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San Francisco

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San Francisco, California ([/places/united-states-and-canada/us-political-geography/california](#)), **United States** ([/places/united-states-and-canada/us-political-geography/united-states](#)) of America, **North America** ([/places/oceans-continents-and-polar-regions/oceans-and-continents/north-america](#))

Founded: 1776; **Incorporated:** 1850

Location: The Pacific coast of northern California, United States, North America

Motto: "Gold in Peace and Iron in War"

Flower: Dahlia

Time Zone: 4 am Pacific Standard Time (PST) = noon Greenwich Mean Time (GMT)

Ethnic Composition: White, 67%; Black, 11%; American Indian, Eskimo, Aleut, 0.5%; Asian and Pacific Islander, 29%; Hispanic origin (may be of any race), 14%

Elevation: 47 m (155 ft)

Latitude and Longitude: 37°77'N, 122°41'W

Coastline: 40–50 km (25–30 mi)

Climate : Mediterranean-type climate with consistent, moderate temperatures. The year is divided into distinct dry and wet seasons, with most precipitation occurring between November and March. A distinguishing climate feature is the fog that rolls in from the [Pacific Ocean \(/places/oceans-continents-and-polar-regions/oceans-and-continents/pacific-ocean\)](#).

Annual Mean Temperature: 15°C (59°F); January 12°C (53°F); August 18°C (65°F)

Average Annual Precipitation (rainfall and melted snow): 49 cm (19.33 in)

Government: Mayor-council

Weights and Measures: Standard U.S.

Monetary Units: Standard U.S.

Telephone Area Codes: 415

Postal Codes: 94101-88

1. Introduction

Situated on a peninsula separating San Francisco Bay from the Pacific Ocean, San Francisco is a uniquely picturesque city, whose scenic attractions include the largest cultivated urban park in the country, Golden Gate Park. Its notoriously steep streets, traversed by the famous cable cars, are home to a remarkably diverse ethnic population, and the city's reputation for tolerance and diversity is also evident in its history as a mecca for the gay community. Known for sophisticated cultural innovation and experimentation, San Francisco was the gathering place of the "beat" generation in the 1950s and a focal point of the 1960s counterculture, a hotbed of political protest and the birthplace of the "San Francisco Sound." Still known for its cultural attractions, today the Bay Area is also famous for its concentration of cutting-edge high-technology firms, which have drawn even more new residents to this populous region.

2. Getting There

The city of San Francisco is situated at the tip of a peninsula surrounded by the Pacific Ocean on the west, the San Francisco Bay on the east, and the Golden Gate, a narrow marine passageway between San Francisco and Marin County to the north.

Highways

Several interstate highways provide easy access to the city, including U.S.-101 and State Route 1 (the Pacific Coastal Highway). I-5, the north-south highway that runs from [Canada \(/places/united-states-and-canada/canadian-political-geography/canada\)](#) to Mexico, reaches San Francisco through Loops 580 and 680. U.S.-50 also passes through the city.



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Bus and Railroad Service

Amtrak provides service to San Francisco on the *California Zephyr*, which runs through [Salt Lake City \(/places/united-states-and-canada/us-political-geography/salt-lake-city\)](#), [Denver \(/places/united-states-and-canada/us-political-geography/denver\)](#), and eastward to [Chicago \(/places/united-states-and-canada/us-political-geography/chicago\)](#), and the *Coast Starlight*, which runs between San Francisco and [Los Angeles \(/places/united-states-and-canada/us-political-geography/los-angeles\)](#). Trains with regional routes through California include the *Capitols* and the *San Joaquins*.

Airports

San Francisco International Airport, one of the nation's busiest, handles most domestic and international flights to and from the city. It services flights from about 50 major carriers.

Shipping

With 40 deep-water piers, San Francisco is one of the leading port cities on the Pacific coast, handling about one-third of the country's West Coast trade, amounting to more than 200,000 tons of cargo annually. It has been designated a U.S. Port of Entry and a free trade zone. Freight is also carried to and from the region by a number of major rail carriers and trucking companies, and all major air freight carriers land at San Francisco International Airport.

