



Insiders Guide to **San Francisco** for DF25



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Surviving Dreamforce

Before COVID, attendance peaked at 170,000 people. It was madness. It is now down to 50,000. But this can still be a bit much. So here are some hard-earned lessons from those of us who have been attending and presenting at Dreamforce since 2007.

Survive & thrive

Even the most extroverted person will find conferences and exhibitions a little overwhelming. But worse than that, the scale of any event means it is easy to completely fail to achieve anything meaningful. So here are some simple survival tips:

Objectives: What are you trying to achieve; research, education, contacts? Don't set too high a bar. It is only a few days and you will be maxed out for the entire time.

Hotel and transport: Every city hotel jacks up their prices so you will probably need to find a hotel which is a distance away. The BART (underground) is very efficient and runs late into the night so you can stay a reasonable distance outside the city center. In contrast, the last ferries across to the north bay (Tiburon and Marin) are 8pm so not ideal for any late party, and Uber/taxis surge pricing can be extortionate. There is ample parking under

most buildings. And if you get in before 9am you get a discounted day rate. And the traffic is not too bad. So hiring a car and driving in from a cheaper hotel could be an option.

Sessions: With so many sessions on offer you shouldn't wait until you get to the event to decide. If the sessions are in different hotels/venues which will require a walk between them, being able to get into back-to-back sessions is impossible. Add in the fact that the most popular sessions get overbooked, you need to register and get there early. Don't try to do too many. Some/most will be available on video after the event.

Pre-arranged meetings: This may be the perfect time to catch up with customers, partners or suppliers as you are both there. Scheduling and finding a quiet place to meet is always going to be a challenge. Also, be selective about the meetings you accept.



Parties: Salesforce, SIS and ISVs run parties. Expect them all to be overbooked, but everyone double and triple books themselves!!! So you can probably get it if you get there early or are prepared to stand in line. SalesforceBen has a list of parties on their website.

Dreamfest: This is a fun concert, but expect to spend a lot of time waiting for the free transport to the venue - and even longer getting back. This year it is at the Chase Center which is a long walk or an expensive taxi to / from the Moscone area. Salesforce puts on coaches, but there will be long lines to get on them.

Work back at the office: Try and make sure that you are not trying to hold down the day job at the same time. You will not make the most of the event and you will compromise the day job.

Packing

Only 2 types of luggage - hand luggage and lost luggage: Travel light so you don't need to check luggage and risk it being lost by the airline, adding extra levels of stress.

Clothes and shoes: Dress codes vary massively in San Francisco, from t-shirts and jeans to business attire – but there are rarely suits. If the event is long, or spread over different venues, you'll need to wear something comfortable, but something that makes you feel strong, confident and self-assured. You'll need comfortable shoes.

Technology: You are probably going to use your phone for accessing the conference app, maps and email, so have an external USB charger as you will not be able to find a wall outlet. How are you taking notes? If it is a laptop, then will it have enough charge, and what will you do with it at the party?

Power strip: There are NEVER enough outlets to charge laptops and phones. Take a powerstrip and plug it into the wall. Plug your laptop into one outlet and suddenly you will have 5 new friends all wanting to plug in.

Headache remedy: You may end up with a headache; hours on your feet, constantly talking to people, air-conditioning and partying. What do you use or need?

Pacing yourself

Take breaks: This is a marathon at sprint speed. But pace yourself. Don't try and do or see too much. Give yourself some time between sessions to be able to think, absorb and reflect on what you've just heard. If you leave it until later all the sessions will blur into each other.

Energy: What do you need to do to keep your energy up? Make sure you arrive refreshed. Make sure you sleep enough. Try to avoid the massive amounts of junk food that is on offer.

Snacks: What snacks help you stay alert and energized? 14 cups of coffee, 2 cans of Coke and 4 chocolate chip cookies is probably NOT the right answer!!!

Safe place: Find yourself somewhere that you can go to so you can sit, think, re-energize. You may need somewhere to escape the madding crowd. The W Hotel opposite the conference venue is busy, but try upstairs. Also look out for the "open spaces" that are in various building lobbies where anyone can sit and work using the free wi-fi. These are listed later in this book.



20 rules for networking

1 Know why you're there.

Is it for the social side, to develop sales or to raise your profile? Then ask the question *"Can I achieve that here?"*

2 What is your Elevator Pitch?

Mine is *"Hi, I'm Ian, CEO of Elements.cloud. For consultants we are the "Xray scanner" for an org so that you can do org analysis in a fraction of the time. For customers, we provide you with intelligence about your business and org so you can make changes faster and with confidence."*

3 Set low expectations.

Aim to get NO MORE THAN 5 business cards or useful / relevant contacts.

4 Treat every interaction as a "Conversation of Possibilities".

Go with an open mind, not a targeted sales pitch.

5 Leave residual energy, give more than you take.

Good Karma as *@guykawasaki* would say.

6 Be interested in them, ask open questions.

Rather than firehose them with your product info. Open questions start with Who, Why, What, When, How...

7 Getting rid of someone.

Introduce to someone else, or say *"I need to move on"*, or go to the bathroom.

8 If you know nobody in the room.

Take your time and look around, look at groups for opening, join but don't stop the conversation, introduce yourself in a FEW SHORT WORDS – make an impression.

9 Speak to speakers.

At the end of sessions go and ask the speakers a question. They are expecting it. They may seem daunting, but they are just people.

10 3-foot rule.

If anyone is within 3 feet, smile, make eye contact and strike up a conversation.
Start with open questions.

11 Get off your phone.

No-one will talk to you if you hide in your phone.

12 Get to events super early.

You can talk to the organizer who can then introduce you to people as they arrive.
Arrive late and the whole room seems to be talking to someone.

13 Pick odd numbers of people in a group.

Then someone will break off and talk to you. It is very difficult to break into a conversation with 2 people, particularly in a loud room.

14 Prepare talking points.

Think beforehand what icebreakers or topics of conversation you could use. Don't start conversations with questions that can be answered by a simple Yes or No, or simple statements – e.g. *"I see you are from Dell"* If nothing else, then use *"How many Dreamforce's have you been to?"*

15 Take their card.

If you want them to take your card, ask for theirs.

