



## San Francisco, California



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### The City by the Bay

**W**ith foreign-born residents making up more than 35 percent of the population, San Francisco represents a unique blend of the world's cultures.

From the waterfront marketplaces of Fisherman's Wharf and the gelato parlors of North Beach to the Victorian homes of Castro and the cable cars of Nob Hill, San Francisco's neighborhoods showcase a diversity of people, cultures and activities.

### Then and Now

Spanish colonists founded San Francisco on the peninsula

between the Pacific Ocean and San Francisco Bay in 1776, but the "City by the Bay" really burgeoned in 1849, when the California Gold Rush enticed treasure seekers from around the world. In that year alone, the city's population grew from 1,000 to 25,000.

In 1906, an earthquake and subsequent fires devastated the city, destroying more than 80 percent. Relying on the strong financial industries established during the Gold Rush, San Francisco recovered quickly. The city reemerged to host the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition. The

exposition inspired the construction of the Palace of Fine Arts, one of San Francisco's top tourist attractions.

City history includes these other milestones:

1869 — Completion of the first U.S. transcontinental railroad connected San Francisco to the U.S. East Coast and solidified the city's role as a commercial hub.

1873 — The first cable cars carried passengers up Clay Street and the city's many notorious hills. Today, San Francisco maintains the world's last manually operated cable car system.

1937 — Upon completion, the Golden Gate Bridge spanned the opening of San Francisco Bay into the Pacific Ocean. The Golden Gate is considered one of the Wonders of the Modern World, a feat of civil engineering, and an internationally recognized symbol of San Francisco.

1967 — The “Summer of Love,” a counterculture movement of the 1960s that emphasized personal freedom and rejected consumerism, arrived in San Francisco. The movement still imparts a liberal flavor to San Francisco.

1984 — San Francisco hosted the Democratic National Convention. Delegates nominated New York Representative Geraldine Ferraro as the first female major party candidate for the vice presidency.



San Francisco's “Painted Ladies” add color to the city’s skyline. ©Shutterstock

2006 — Twitter, the popular micro-blogging website, was launched. Headquartered in San Francisco, the tech startup bolsters the city’s credentials as a destination for Internet companies.

**Art, Animals and Alcatraz**

San Francisco is one of America’s most diverse cities — and that diversity extends beyond the ethnic origins of the city’s people. San Francisco offers a range of activities as colorful as its neighborhoods.

The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art boasts the West Coast’s first collection of modern and contemporary art, along with thought-provoking exhibitions.

The city’s Aquarium of the Bay contains more than 20,000 marine animals and features a fish’s-eye view of the surrounding waters.

Embark on a ferry ride to Alcatraz, the famous San Francisco island where such infamous criminals as Al Capone and George “Machine Gun” Kelly were imprisoned. The island

also has a lighthouse, a historic military fort and nesting seabirds.

Visitors to Pier 39 can enjoy shopping, sea lion watching and breathtaking views of San Francisco Bay, the Golden Gate Bridge and Alcatraz. The setting inspired Otis Redding’s hit song “Sitting on the Dock of the Bay.”

Enjoy a picnic in Alamo Square, the park overlooking San Francisco’s “Painted Ladies.” The ladies are not actually women, but a row of Victorian houses painted in vibrant colors.

The area just beyond San Francisco also has much to offer. The wineries of Napa Valley, high-tech entrepreneurs of Silicon Valley, and the mountains of Yosemite National Park are all a short drive away from the “City by the Bay.”

**The People**

More than 800,000 people live in San Francisco’s 122 square kilometers, making it the second most densely populated major U.S. city. San Francisco also has one of the largest immigrant populations in the United States.

**The Land**

Situated on a famously hilly peninsula, San Francisco shares boundaries with the Pacific Ocean and San Francisco Bay.

**The Weather**

San Francisco experiences mild temperatures all year long. On average, the temperature in San Francisco does not exceed 24 degrees Celsius more than 28 days a year.