San Francisco Population Profile

City Proper

Population: 724,000

Area: 122 sq km (47 sq mi)

Ethnic composition: 59.5% white; 29.1% Asian or Pacific Islander; 10.9% black; and 0.5% Native American

Nicknames: The Golden Gate City, [Baghdad \(/places/asia/iraq-political-geography/baghdad\)](/places/asia/iraq-political-geography/baghdad) in the Bay

Metropolitan Area

Population: 4,051,000

Description: San Francisco and surrounding communities

World population rank¹: 59

Percentage of national population²: 1.5%

Average yearly growth rate: 1.0%

Ethnic composition: 67% white; 25% Asian or Pacific Islander; 7% black; 1% other

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1. The San Francisco metropolitan area's rank among the world's urban areas.
 2. The percent of the United States' total population living in the San Francisco metropolitan area.

3. Getting Around

Situated on 40 hills of varying heights—among the highest are Telegraph Hill, Nob Hill, and Russian Hill—San Francisco is known for its steep streets, many of which ascend and descend hillsides, the result of insistence by early planners on imposing a strict grid pattern on the city rather than following the natural contours of the land. The two hills of Twin Peaks mark the geographic center of the city, which is divided into a number of distinct neighborhoods, many of whose streets are laid out in grid patterns. Bisecting much of the city from southwest to northeast is Market Street, whose southwestern-most portion is called Portola Drive. The Golden Gate Bridge runs northward across the Golden Gate straight; the San Francisco–Oakland Bay Bridge runs north–eastward across San Francisco Bay.

Bus and Commuter Rail Service

The Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) provides commuter rail service between the city and 26 stations in the East Bay area. The Municipal Railway System (Muni) operates San Francisco's famed cable cars—popular with both commuters and tourists—and a system of above- and underground light-rail vehicles. There is also ferry service between San Francisco, Oakland, and Berkeley.

Sightseeing

Many of the sights in downtown San Francisco can be covered on walking tours. Areas for which tours are available include Chinatown and Pacific Heights. Among the tours focusing on specific areas of interest are Victorian homes tour and a Dashiell Hammett tour that covers sites linked to his detective, Sam Spade. The city's restored cable cars—which have been declared a historical landmark—carry visitors over a 16-kilometer (ten-mile) route. Bus tours of San Francisco and the Bay Area are also available, as are scenic cruises of San Francisco Bay, which offer views of the San Francisco skyline, the Golden Gate Bridge, and Alcatraz prison.

4. People

Known for its ethnic diversity, San Francisco has one of the country's highest concentrations of new immigrants. The 1990 census recorded a population of approximately 724,000 in the city of San Francisco, of which 59.5 percent were white, 29.1 percent Asian or Pacific Islander, 10.9 percent black, and 0.5 percent Native American. The surrounding area, designated by the Census Bureau as San Francisco's Primary Statistical Metropolitan Area (PMSA), had a 1990 population of 1.6 million. In 1996 its population was still under 1.7 million, and its racial composition was 67 percent white; 25 percent Asian or Pacific Islander; and seven percent black.

City Fact Comparison				
Indicator	Atlanta (/places/united-states-and-canada/us-political-geography/atlanta) (United States)	Cairo (/places/africa/egyptian-political-geography/cairo) (Egypt /places/africa/egyptian-political-geography/egypt)	Rome (/places/spain-portugal-italy-greece-and-balkans/italian-political-geography/rome) (Italy)	Beijing (/places/asia/chinese-political-geography/beijing) (China /places/asia/chinese-political-geography/china)
Population of urban area ¹	4,051,000	10,772,000	2,688,000	12,033,000
Date the city was founded	1776	AD 969	753 BC	723 BC
Daily costs to visit the city ²				
<i>Hotel (single occupancy)</i>	\$139	\$193	\$172	\$129
<i>Meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner)</i>	\$44	\$56	\$59	\$62
<i>Incidentals (laundry, dry cleaning, etc.)</i>	\$2	\$14	\$15	\$16
<i>Total daily costs</i>	\$185	\$173	\$246	\$207
Major Newspapers ³				
<i>Number of newspapers serving the city</i>	2	13	20	11
<i>Largest newspaper</i>	San Francisco Chronicle	Akhbar El Yom/Al Akhbar	La Repubblica	Renmin Ribao
<i>Circulation of largest newspaper</i>	475,324	1,159,450	754,930	3,000,000
<i>Date largest newspaper was established</i>	1865	1944	1976	1948

¹United Nations population estimates for the year 2000.