16 Take a pen.

Take a pen to write notes on the back of their card.

17 Offer to send them something.

Find a reason to start the connection. Email an interesting blog link, a restaurant recommendation, a book summary, BUT NOT YOUR SALES DECK.

18 FOLLOW UP.

Do what you said you would. SO FEW PEOPLE DO. This one simple act will make you stand out.

19 Enjoy the experience, don't focus on the results.

You have to kiss a lot of frogs to find the princes.

20 You get better with practice.

Like any muscle it gets stronger the more it is used.

Scared? It's ok

There is a difference between alone and lonely. You can be lonely in a group of 50,000 people. If you are there on your own it can feel very, very lonely. Everyone else seems to be talking to someone and having a great time. The way to change that is to start a conversation with someone.

Not every conversation will flow: Sometimes it just doesn't work. Start with open questions. Maybe they are tired. Maybe they are shy. Maybe they are scared. So close it off and move on. Next...

It's ok to leave: If you are tired, feel massively out of place, are struggling to engage, then leave. But only once you have tried.

And stop staring at your phone.

Every event experience is different

There are several different groups who attend events; existing customers, potential customers, potential partners (consulting and app builders), existing partners, analysts, and exhibitors.

What makes a great event is very different for each group. But one thing they have in common is that attending an event is not a cheap experience. The ticket price, travel, cost of hotels with their inflated prices, and the time spent away from the office all adds up.

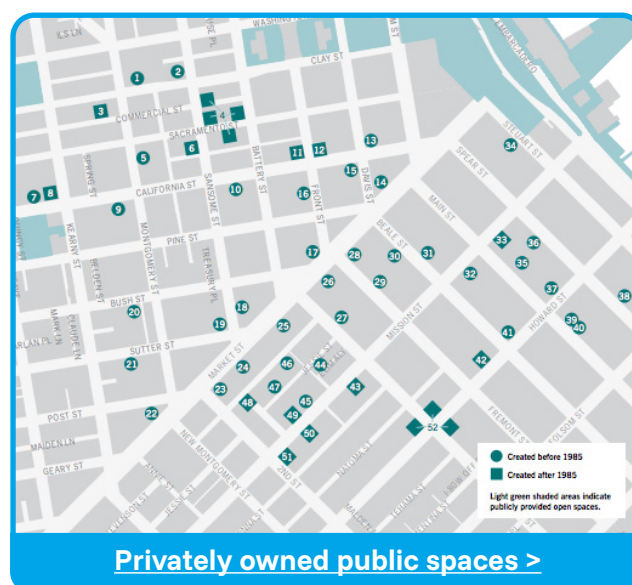
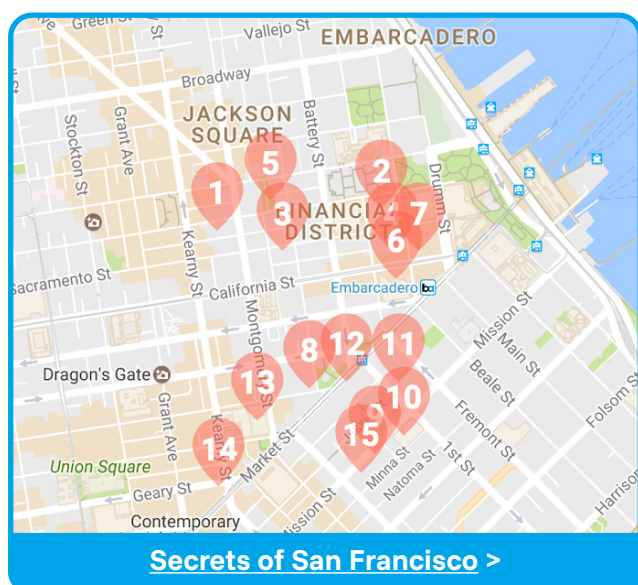
As an exhibitor you need to factor in the cost of sponsorship, swag and stand workers. With free expo passes for anyone, the exhibitors needed to qualify out those who were simply looking for free pens, bags and other swag from genuine potential customers.



Clear your head

Privately Owned Public Open Spaces (POPOS)

Finding somewhere quiet to gather your thoughts is not as hard as you think. These privately owned public open spaces (aka POPOS) have been a development requirement in San Francisco since the passage of the 1985 Downtown Plan. These are office lobbies, terraces and spaces that are made open to the public. So they are perfect to hide away from the rush. There are even a couple of roof top terraces.



Sponsor “zones”

A number of the sponsors have rented out dedicated spaces or zones. These offer a space away from the madness of Dreamforce.

But they are not like the POPOS. You are either a customer or a prospect. And some maybe by invite only. They include Elements.cloud Retreat, PWC Childrens Creativity Museum, Sercante's Growth Lounge or HIKE2's Lodge.

"It's an odd thing, but anyone who disappears is said to be seen in San Francisco"

