

The Marina, Fisherman's Wharf & the Piers

THE PRESIDIO | FORT MASON | COW HOLLOW

Neighborhood Top Five

- 1 Strolling across the **Golden Gate Bridge** (p59) just as the fog clears, revealing magnificent views of downtown San Francisco and sailboats plying the waves below.
- 2 Feeling cold winds blow through **Alcatraz** (p54) and imagining the misery of prison life.
- 3 Giggling at the shenanigans of braying and barking sea lions at **Pier 39** (p56).
- 4 Poking into hidden courtyards and finding indie boutiques along **Union St** (p71).
- 5 Marveling at 19th-century arcade games at the **Musée Mécanique** (p57).



For more detail of this area, see Map p315, p317 and p318 →

Explore the Marina, Fisherman's Wharf & the Piers

Fisherman's Wharf is the epicenter of tourism in San Francisco; the few remaining fishermen moor their boats around Pier 45. Locals don't usually visit the Wharf. The area gets packed by early afternoon: the earlier you come, the better – unless you don't mind strolling through crowds, in which case afternoon is better. Summertime fog usually clears by midday (if it clears at all), so save the Golden Gate Bridge for the early afternoon – but be forewarned that afternoon fog blows in around 4pm. Carry a jacket and don't wear shorts, unless you're here during the rare heat wave (locals spot the tourists by their short pants). Most people walk far more than they expect to when exploring the waterfront, so wear comfortable shoes and sunscreen. Cow Hollow and the Marina have good shopping, bars and restaurants. Explore these areas later in the day, after working hours but while shops are still open, when the busy sidewalks provide a glimpse of how San Franciscans entertain themselves near the waterfront.

Local Life

- ➔ **Nature walks** San Franciscans love the outdoors – joggers and dog walkers flock to the waterfront trails at Crissy Field (p60) and the wooded hills of the Presidio for ocean breezes and knockout views.
- ➔ **Barhopping** The Marina District bars on Fillmore St, from Union St to Chestnut St, are ground zero for party-girl sorority sisters and the jocks who love them. Not all locals approve.
- ➔ **City views** For dramatic views of Fisherman's Wharf and the San Francisco skyline – and a break from the crowds – hop on a ferry at Pier 39.

Getting There & Away

- ➔ **Streetcar** Historic F Market streetcars run along Market St, then up the Embarcadero waterfront to Fisherman's Wharf.
- ➔ **Cable car** The Powell-Hyde and Powell-Mason lines run up Powell St to the Wharf; the Mason line is quicker, but the hills are better on the Hyde line.
- ➔ **Bus** Major routes to the Wharf and/or the Marina from downtown include the 19, 30, 47 and 49.
- ➔ **Parking** At the Wharf, there are garages at Pier 39 and Ghiradelli Square (enter on Beach St, between Larkin and Polk Sts). At the Marina, there's parking at Crissy Field and Fort Mason. The Presidio is the only place it's easy to park – and free.

Lonely Planet's Top Tip

To gain breathing room from the tourist crowds, head west of Ghiradelli Square. Make your way to the northernmost end of Van Ness Ave, then cut west along the waterfront pedestrian–bicyclist path, through Fort Mason to the Marina Green. Aim for the bobbing masts of the yacht club, along Marina Blvd, stopping to explore piers jutting into the bay, but keeping your eye on the prize: the Golden Gate Bridge.

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Gary Danko (p66)
- ➔ Greens (p68)
- ➔ A16 (p68)
- ➔ Betelnut (p68)
- ➔ Friday night food trucks (p69)

For reviews, see p66 ➔

Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Buena Vista Cafe (p70)
- ➔ Pier 23 (p70)
- ➔ Betelnut (p68)
- ➔ Lou's Pier 47 (p70)
- ➔ California Wine Merchant (p70)

For reviews, see p70 ➔

Best for Waterfront Vistas

- ➔ Golden Gate Bridge (p59)
- ➔ Warming Hut (p69)
- ➔ Crissy Field (p60)
- ➔ San Francisco Municipal pier at Aquatic Park (p58)
- ➔ Sea lions at Pier 39 (p56)