

San Francisco weather: the best in America?

Having lived all over America, this native of San Francisco makes the bold claim that San Francisco weather is the jewel of American climates. Although I know that there are those who love the hot, broiling desert summers, the bone-chilling winters of Minnesota and the wilting humidity of the Southern states, three generations of my family have loved the even, pleasant, indeed blessed, San Francisco weather. Let me see if I cannot convince you too.

Besides the diversity of culture to be found, the multitude of parks, museums, theatre, fabulous dining and other entertainments, I'd probably love San Francisco simply for the climate.

There's no need for multiple wardrobes for every horrific seasonal change, snow shovels or mosquito repellent by the gallon. True, you'll need a coat for winter rains, but this coat has year-round purpose, just as useful on a chilly evening in any season. In winter, umbrellas are necessary items, but are rarely blown inside out and ruined by nasty gale winds. San Francisco weather boasts early springs, with winter rains abating, for the most part, in February.

February and March bring all the flowering trees into bloom, making a delightful occasion for a visit to Golden Gate Park. Azaleas and rhododendrons are abundant, with spectacular flower beds surrounding the Conservatory. Cool weather prevails, but usually all that's required to ward off the chill is a light windbreaker.

From April through August, San Francisco weather is best described as temperate. Nice days are the norm, with temperatures averaging between 65(and 72(.

Come September, you may experience the worst San Francisco weather has to offer. This consists of perhaps a few days or a week at the most of a hot spell, when the temperature may soar to 90(in its Indian summer stage. Everyone hangs out of their open windows, complaining loudly of this heat and waiting for it to end, amid great sighs of relief.

Another lovely feature of San Francisco weather are the differences by neighborhood. If you love fog, move to the Richmond or Sunset districts, or better yet out by the beach. For the greatest number of sunny days per year, settle in the Noe Valley or Mission districts. Pacific Heights offers a mix, tending towards sunny weather where you can look down towards the Bay and simply watch the fog roll in every evening.

Although the Financial district and downtown typically sport sunny skies, the

tall buildings make for brisk breezes with a bit of a chill.

For those who like to see the change of seasons with falling leaves, San Francisco obliges, with a smattering of deciduous trees to be found in every neighborhood and all over Golden Gate Park.

If you haven't visited San Francisco, any time is a good time for pleasant weather - just try not to hit those scorching early September days.