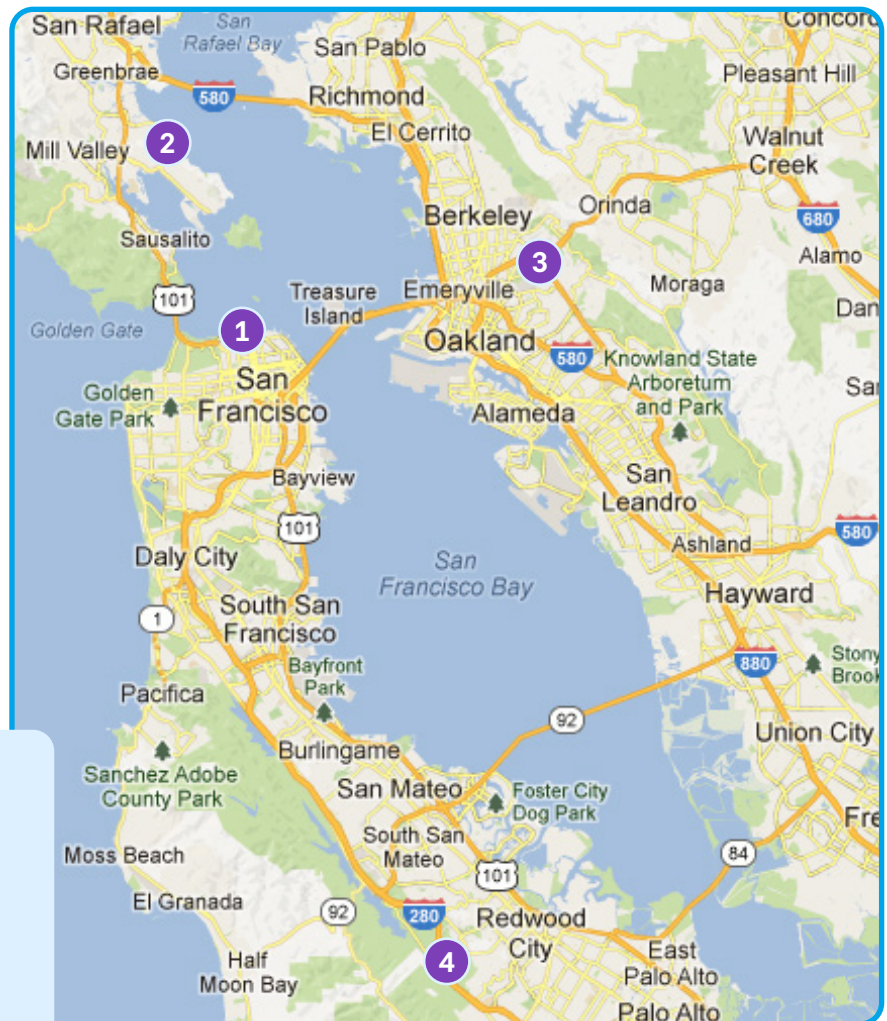
- Oscar Wilde

Getting around the Bay Area

San Francisco is the largest and best-known city on the edge of the Bay. But the Bay area is far more than just SF. By the way, the City of San Francisco is referred to by the locals as SF, Frisco but never San Fran. Throughout this guide it will be referred to as **the City**.

The other thing to remember is that the Bay Area is very compact with good road and public transport systems and limited rush hour traffic problems. If you want congestion, you need to make your way down 101 or 280 to Silicon Valley, or 580 along the east of the bay.

Route 1 runs along the Pacific coast. It is an amazing drive with the most stunning views, therefore it is way better to be the passenger not the driver.



1. **The City:** San Francisco
2. **North Bay:** North of the Golden Gate Bridge, so Sausalito up to San Rafael
3. **East Bay:** Oakland, Berkeley and surrounding cities
4. **Silicon Valley:** From San Mateo south to San Jose

Airports

INTERNATIONAL flights land at **San Francisco Airport (SFO)**, **Oakland (OAK)** and **San Jose (SJC)** down in Silicon Valley.

Flying to the USA from abroad

- ✓ Have you got your electronic ESTA?
- ✓ Have you worked out the best **cellphone / mobile phone roaming package** and have access to your voicemail from abroad?
- ✓ Have you told your **bank and credit card** you will be in the USA?

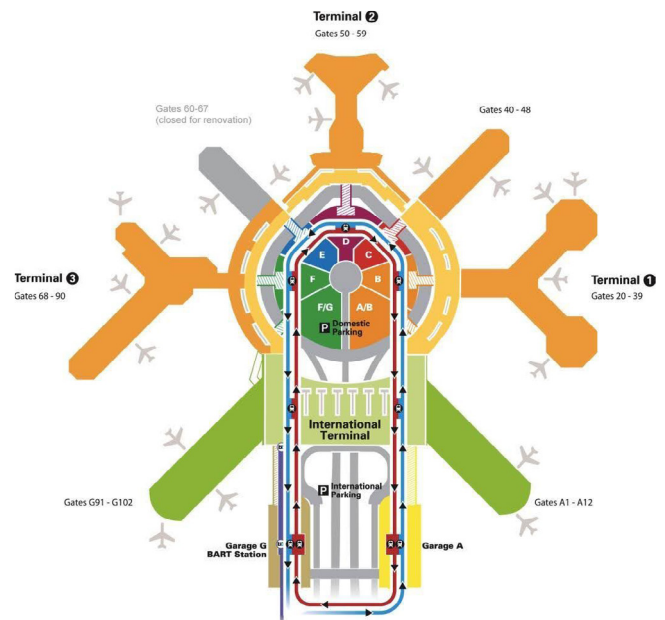
San Francisco Airport (SFO)

flysfo.com | 800.435.9736

Immigration at SFO is normally fairly slick, but you should allow at least an hour to get through and collect luggage. But if you land along with other aircraft or a far eastern flight then the immigration lines can be longer. You cannot bring fruit or vegetables off the aircraft into the USA and this is policed aggressively.

There is free wi-fi in SFO.

The car hire center is a short ride away on the free AirTrain and all the main car rental companies are represented.



The other way to get into the City or the East Bay is the BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit). This is the underground train service which is extremely efficient, clean and safe. It runs from the airport terminal right into the heart of the city, so it is often quicker and WAY cheaper than a taxi. Getting a ticket is slightly challenging as the machines have a quirky way of working, but they do take credit cards.

An alternative if you are intending to spend time using the BART, MUNI and ferries is to buy a Clipper card which is a contactless payment system and is also cheaper than buying individual tickets. You can buy a Clipper card at the airport inside the main terminal, NOT at the BART station.

If you are staying in Sausalito / Marin / San Rafael then the Marin Airporter runs a service every 60 minutes. Tickets are \$31.00. Cash or via their app/website - marinairporter.com. They will book you a taxi from the bus stop to your hotel from the bus stop, but an Uber / Lyft is cheaper as the taxis have a minimum \$20 charge.

