Walk the gold rush trail through some of SF's neighborhoods:

<http://www.goldrushtrail.org/walkyer.html>

❖ Coupons & Passes

Here is a website that offers downloadable PDFs. Check them out and print out the pages you think you might want - every dollar helps when you're on a budget and these offer anywhere from \$1.00 off to \$5.00 off.

<http://www.sanfranciscoonline.com/coupons.html>

<http://www.mapwest.com/coupon/>

GuideYou.com SF Sightseeing Tour \$8.00 off

http://www.guideyou.com/prod_view.php?prod_idx=6

This offers free hotel pick up and drop off, and takes you through the famous landmarks in SF. If you order online, it's \$39.00 - an \$8.00 savings.

Splurging on a few attractions is made a little more feasible with a few of the available passes that can help. Get the most bang for your buck with some of these passes:

The SF CITYPASS: This is a great cost saver. It offers tickets to SF Attractions plus a seven day pass for MUNI and the Cable Cars for \$54.00.

<http://www.citypass.com/city/sanfrancisco.html?id=3mD8d4Af>

The attractions included are: Blue & Gold Fleet Bay Cruise, Aquarium of the Bay, SFMOMA, The Legion of Honor/de Young Museum, CA Academy of Sciences & Steinhart Aquarium. An option ticket gives you the choice between the Exploratorium OR Asian Art Museum. Plus other discounts and goodies.

Another multi-attraction/discounted pass: The GO SF CARD

<http://www.gosanfranciscocard.com/>

WHARFPASS: If you're planning to spend time at Fisherman's Wharf, consider getting a WharfPass. It costs \$55, and offers a selection of attractions, cruises and other items for your money.

<http://www.wharfpass.com/>

CityStoryWalks: This is actually an mp3 option that you can download for \$19.99 to walk you through 14 of the most interesting sites in the city. It's a cost effective (and exercise worthy!) way of seeing the city at your own pace in your own time.

<http://www.citystorywalks.com/SanFranciscoWalkingTour.php>

❖ Maps

Buying maps to get around can add up, so here are some free PDF version maps you can download (as opposed to buying them when you get there). You can download individual ones or you can download all of them in the ZIP file here:

<http://www.jeannieruesch.com/downloads/sfmaps.zip>

Map of BART routes and locations (from BART)

http://www.jeannieruesch.com/downloads/BART_Map.pdf

Map of Fisherman's Wharf (by BayCityGuide.com)

http://www.jeannieruesch.com/downloads/fishermans_wharf_map.pdf

Great map of the area surrounding the hotel. Includes Union Square, GG Park, cable Car routes, points of interest, shopping, theaters, restaurants, etc... Good to have! (BayCityGuide.com)

http://www.jeannieruesch.com/downloads/ggpark_Union_Square_map.pdf

Map of Golden Gate Park

<http://www.jeannieruesch.com/downloads/GGMap.pdf>

Map of Pier 39, it's sights, restaurants and shops (Pier 39)

http://www.jeannieruesch.com/downloads/PIER39_web_directory_2008.pdf

A Map of San Francisco (BayCityGuide.com)

http://www.jeannieruesch.com/downloads/San_Francisco_Map.pdf

A Map of the MUNI routes and directions (BayCityGuide.com)

http://www.jeannieruesch.com/downloads/San_Francisco_Muni_Bus_Map.pdf

As you can tell, most of these I got from BayCityGuide.com - it's a great resource, so check it out if you can.