²The maximum amount the U.S. Government reimburses its employees for business travel. The lodging portion of the allowance is based on the cost for a single room at a moderately-priced hotel. The meal portion is based on the costs of an average breakfast, lunch, and dinner including taxes, service charges, and customary tips. Incidental travel expenses include such things as laundry and dry cleaning.

³David Maddux, ed. *Editor&Publisher International Year Book*. [New York \(/places/united-states-and-canada/us-political-geography/new-york\)](/places/united-states-and-canada/us-political-geography/new-york): The Editor&Publisher Company, 1999.

5. Neighborhoods

Neighborhoods in the northern part of San Francisco include the wealthy Pacific Heights district, whose mansions provide dramatic views of the Bay; Nob Hill, site of the "crookedest street in the world" (Lombard Street); North Beach and Chinatown, home to the largest single concentration of Chinese outside of China; the financial district, dominated by the TransAmerica Pyramid and the Bank of America building; and the Western Addition, with its gracious restored Victorian homes. Districts close to the center of the city include Haight-Ashbury, cradle of the 1960s counterculture; the Mission District, site of the historic Mission Dolores and home to the city's largest Hispanic population; the Central area, home of the Castro, for decades a gay and lesbian mecca; and the South of Market district, a heavily commercial area that has attracted many high-technology start-up firms. To the south lie South Bayshore, which combines residential and commercial properties and is also home to the city's produce markets; the largely working-class South Central area; and the pricier Ingleside, near San Francisco State University and San Francisco City College.

6. History

The fog that rolls in off the Pacific Ocean hid the present-day site of San Francisco from Spanish conquistadors for two centuries after they first discovered California. A small party of explorers traveling overland from Mexico toward Canada and led by Sergeant José Ortega first stumbled on the area in 1769, and settlement began in 1776. A small town, called Yerba Buena, was established, but for over half a century it attracted little attention and was populated mostly by missionaries. The United States claimed it in 1846, during the Mexican War, and its population nearly doubled with the arrival of over 200 Mormon settlers.

The town's situation changed dramatically with the discovery of gold in 1848 at Sutters Mill, about 225 kilometers (140 miles) away, and the onset of the California Gold Rush. The Gold Rush brought wealth and expansion to the city as it grew to accommodate the thousands of prospectors arriving to seek their fortunes, many of whom later settled permanently in the area. However, the Gold Rush also created a wave of lawlessness as saloons, gambling joints, and brothels were opened to serve thousands of temporary settlers who considered themselves outside the law. San Francisco was incorporated in 1850, and the city's permanent residents began forming vigilante groups in the 1850s to clean up the town, eventually restoring order.

San Francisco continued to grow in the latter half of the nineteenth century, receiving a major boost from the completion of the transcontinental railway in 1869, as well as a silver boom in [Nevada \(/places/united-states-and-canada/us-political-geography/nevada\)](#). By the turn of the century, it was home to about a third-of-a-million people. The new century, however, soon brought disaster in the form of the great earthquake of April 18, 1906, in which over 500 people perished. Ten square kilometers (four square miles) of the city were destroyed as fires raged out of control for three days. However, the people of San Francisco forged ahead in the face of tragedy and rebuilt their city, with the help of donations that poured in from many quarters following the disaster. By 1915 the city triumphantly hosted its first world's fair, the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in honor of the completion of the Panama Canal.

The first half of the twentieth century was a period of continued growth spearheaded by the completion of major buildings and infrastructure projects, including the damming of the Tuolumne River at the Hetch Hetchy Canyon and the construction of two great bridges completed within a year of each other: the San Francisco-Oak-land Bay Bridge (1936) and the Golden Gate Bridge (1937). With the growth of industry came the development of an active labor movement, which became one of the dominant powers in the city. The longshoremen's strike in 1930 was the largest in U.S. history. [World War II \(/history/modern-europe/wars-and-battles/world-war-ii\)](#) (1939–45) further boosted industrial production in the city, although the period was marred by the forced relocation of thousands of Bay Area Japanese Americans and their detention in internment camps for the duration of the war.