Oakland Airport (OAK)

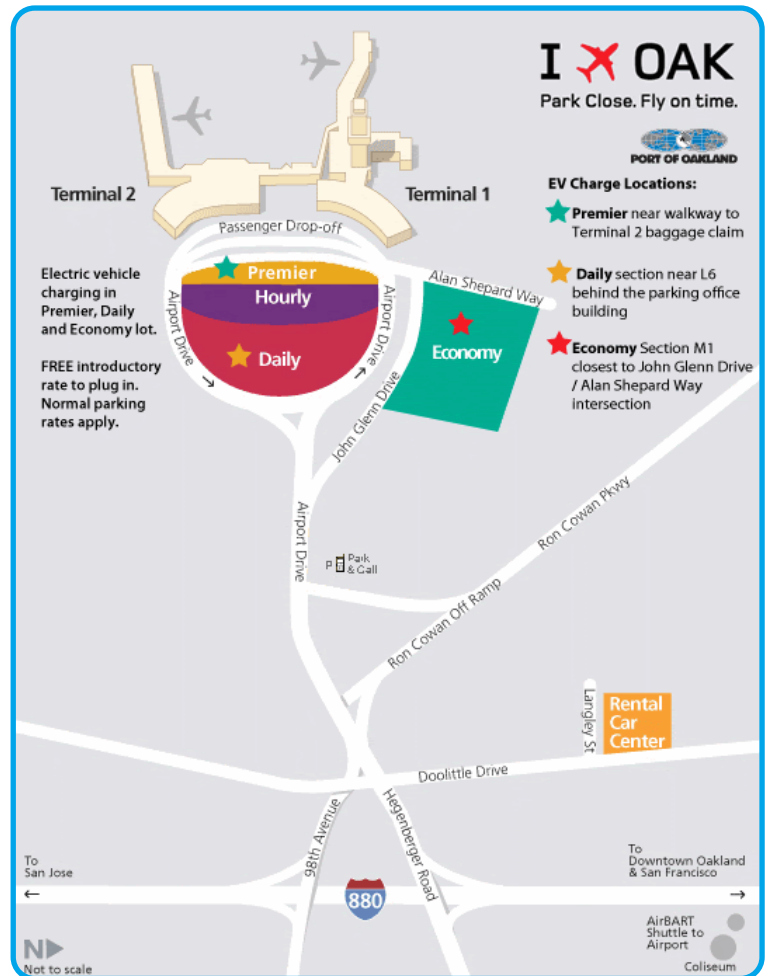
oaklandairport.com | 510.563.3300

Oakland is an international airport with 2 terminals. Terminal 1 is for all airlines apart from SouthWest Airlines who use Terminal 2

There is free wi-fi in the airport.

The car hire center is a short shuttle ride away and all the main car rental companies are represented.

The BART runs from Oakland Airport into the City.



San Jose Airport (SJC)

flysanjose.com

This at least an hours drive from San Francisco so not ideal.



Rental cars and Zipcar

Despite the extensive public transport system, it is limited to the City and East Bay. Therefore if you are venturing outside the City you will need a car.

Car rental

Every rental car company is at San Francisco and Oakland airports and they have offices in the City. It is easy to pick up a car and drive from the airport into the City, North or East bay. There is no ring road so the routes north will take you through the City which means it can get congested at peak times.

Things to know when driving rental cars:

- In California a married partner is automatically covered by the car, so no need to register their driving license or pay for a 2nd driver when you book.
- Generally, roads are well signposted but they show the end city which may be hundreds of miles away and are often labeled with the direction i.e. I580(W). This can seem confusing as the I580 seems to run north south, but eventually it will go west.
- You need to make sure you have a FasTrak bridge toll unit in the car so that you can take the fast lane.
- Most cars have a USB connector which means your iPhone / iPod will charge and play music, but you will need your USB cable.
- You need to keep the rental documentation in the car in case you are stopped.
- You need to carry ID (passport) and driving license with you in case you are stopped.
- If you are stopped DO NOT GET OUT OF THE CAR, as you could be shot. Wait until the officer approaches the car and wind the window down with your hands visible.

Zipcar - rental by the hour

[zipcar.com](https://www.zipcar.com)

An alternative is ZipCar which is car rental by the hour. There are literally hundreds of cars parked in parking lots and underground garages in the City, Berkeley and Oakland.

You will need to join ZipCar and have your driving record validated and this takes a week so it is worth planning in advance.

The way it works is you find a car using the website or mobile app. You can search by location and type of car. You book it specifying the collection and return date and time.

You unlock the car by swiping your membership card on the windscreen sensor. The keys are in the car as well as a petrol card. You drive the car and leave it clean and tidy in the space you collected it from - ON TIME. There are steep penalties for over-running, however you can extend your rental using the website or mobile app provided the car has not been booked by someone else.

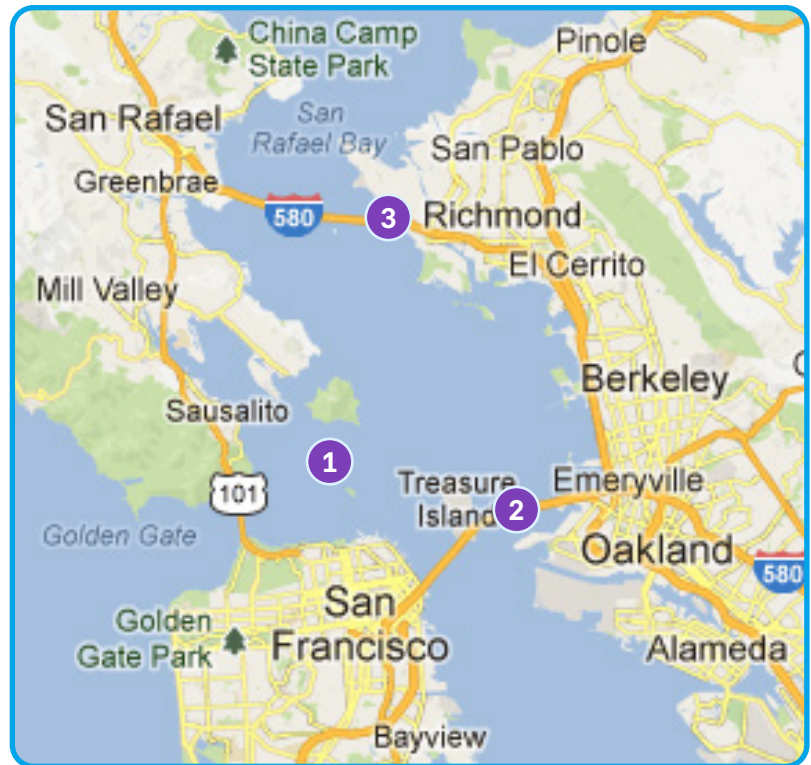
The cars have FasTrak devices so your bill is automatically debited for tolls.

