

## Hotels & Hostels

Want more sleeping recommendations than we could ever pack into this little ol' book? Craving more detail – including extended reviews and photographs? Want to read reviews by other travelers and be able to post your own? Just make your way over to [lonelyplanet.com/hotels](https://lonelyplanet.com/hotels) and check out our thorough list of independent reviews, then reserve your room simply and securely.

# SLEEPING

## top picks

- **Hotel Bohème** (p257)
- **Hotel Vitale** (p259)
- **Hotel Triton** (p253)
- **Orchard Garden Hotel** (p253)
- **Hotel des Arts** (p255)

# SLEEPING

San Francisco has many convention hotels, several good four-stars with predictable comforts, and three palatial five-stars with top-flight luxuries. But it's the unexpected gems that stand out. This is the birthplace of the boutique hotel, and you'll find elegant Victorians on neighborhood side streets, artsy hotels with intimate bars, and small inns that smell of freshly baked cookies. The broadest hotel selection is Downtown, near Union Square, conveniently near all public transportation and within walking distance of many major sights, but the area is densely urban and dedicated to chain-store shopping, theaters and restaurants. At nighttime it's dead. Union Square also abuts the Tenderloin on its southwest side, a 'hood of drug-addled panhandlers – though it's also home to artists, who lend an up-and-coming vibe to the grit. (The worst area extends roughly three blocks in all directions from Eddy and Jones Sts.) Staying in other districts provides a glimpse of how the locals live. We particularly like the Cali-chic low-rise Marina, the gay-ghetto Castro and the Latino-meets-hipster Mission.

Tipping housekeepers in US hotels is standard practice; leave a couple of dollars on your pillow each morning, and be guaranteed excellent housekeeping service.

All lodging in San Francisco is by definition gay-friendly, but also check our chapter devoted to GLBT San Francisco (p248).

If you're planning on staying for a few months, subletting an apartment or room is a good way to go. Scan the classified ads on [Craigslist](http://www.craigslist.org) ([www.craigslist.org](http://www.craigslist.org)).

## RESERVATIONS

Hotels routinely overbook, especially when there's a convention in town. 'City-wide sellouts' happen several times a year. If you haven't chosen dates for your trip, check the SF Convention & Visitors Bureau's convention calendar ([www.sfcvb.org/convention/calendar.asp](http://www.sfcvb.org/convention/calendar.asp)), which shows the expected bed count each convention requires. The city has a total of 33,000 rooms; if the calendar says a convention (such as the annual Oracle meeting) will require over 10,000 beds, choose other dates or expect to pay a premium.

Always reconfirm your reservation the day of arrival, and ask if the hotel is oversold. If

it is, make clear that you don't want to be 'walked.' ('Walking a guest' means that when the hotel is oversold, management books you into another hotel and pays your first-night's stay at the other hotel, which may be as far away as the airport or Oakland.) If you're planning to arrive after 4pm, guarantee with a credit card or your reservation may automatically cancel. Ask about the hotel's cancellation policy, and if you do cancel, get the cancellation code, which ensures that the agent has properly entered your cancellation into the reservations system. Finally, get the names of the people you speak with on the telephone; not only will this bolster your

## RESERVATION SERVICES & DISCOUNTS

Hotel-reservation services provide a convenient way to shop for a hotel room, simplifying what would otherwise require multiple phone calls. Some also serve as clearinghouses for hotel bookings during low-occupancy periods, when they can offer lower rates than the hotel would quote. If you're flexible, you can save big bucks on rooms that would otherwise blow your budget. Services are free to customers, but prepayment is sometimes required and cancellation fees may apply.

**Hostels.com** ([www.hostels.com](http://www.hostels.com)) General information about hostels in San Francisco and elsewhere, plus a link to online reservations.

**Priceline** ([www.priceline.com](http://www.priceline.com)) A clearinghouse for upscale lodging; you can often find a room for as little as \$75 a night in highly rated Union Square hotels. You don't get to choose the hotel, though.

**Topaz Hotel Services** (☎ 510-628-4450, 800-677-1570; [www.hotelres.com](http://www.hotelres.com)) A locally based booking agent that can get you great prices in the city or elsewhere in the Bay Area and Wine Country.

**www.bbsf.com** Find Bay Area B&Bs and great deals.