The postwar period has seen continued economic growth and civic expansion, but the city has also had to confront problems typical of major urban areas, including flight to the surrounding suburbs, and the blight and decay of downtown areas. Urban renewal began in the 1960s and 1970s; the downtown area was redeveloped, and the Rapid Transit System was introduced to make the central city more accessible to those on the periphery. During this period, the Bay Area became a focal point of the youth counterculture that was sweeping the nation, and a center for student protest against the [Vietnam War \(/history/asia-and-africa/southeast-asia-history/vietnam-war\)](#) (1945–1973) and other types of activism, including the struggle for gay rights. The 1970s ended on a somber note with the 1979 assassination of Mayor George Moscone and the city's first openly gay city supervisor, Harvey Milk. That same year San Francisco elected its first woman mayor, Dianne Feinstein.

In 1989 San Francisco experienced another major earthquake. However, the city moved forward in the following decade. Its city hall was refurbished, and important new facilities were built, including a museum of modern art, a new main library, and an arts center.

7. Government

San Francisco, which is both a city and a county, has a mayor-council form of government. The mayor, who serves as the chief executive, is elected to a four-year term, as are the 11 members of the city council. The city administrator and controller are appointed by the mayor. Elected officials include the city assessor, public defender, district attorney, sheriff, and attorney. In 1995 San Francisco's municipal government employed 26,000 persons.

8. Public Safety

In 1995 San Francisco had a total crime index figure of 8,190 crimes reported to police per 100,000 residents. A total of 1,737 reports were violent crimes (murder, 17; rape, 69; robbery, 653; and aggravated assault, 998), and 6,713 were property crimes (burglary, 965; larceny, 4,625; and motor vehicle theft, 1,123).

In May 1999, the city of San Francisco, together with three other California municipalities and two counties, sued gun manufacturers for promoting the illegal sale of guns that are ultimately used to commit crimes. Three industry trade associations and 28 gun makers were named in the suit, which charged them with creating an illegal secondary market for guns and deliberately producing enough guns to perpetuate it; designing guns to make them attractive to criminals; falsely advertising the safety of their products; evading state and federal gun control laws; and selling defective and unsafe weapons. The gun-industry suit follows the precedent set in 1996 when San

Francisco became the first city in the United States to sue the tobacco industry, also under California's unfair business practices law. Under the terms of the 1998 settlement of that suit, California became the only state in which cities were to receive direct compensation from the tobacco industry.

9. Economy

San Francisco's coastal location and natural harbor have made it an important shipping center throughout its history, and it is still one of the major port cities on the West Coast, although today most shipping activity actually occurs in nearby Oakland.

Since the nineteenth century, San Francisco has been known as a financial center. Today it is home to leading banks (Wells Fargo) and insurance companies (TransAmerica, Fireman's Fund) and the site of the Pacific Stock Exchange, as well as branches of the Federal Reserve and United States Mint. Some 500 Fortune 500 companies are headquartered in the city, including Charles Schwab & Co., Bechtel Engineering, Chevron Oil, and Levi Strauss & Co.

San Francisco's newest growth areas are computers and electronics, and biotechnology. The city's history of involvement in defense-related industries and its location near such high-tech centers as Stanford University and the famed Silicon Valley have created a boom in computers, scientific instrument, and other electronics fields. Home of the pioneering Genentech firm, founded in the 1970s, San Francisco is also on the cutting edge of the biotechnology industry, with some 500 companies in the area specializing in pharmaceuticals, medical electronics, bionics, and related areas.

The cost of living in the Bay Area is substantially higher than the national average. In 1996 the median sale price for a single-family home was \$319,985, well above the national average, and apartments rent from \$550 per month for a one-room studio to \$1,500 for two- and three-bedroom apartments or houses. However, the income of the area's residents is also above average—their wages and salaries are among the highest in the nation, partly as a result of their relatively high level of education and the concentration of jobs in well-paid areas, including high-technology fields and the professions.

10. Environment

San Francisco is situated on a peninsula that forms the western boundary of the 1,285-square-kilometer (496-square-mile) San Francisco Bay. Its hilly terrain is part of the Coast Ranges, which extend from Oregon southward to Santa Barbara County. Among the highest peaks in the region are Mount Tamalpais (784 meters/2,571 feet) and Mount Diablo (1,173 meters/3,849 feet).