Toll bridges

There are eight bridges that are toll bridges, but there are three that you are likely to be using. Whilst they are toll bridges, they charge in only one direction. You can [see pricing here](#).

The key bridges and tolls are:

1. **The Golden Gate Bridge** is a toll going south collected on the City side. There is number plate recognition and automatic billing with FasTrak. NO CASH or CREDIT CARDS.
2. **The Bay Bridge** between the City and East Bay is a toll going westbound collected in Oakland and accepts FasTrak. NO CASH or CREDIT CARDS.
3. **The Richmond Bridge** which is in the north and connects the East Bay with the North Bay is a toll when traveling north collected in Richmond and accepts FasTrak. NO CASH or CREDIT CARDS.



FasTrack

FasTrack is an electronic contactless unit which rental cars can provide for you when you rent your car. It allows you to take the fast lane and the charges are added automatically to your bill.

Parking

Parking in the center of the City is not cheap, but there is plenty of metered parking, car parks connected to hotels and public car parks. Many car parks have early bird rates if you get in before 9am.

Pier 39 has a number of car parks but spaces could be very limited and prices obscenely high.

What is unusual about San Francisco is it is very hilly and therefore by law you need to turn your wheels into the curb when you park. This is for protection in case the handbrake fails. If you do not do this, expect a fine.

If you get a parking ticket (citation) in the City you can pay online or over the phone. They are very hot on any parking infringement and within minutes they will tow your car which is a \$500+ experience.

Taxis

Whilst there are taxis in the street, most people use [Uber](#) or [Lyft](#). Alternatively, there are now 250 [Waymo](#) driverless taxis.

A taxi fare within the City is often reasonable, but late at night the surge pricing to get to the airport, or over the bridges to Berkeley or Mill Valley can be very scary.



Ferries

A simply stunning way to get around is the ferries which span the Bay. Some of the ferries run commuter schedules, but there are also tourist ferries.



Red & White Fleet (tourist)

redandwhite.com | 415.673.2900

These cruises are exclusively for tourists leaving from Pier 43 ½.

Golden Gate Bay Cruise

Sail under the Golden Gate and around Alcatraz with commentary on San Francisco history in 16 languages. There are 9 regular sailings which take 1 hour.

California Sunset Cruise

A 1.5 hour cruise where you can enjoy the spectacular sunset views, city lights, and a snack bar.

Golden Gate Ferries (commuter)

goldengateferry.org

Tickets can be bought at machines before you board and the Clipper Card is valid.

Larkspur Ferry to City Ferry Building

This is the commuter ferry between Larkspur in the North Bay to the Ferry Terminal building in the center of the city.

There is a huge car park at Larkspur Ferry Terminal and there is regular service throughout the day. It costs \$2.00 per day but free after 1pm, and free on weekends. You pay via phone or a very neat mobile app.

The Ferry Terminal is NOT within walking distance of any of the nearby towns of Corte Madera, Mill Valley or Larkspur. There are only a couple of taxis that wait at the Ferry Terminal so it is worth booking one.

The Marriott Courtyard Hotel is opposite the Ferry Terminal.

Tiburon Ferry to City Ferry Building

There is a limited hours commuter ferry service between Tiburon and the City. During peak hours, the ferry goes to the Ferry Terminal building (Pier 41) in the center of City. There is very limited parking at Tiburon, which is a small town with bars, restaurants, shopping and also the San Francisco Yacht Club all within walking distance of the ferry terminal.

The Lodge at Tiburon is a short walk from the ferry terminal (jetty).

This is the service used by the more ambitious “Bike the Bridge” riders who have cycled from the city, over the Golden Gate Bridge and are returning to the City regretting that they didn’t stop in Sausalito.

Blue & Gold Fleet (tourist)

blueandgoldfleet.com | 415.705.8200

San Francisco Bay Cruise

The Blue and Gold fleet run one-hour cruises under the Golden Gate Bridge and around Alcatraz.

Escape From The Rock

Take a 90-minute cruise that reveals the untold secrets of The Rock (Alcatraz).

Sausalito to Pier 41 Ferry

This service runs from Pier 41 to the quaint waterside town of Sausalito. A number of bars, restaurants and shops are all within walking distance of the ferry terminal in Sausalito. There is very limited parking at Sausalito. This is the service used by the “Bike the Bridge” riders who have cycled from the City over the Golden Gate Bridge and are returning to the City. The Clipper Card is not valid and tickets can be bought on the ferry.

Public transport

Public transport into and out of the City is very good, except up to the North Bay.

There are several different systems:

ClipperCard

clippercard.com

This payment card that can be used on a number of the public transport systems and is cheaper and easier than buying individual tickets. It is accepted on:

- BART
- MUNI
- AC Transit
- CalTrain
- GoldenGate Ferry and Transit
- SamTrans
- Valley Transit Authority
- San Francisco Bay Ferry

You can go to one of the many stations or stores to buy the initial card, but then they can be topped up online. You can buy a card at San Francisco Airport BART station.



BART – Bay Area Rapid Transit

bart.gov | 510.464.6000

This is underground and runs from the San Francisco airport, north into the City and then east into Oakland with a connection to Oakland airport, and north east up to Richmond. It does NOT run into the North Bay. It is the quickest and cheapest way to get from SFO into the city.



Heritage Streetcars

San Francisco is less famous for its heritage streetcars which run along the waterfront so perfect for getting between Pier 39 and the Ferry Building. The streetcars can be broken down into four distinct sub-fleets consisting of PCC streetcars (1946-48), Peter Witt streetcars (1928), pre-PCC veteran streetcars (1895-1924) from San Francisco, and a diverse collection of 10 streetcars and trams from various overseas operators.

The fare is \$3 in cash which you pay the driver. There is no schedule, just wait and then 2 or 3 will come along at the same time.



