

The Hills & Japantown

PACIFIC HEIGHTS | RUSSIAN HILL | NOB HILL

Neighborhood Top Five

- 1 Stepping off the Powell-Hyde cable car atop twisty **Lombard St** (p117) and taking in the spectacular hilltop vistas.
- 2 Marveling at afternoon fog blowing through the Golden Gate, from atop **Sterling Park** (p119).
- 3 Soaking naked in silence in the communal Japanese baths at **Kabuki Springs & Spa** (p129).
- 4 Eating sushi and catching a live band at **Yoshi's** (p125).
- 5 Shopping for Japanimé and quirky ephemera at the vintage-'60s **Japan Center** (p118).



For more detail of this area, see Map p326 and p328 →

Lonely Planet's Top Tip

Cable cars serve Russian and Nob Hills, but the Powell St lines have notoriously long waits at their terminuses. Alternatively take the California St line, which rarely has queues. Ride west from the foot of Market St to Van Ness Ave, then walk to Pacific Heights and Japantown; but instead of taking California St west of Van Ness, walk along Sacramento St (one block north of California) – it passes Lafayette Park.

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Acquerello (p123)
- ➔ Swan Oyster Depot (p123)
- ➔ Tatakai (p122)
- ➔ Out the Door (p122)
- ➔ Pizzeria Delfina (p123)

For reviews, see p122 ➔

Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Tonga Room (p125)
- ➔ Amélie (p125)
- ➔ Butterfly Bar (p124)
- ➔ 1300 on Fillmore (p124)
- ➔ Bigfoot Lodge (p125)

For reviews, see p124 ➔

Best Places for Live Music

- ➔ Yoshi's (p125)
- ➔ Boom Boom Room (p126)
- ➔ Fillmore Auditorium (p125)
- ➔ Rasella's (p126)
- ➔ Sheba Piano Lounge (p125)

For reviews, see p125 ➔

Explore the Hills & Japantown

Tackle Japantown and Pacific Heights at the same time. The neighborhoods are immediately adjacent to each other and connect via Fillmore St. Start at the intersection of Geary Blvd and Fillmore St, work your way through Japantown, then head north on Fillmore St to window-shop boutiques. Continue uphill until the street becomes residential, around Jackson St, then head west a block to Alta Plaza Park for spectacular hilltop city views – there's a fantastic playground here, too.

Russian and Nob Hills are likewise adjacent to each other, but because of their ultra-steep gradients, they're not as easy to explore on foot. Fortunately they're both accessible via cable car. Nob Hill stands between downtown and Chinatown; Russian Hill abuts Fisherman's Wharf and North Beach. Consider combining the hills with one of these other neighborhoods. Polk St is the main shopping and nightlife strip near Russian Hill; Fillmore St in Pacific Heights is swankier.

Local Life

➔ **Jazz** The city's top jazz clubs (p125) lie south of Geary St, along Fillmore St; wander between piano bars and jazz clubs before deciding which you like best.

➔ **Cinema** Locals come to Japantown for dinner and a movie at Sundance Kabuki Cinema (p126), which serves food and wine in its main theater.

➔ **Shopping** Most visitors only see the inside of the mall at Japan Center (p118), but there's also shopping *outside* the mall, along Post St, from Webster St to Laguna St.

➔ **Canines** Dog lovers flock to Alta Plaza Park for a pug parade on the first Sunday of the month, from 1pm to 4pm – only in San Francisco.

Getting There & Away

➔ **Bus** The 1, 2, 3 and 38 buses connect downtown with Japantown and Pacific Heights; the 22 connects Japantown and Pacific Heights with the Marina and the Mission. Bus 10 links Russian and Nob Hills with Pacific Heights. Bus 27 runs from downtown to Nob Hill. Buses 41 and 45 run from downtown to Russian Hill.

➔ **Cable car** The Powell-Hyde cable car serves Russian and Nob Hills; the Powell-Mason line serves Nob Hill; and the California St line runs between downtown, Nob Hill and the easternmost edge of Pacific Heights.

➔ **Parking** Street parking is hard to find, but possible. Find garages at Japan Center on Fillmore St (between Geary and Post Sts) and Post St (between Webster and Buchanan Sts).