Other than its harbor, the outstanding natural feature of the Bay Area—and the one with the greatest potential to affect the lives of its residents—is the region's location on top of a network of fault lines, which has led to two major earthquakes in this century, in 1906 and 1989. The San Andreas is the best known of these tectonic faults, where portions of the earth's crust slide past each other. Normally these motions amount to an imperceptible five centimeters (two inches) per year; occasionally, however, excess pressure builds up against these plates, and when it is released, an earthquake occurs.

In 1994 the city inaugurated a 50-year plan to dispose of the millions of tons of sediment that wash into San Francisco Bay annually, threatening shipping and other activities.

11. Shopping

San Francisco offers a varied and eclectic shopping experience. Union Square, in the northeastern part of the city, is the major shopping district and home to most of the city's department stores, including Macy's, Neiman Marcus, Gump's, and Nordstrom, which anchors the huge San Francisco Shopping Centre, site of over 100 stores and restaurants. The Embarcadero Center, located in the financial district, is a four-hectare (ten-acre) commercial complex of shops and restaurants. Also located in the financial district is the exclusive Crocker Galleria, featuring designer clothing and specialty shops. The Jackson Square Historic District offers over 20 antique stores.

In addition to souvenir shops and specialty museums, Fisherman's Wharf offers four major retail complexes: Ghirardelli Square, anchored by a chocolate factory, the Cannery (a converted canning factory), Pier 39, and the [Anchorage \(/places/united-states-and-canada/us-political-geography/anchorage\)](#). For the budget-minded, the South of Market neighborhood offers a variety of bargain outlets and secondhand shops. San Francisco's ethnic neighborhoods provide a colorful shopping experience: goods from throughout [Latin America \(/places/latin-america-and-caribbean/south-american-political-geography/latin-america\)](#) can be found in the heavily Hispanic Mission District, and Chinatown offers all types of Asian goods, some in open-air markets. San Francisco is also widely known as a bookstore lover's paradise.

12. Education

The San Francisco Unified School District has approximately 105 public schools covering kindergarten through grade 12, with an average daily attendance of 63,900. The city's private and parochial schools, numbering about 140, enroll an additional 23,600 students.

Altogether, there are more than 35 colleges and universities located in the Bay Area, including the University of California at San Francisco, San Francisco State University, the University of San Francisco, Golden Gate University, and the University of California at Berkeley. Specialized educational facilities include the Hastings College of Law, the California School of Professional Psychology, the San Francisco Art Institute, and the San Francisco Conservatory of Music.

13. Health Care

San Francisco offers state-of-the-art health-care facilities. The San Francisco metropolitan statistical area had 5,209 office-based physicians in 1995 when its 23 community hospitals had 4,999 beds. San Francisco's largest hospital is San Francisco General Medical Center, with 550 beds and a highly respected emergency and trauma center. The hospital was also the site of the first specialized [AIDS \(/medicine/diseases-and-conditions/pathology/acquired-immunodeficiency-syndrome\)](#) unit in the country. In 1996–97, it had 23,764 admissions, 391,661 outpatient visits, and employed 3,239 people. Other health-care facilities include the University of California at San Francisco Medical Center, St. Francis Memorial Hospital, and Seton Medical Center.

14. Media

San Francisco has two major daily newspapers: the *San Francisco Chronicle* (morning) and the *San Francisco Examiner* (evening); both papers jointly publish the Sunday paper, the *San Francisco Examiner and Chronicle*. Neighborhood publications include the *Richmond Review*, *San Francisco Downtown*, the *Haight Ashbury Free Press*, and the *New Mission News*. *San Francisco Business* magazine is published by the city's chamber of commerce, while *San Francisco Focus* is a regional-interest magazine. San Francisco is also the book publishing capital of the West Coast. The major commercial networks, public television, and foreign-language stations are all represented among the city's nine television stations, and there are 33 am and FM radio stations.

15. Sports

The Bay Area is home to major league teams in all the major spectator sports. In baseball, there are the National League's San Francisco Giants and the American League's Oakland Athletics ("Oakland A's"). Teams from both San Francisco and Oakland also play in the National Football League (NFL): the San Francisco 49ers and the Oakland Raiders. In basketball, Oakland's Golden State Warriors play in the National Basketball Association (NBA). All the San Francisco teams play in 3Com Park (formerly Candlestick Park); the Oakland teams play at the Oakland Coliseum. Also in the Bay Area are the National Hockey League's San Jose Sharks.