Cable cars

The iconic San Francisco cable car was introduced to San Francisco on August 2, 1873. The first car descended down Clay Street on Nob Hill. Throughout the 1890's, 8 transit companies operated 600 cars that covered 21 cable routes over 58 miles. Cable cars were the primary mode of transport until the 1906 earthquake.

The cable car ride costs \$9 for a single ride pass and \$15 for a day pass (under 4's go free) and you pay on board or at the self-service machines at the end terminals. If you are paying cash, exact change is required.

There are 3 lines; **Powell-Mason**, **Powell-Hyde** and **California St.**

The lines to get on the cable car at the terminals can be long, so it is worth walking up the hill as there are stops every couple of blocks where there is a white and maroon sign. Hop on as it pauses, find a space and hold on tight.

There is also the 1907 Cable Car Museum which is free with a cable car ticket. It is at the corner of Washington and Mason near China Town.



Caltrain

caltrain.com | 800.660.4287

The Caltrain is a limited train service from San Francisco down Silicon Valley to San Jose, where there is a shuttle bus to San Jose airport. The San Francisco railway station is on 700 4th St which is a long walk from the Ferry Terminal or the center of the City.

An easier approach is to get the BART and change at Millbrae where the Caltrain runs from an adjacent platform just over a footbridge.

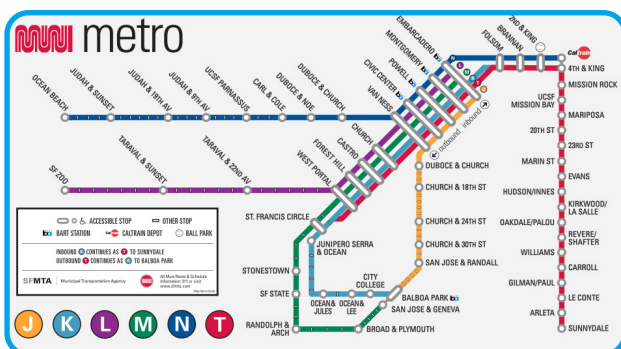
Note the Millbrae station is NOT reached by the train to San Francisco Airport (SFO).

MUNI

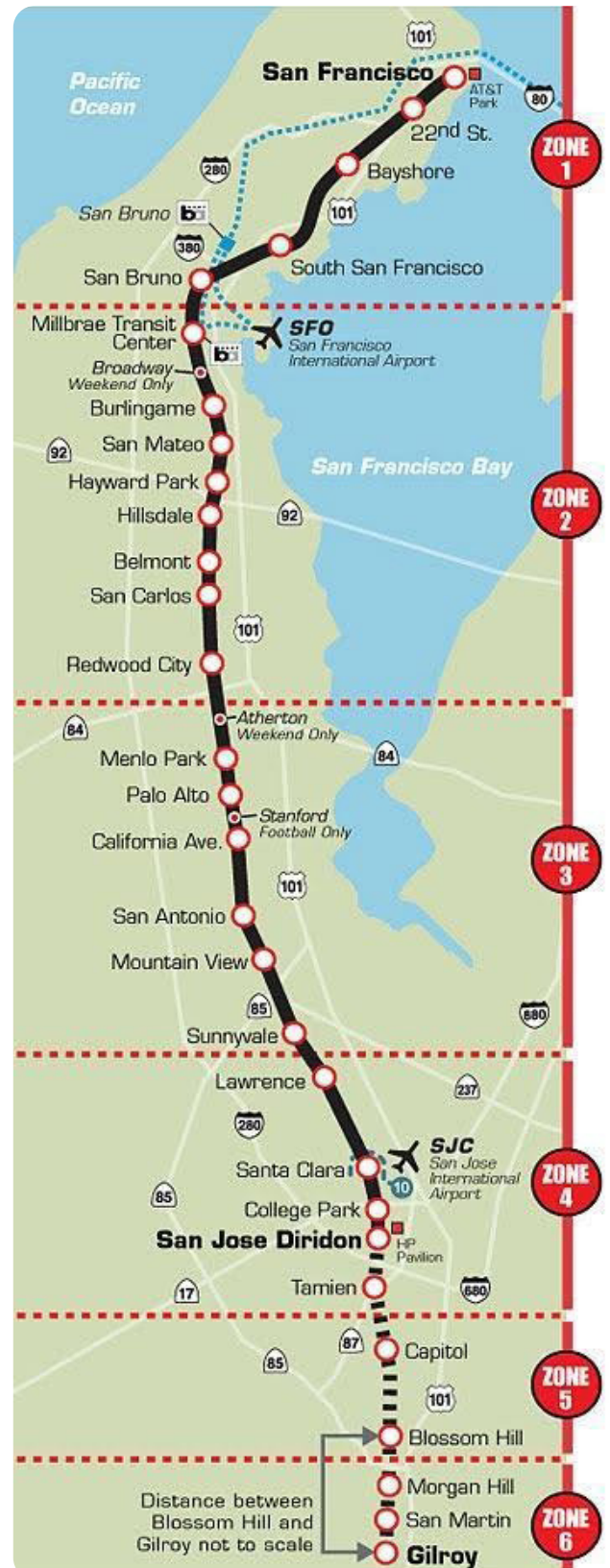
sfmuni.com | 415.701.2311

This is the bus and tram system operating in the City. You can get Muni-Passports for unlimited travel.

There is a very comprehensive network of routes. Check out the map on their [website](http://sfmuni.com).



CalTrain route



Bikes, GoCars, Segways and Scooters

As most of the cycling is likely to be along the waterfront, and not up over the hills, using a bike to get around is an option.

There are several operators who rent bikes in the City, primarily to “bike the bridge”. But the waterfront area is easy to explore by bike. Bear in mind that the center of the City is dominated by some serious hills that are impossible to cycle up and scary to cycle down. For those who like a little assistance, they also have electric bikes.

Top tips:

- ✓ On a windy day it is easier to cycle the route anti-clockwise. Take the ferry FIRST. You get to do the Golden Gate Bridge last, but then the long cycle along Crissy Field is WITH the wind, not AGAINST it.
- ✓ If you decide to cycle via the Tiburon Ferry, not the Sausalito ferry it doubles the distance. It doesn't look like it on the map, but the cycle path takes a very different route than the 101 to be able to cross over the Mill Valley river/creek.

Bikes

The major bike rental companies are:

Blazing Saddles

blazingsaddles.com | 415.202.888

2715 Hyde St, Pier 41, and 465 Jefferson St

Bay City Bike Rentals and Tours

baycitybike.com | 415.346.2453

*2800 Leavenworth St, 622 Shrader St, and
2661 Taylor St*

Parkwide Bike Rentals and Tours

parkwide.com | 415.671.8989

*501 Bay St, Fort Mason Center, Green and
Orange Kiosk behind the Music Concourse*



GoCar

These tiny bright orange open-topped 2-seater “cars” provide a GPS guided tour with audio comments in 8 languages, hence the term “the storytelling car”. Helmets provided.

GoCar Tours

gocartours.com | 415.441.5695

431 Beach St



Segway

Segways are the wacky single wheel stand-on transporters you sometimes see whizzing around airports. If you fancy a tour with a difference then there are guided tours where you ride a Segway.

Electric Tour Company

electrictourcompany.com | 415.474.3130

757 Beach St

Scooters

Scooter apps are the fastest way to zip around the city. To use the scooters you first need to download the app then you enter your payment information. On the app it will show you the locations of all the scooters near you. Once you locate a scooter you scan the QR code and you're all set. There are a variety of different apps available, but here are a few of our favorites.

Lime App

www.li.me

Bird App

go.bird.co

Helicopter and seaplanes

A spectacular way of seeing the Bay, Alcatraz and the bridges is from the air; seaplane or helicopter.

Seaplane Adventures

seaplane.com | 415.332.4843

888-SEAPLANE

242 Redwood Highway Frontage Rd., Mill Valley, CA 94941

The seaplanes take off from Sausalito, just north of the Golden Gate Bridge. They offer a couple of different schedules:

30-minute tour

Their 30-minute basic flight will take you over the splendor of the greatest city in the U.S. - San Francisco! On this flight you will fly along the coast over the Golden Gate National Reserve past Baker Beach and Pt. Bonita Lighthouse, then left over the legendary Golden Gate Bridge. After that, you fly over Crissy Field, downtown San Francisco, AT&T Park - Home of the Major League Baseball World Champion San Francisco Giants - then over the infamous island prison of Alcatraz. Finally, your flight will pass by historic Angel Island - the Immigrant Gateway to the West and a smooth landing back in Sausalito's Richardson Bay.

40 min sunset champagne tour

This end of day excursion follows the tour route described in the 30-minute tour. However, it takes place as the sun bathes the Bay Area in gorgeous hues of sunset orange and red. Passengers will enjoy a cool, crisp, bubbling glass of Northern California champagne.

San Francisco Helicopters

sfhelicoptertours.com | 650.635.4500

They offer standard tours, and an example is below, but can also be chartered for whatever you want.

Vista Tour

Board a Bell Jet helicopter for an exciting adventure above San Francisco. Musical background, choreographed to each flight, accompanies narration by the professionally trained pilot. Take in the renowned hills of San Francisco and the striking cityscape; in the distance the surrounding Bay Area communities. See the famous landmarks, such as Alcatraz Island and the spectacular bridges spanning the Bay. Upon landing, a return shuttle is waiting.



Being a **tourist**

San Francisco is a fantastic, cosmopolitan city with so much to offer; culture, sites, scenery and sports. There are “classic” things you must do. But we’ve also listed things only the locals know about.

Classic stuff

Being a tourist is cool, not tacky, in San Francisco. It will take several days to do the classic touristy things whether you have kids or not.

- ✓ Walk or bike over the Golden Gate Bridge
- ✓ Ride on a Cable Car
- ✓ Drive down the 8 hairpins of Lombard Street.
- ✓ Take a ferry across the Bay to Sausalito
- ✓ Visit Alcatraz; take the guided tour and learn the fantastic history and stories of failed escapes
- ✓ Hippy, druggy Haight
- ✓ Gay and often naked in The Castro
- ✓ Take in the sights, sounds and smells of China Town

If it is foggy in the City and you can’t see the bridge; PERFECT. Get out and drive north over Golden Gate Bridge and first left up Conzelman Road and drive to the lookout points to see the bridge poking through the fog. Keep driving UP until you pop through the fog. Most people give up too early.



Stuff the tourists don't know about

Here are our top 5 favorites:

1 Drive the steepest road in the city.

Everybody drives down the windy road in San Francisco — Lombard. But far cooler is driving down the steepest road — Filbert Street between Hyde and Leavenworth — with the car full of screaming adults. It feels steeper than Lombard as it is straight down — 30.1% gradient.



2 mins down the hill, 30 mins for your heart to calm down.

2 Walk to the Kirby Cove Beach.

This is a lovely beach at the base of the Golden Gate Bridge on the north side. Everybody does the classic lookout on the north of the bridge, but from that same parking lot, take the fire road that goes downhill and away from the bridge. It winds its way through woods down until you are rewarded with amazing views of the city from underneath the Golden Gate Bridge. It is fantastic and magical in the early morning as the mist clears.



2 hours, including time messing around on the beach

3 Hike down into Muir Woods.

You can drive to Muir Woods which has huge redwoods and is calm and quiet. There is a short path around the woods. But I prefer the hike down from Mountain Home Inn and then back up, finishing off with dinner or lunch at the Inn. You need to book. It is better on older knees to do the loop clockwise down Ocean View Trail, so you are on the less-steep trail going down.



3 hours round-trip, including time down in Muir Woods soaking up the peace.

4 Take the ferry to Angel Island.

This is the huge island you can see from the city beyond Alcatraz. Take the ferry from the city or drive to Tiburon, which is a pretty little town with nice restaurants and shops. There are ferries from the city to the island. The undulating road hugs the coast, or slightly higher up is the fire road, and both treat you to a 360-degree view of the bay, the cities and the bridges. You can even hike to the very top of the island rather than walk around the island. Bikes can be rented on the island. There is also a little open-air bus for those feeling less energetic, or those who want to learn about the fascinating military and immigrant history. You can stop for lunch or coffee at the café where the ferry docks, and often there is live music.