San Francisco is also home to the nation's third-largest marathon, the San Francisco Marathon, held annually in July. Other spectator sports include horse racing at Golden Gate Fields and Bay Meadows and auto racing at Baylands Raceway Park and other venues.

16. Parks and Recreation

Golden Gate Park, stretching five kilometers (three miles) inland from Ocean Beach toward the heart of the city, is the nation's largest cultivated urban park. Covering a total area of over 405 hectares (1,000 acres), it has 43 kilometers (27 miles) of footpaths and 12 kilometers (seven-and-a-half miles) of equestrian trails. Its varied landscape includes gardens and woods, as well as man-made lakes and waterfalls. San Franciscans use the park for everything from quiet strolls and picnics to outdoor sports. Located within its boundaries are an arboretum, a glass flower conservatory housing over 20,000 species of rare plants, a Japanese tea garden, an eight-hectare (20-acre) rhododendron garden, and a children's playground.

Situated on both sides of the Golden Gate waterway between the Pacific Ocean and San Francisco Bay, and connected by the Golden Gate Bridge, is the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, the world's largest urban park. Covering a total of 28,329 hectares (70,000 acres), it offers hiking trails, beaches, campgrounds, nature preserves, and scenic lookouts over both the ocean and the bay.

Outdoor activities available in San Francisco year round include hiking, camping, bicycling, horseback riding, hang gliding, and golf. Popular water sports include swimming, fishing, boating, water skiing, and surfing.

17. Performing Arts

San Francisco is known for its rich and varied cultural scene, which embraces both European (Western) and non-Western traditions in the performing arts. Its flagship musical institution is the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra, founded in 1911. Appointed in 1995, music director Michael Tilson Thomas has expanded the group's repertoire to include a greater number of twentieth-century works, as well as the standard classical and Romantic offerings. Other well-known musical ensembles founded in San Francisco include the Kronos Quartet and the male choir Chanticleer. The San Francisco Opera, widely considered the leading opera company in the western United States, was founded in 1923, making it one of the nation's oldest opera companies. Jazz has flourished in the Bay Area since the 1940s and 1950s, the heyday of area native Dave Brubeck (b. 1920). The 1960s made San Francisco one of the nation's rock capitals, birthplace of the "San Francisco Sound," exemplified by the Grateful Dead, the Jefferson Airplane, and Janis Joplin's band, Big Brother and the Holding Company.

The San Francisco Ballet, the country's oldest resident ballet company, has a wide repertoire of works by both classical and twentieth-century choreographers, and the Oakland Ballet has also made a name for itself in the region. San Francisco's modern dance troupes include Contraband.

San Francisco's American Conservatory Theatre is considered one of the country's leading regional theaters and also runs a highly regarded drama school. The San Francisco Mime Troupe, founded 40 years ago, is still popular with local audiences and tours widely.

18. Libraries and Museums

The San Francisco Public Library, founded in 1878, serves a population of nearly 800,000 from a main building and 26 branches. With almost two-and-a-half million book volumes, it has an annual circulation of close to five-and-a-half million. The library has special collections in the areas of Chinese language, calligraphy, gay and lesbian history, science fiction, and humor.

San Francisco's premier art museum is the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, located in a striking modern building designed by Swiss architect Mario Botta (b. 1943), opposite the Yerba Buena Gardens, after moving from its longtime site in the Civic Center. The museum, which houses more than 17,000 pieces of art, is known locally as "Sf-MOMA." Other major art collections are found at the M. H. de Young Memorial Museum, which features European paintings; it is located in Golden Gate Park, where it shares a building with the Asian Art Museum. San Francisco is also home to an eclectic array of specialty museums, including the American Carousel Museum, the National Maritime Museum, the San Francisco International Toy Museum, the Old Mint, the Telephone Museum, the San Francisco Fire Department Museum, the Chinese Culture Center Museum, and the San Francisco Crafts and Folk Art Museum.