Allow a morning or afternoon including ferries. Longer if you are walking rather than biking.

5 Drive or bike up to the Point Bonita lighthouse.

Drive over the Golden Gate Bridge and turn left up to the lookouts. Get the top and turn left at the traffic circle. Keep going. Then drive down the other side on the single-track road. You will have stunning views of the Pacific and even may spot whales. Eventually you will get to a parking lot. Walk back down towards the lighthouse and you can see the sea lions basking in the sunshine in the secluded coves. Then go through the tunnel to the lighthouse, if the tunnel is open (check the times the tunnel is open). It is worth it, even if the tunnel isn't open. Walk slightly north along the cliffs for amazing views up the Pacific coastline.



1-hour drive after you get across the bridge. By the way, this is a serious bike ride and will take several hours.



Activities

Feeling fit or just need to work off those corporate lunches and dinners. Here are some more active ways of experiencing San Francisco:

Walk along Embarcadero

Go to Pier 39 / Fisherman's Wharf and then along to Marina Green. It is a leisurely stroll avoiding the joggers and skaters. Get the streetcar back if you are getting weary.

Walk up California St

To the top. It gets steeper the further you go, but you are rewarded with amazing views of the city and bay. Get the cable car down if you want to save your knees.

Bike the bridge (Sausalito or Tiburon).

Be warned Tiburon is over 20 miles and it is pretty hilly in parts. The worst bit is probably to the Golden Gate Bridge along Crissy Field against the wind. So cycle the route in the reverse direction.

Mountain Biking

This happens in the North Bay. Marin is home to mountain biking with a number of challenging trails in China Camp and on Mount Tam.

Road biking

The best road biking is Route 1 north up the Pacific coast. It is a challenging ride due to the steep ascents and descents but that doesn't stop thousands of cyclists enjoying some of the most spectacular views. The road quality is excellent, as it has not been destroyed by earthquakes.

Dancing

If you want to dance around your handbag, then there are nightclubs and bars. If you want to have some lessons or want a freestyle then the popular dancing is West Coast Swing and Lindy Hop. There are classes in the City, North and East Bays. To find out what is happening visit nextgenswingdance.com. Alternatively, Argentinian Tango is danced in the area so check out tangomango.org Alternatively every Sunday at 12 noon there is a free lindy hop taster class in Golden Gate Park

Intellectuals, music and culture

It is not just the outdoorsy types who will love San Francisco. Intellectuals, art-buffs and music lovers can have their fill too. There is no shortage of art, museums, and historical stuff to visit and experience.

You can check out sfstation.com for the latest gigs and what's on in SF. They bill themselves as "San Francisco Bay Area's definitive online city guide to Arts & Culture, Entertainment, Food, Shopping, and Urban Living for 18 - 45 year old 'socially active' users."

Art & museums

- ✓ Asian Art Museum
- ✓ Museum of Modern Art
- ✓ Exploratorium - interactive science museum
- ✓ California Academy of Sciences (CaliCad)
- ✓ Japanese Tea Garden
- ✓ Palace of Fine Arts
- ✓ De Young Museum

Music & theater

Classical

Davies Symphony Hall is home to the SF Symphony - sfsymphony.org

Jazz

There are lots of live jazz at clubs. Type "live jazz San Francisco" into yelp.com

Comedy

Whilst there are comedy clubs - type "comedy San Francisco" into yelp.com - improv is live and kicking.



Retail therapy / suburban

San Francisco doesn't have a one huge shopping area like London's Oxford Street or the whole of Dubai. There are several areas for shopping, each with a different feel and style:

The Union Street Shopping District

unionstreetshop.com) contains some of the City's best eateries, art galleries, fine jewelry stores and trendy boutiques. The street is long, so plan on spending at least half a day exploring up and down the street - don't miss the cross streets - you will find some real gems off the beaten track. Breakfast, lunch or dinner at the great restaurants and cafés will definitely spike the enjoyment of your shopping day!

Fillmore Street (fillmoreshop.com) is a very energized, hip mixed with earthy charm, shopping district. You will find any number of one-of-a-kind shops as well as some of your favorites such as Kiehl's and Eileen Fisher. There are a number of outdoor cafés and restaurants - be sure to take a break while shopping at one of the yogurt or coffee spots along the way.

Chestnut Street (chestnutshop.com) has an eclectic mix of shops, restaurants, coffee houses and services. While sophisticated in nature, the street has a distinctive neighborhood feel. The street is usually bustling with people meeting for coffee, shopping for trendy clothes, running errands or meeting for lunch or dinner.

Noe Valley (sfstation.com/noe-valley-shopping-a35191) is one of the few neighborhoods in San Francisco where you'll find more boutiques and gift shops than eateries. Nestled in the heart of the neighborhood are five flat blocks, stretching down 24th Street from Church Street to Castro Street, packed with places that are

perfect birthday gifts, wedding presents or a personal treat. Barring the occasional battle with the stroller brigade, shopping Noe Valley can be a pleasant shopping experience.

Haight Ashbury (haightshop.com) was the epicenter of the hippy culture and it could be said, still is. Locals in that time included the Grateful Dead at 710 Ashbury, Janis Joplin at 122 Lyon Street and Jefferson Airplane at 2400 Fulton. You can still experience the flavor of that era at many of the shops on haight. Mixed in between those shops of the '60s up and down Haight, high-end vintage clothing stores and a number of exclusive boutiques and many hip restaurants have sprung up all with their own flavor and color.

For classic San Francisco souvenirs go to **Fisherman's Wharf and Pier 39** – have a competition with your friends to find the most cheesy, embarrassing fridge magnet.

For something truly unique and inexpensive try the **market stalls outside the Ferry Building** at the end of Market St or the street artists painting with aerosol cans on the Embarcadero at Pier 39.

On some days there is a **Farmer's Market outside the Ferry Building**, but inside there are some quirky boutiques – a honey shop and one that only sells mushrooms!



The end

See you at
Dreamforce