19. Tourism

San Francisco's natural beauty, mild weather, and cultural attractions have made tourism one of the city's leading industries, and there are some 30,000 hotel rooms available for visitors. In addition to vacationers and sightseers, about one-and-a-half million visitors to the city attend conventions and trade shows in the city every year. They are served by an outstanding array of meeting facilities, including the Civic Auditorium, which seats nearly 8,000 people; the Brooks Exhibit Hall, which provides 8,361 square meters (90,000 square feet) of exhibition space; and the 55,740-square-meter (600,000-square-foot) Moscone Center, undergoing an expansion slated for completion in 2000.

In 1995 San Francisco attracted two-and-a-half million foreign visitors, the fourth-highest number of any city in the United States.

20. Holidays and Festivals

January

Chinese New Year celebration
Sports & Boat Show

February

Arts of the Pacific Asian Show
Pacific Orchid Exposition

March

Bouquets to Art
Contemporary Crafts Market
International Asian Film Festival
Tulipmania
St. Patrick's Day Parade
San Francisco Garden Show

March-April

Easter Parade and Hat Promenade

April

Cherry Blossom Festival

Macy's Flower Show

Late April-early May

San Francisco International Film Festival

May

Carnaval

Cinco de Mayo Celebrations

Traditional Music and Dance Festival

Spring Festival Arts & Crafts Fair

San Francisco Examiner Bay to Breakers Race

Norway Day Festival

June

Ethnic Dance Festival

Union Street Festival

Street Performers Festival

North Beach Festival

Mid-June to Mid-August

Stern Grove Midsummer Music Festival

Late June-July

San Francisco International Lesbian & Gay Film Festival

July

Fillmore Street Festival

Fourth of July Waterfront Festival

Jazz and All That Art

Jazz and Wine at Embarcadero Center

San Francisco Marathon

July-early October

San Francisco Shakespeare Festival

August

A la Carte A la Park

Nihonmachi Street Fair

September

Festival of the Culinary Arts

Ghirardelli Square Chocolate Festival

San Francisco Fringe Theater Festival

San Francisco Blues Festival

October

Fleet Week

Great Halloween and Pumpkin Festival

Viva Mexico

Late October-early November

San Francisco Jazz Festival

November

Polka Festival Weekend (Thanksgiving Weekend) and Polka Hall of Fame Induction

21. Famous Citizens

Ansel Adams (1902–84), photographer.

The "Beat" writers who were based in San Francisco in the 1950s, including Lawrence Ferlinghetti (b. 1920), Jack Kerouac (1922–69), and Allen Ginsberg (b. 1926).

Ambrose Bierce (1842–1914), satirist.

Herb Caen (1916–97), columnist.

Philo Taylor Farnsworth (1906–71), inventor of the first all–electronic television.

U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein (b. 1933).

Jerry Garcia (1942–95), leader of the rock group the Grateful Dead.

Bill Graham (b. 1931), rock and roll promoter.

Bret Harte (1836–1902), local–color author.

William Randolph Hearst (1863–1951), founder of a newspaper empire.

Jack London (1876–1916), adventure writer.

John Muir (1838–1914), naturalist and founder of the Sierra Club.

Frank Norris (1870–1902), naturalist.

Randy Shilts (1951–1994), journalist, author, and AIDS activist.

Leland Stanford (1824–93), businessman and philanthropist.

Amy Tan (b. 1952), author.

22. For Further Study

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Government Offices

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401 Van Ness Avenue
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San Francisco Planning Commission

1660 Mission St. 5th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 558-6414

Tourist and Convention Bureaus

San Francisco Convention and Visitors Bureau
Convention Plaza
201 Third Street, Suite 900
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 974-6900

Publications

Golden State
R.H.L./Golden State Inc.
555 Nineteenth St.
San Francisco, CA 94107

San Francisco Business Times Magazine
275 Battery St., Suite 940
San Francisco, CA 94111

San Francisco Chronicle
901 Mission St.
San Francisco, CA 94103-2988

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110 Fifth St.
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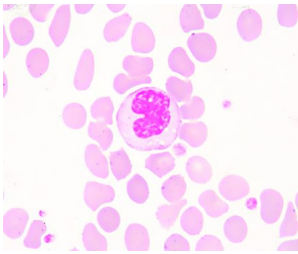
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