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DESTINATION GUIDES • SAN FRANCISCO



What to Do in San Francisco: The Black Book

by Andrea Whittle • June 5, 2017



Photo by Brian Flaherty

Looking northeast, towards Marin County, from the Golden Gate Bridge.

How to eat, shop, and hike your way through the quirky, pioneering, and totally navigable West Coast city.

You could say that San Francisco is a small town masquerading as a big city. On one hand, it's doable in a long weekend and walkable (steep inclines aside), and each neighborhood is unlike the one it borders. There's a quirkiness to this place—you can feel it in the unlikely proximity of Haight-Ashbury's peace-sign-graffitied cafés to Nob Hill's old money social clubs and South of Market's tech alley startups, all against a backdrop of candy-colored Victorians. When it comes to eating here, however, there's nothing provincial about it. San Francisco is the O.G. mecca for new American cuisine. Years before every chef listed the provenance of their salad greens on the menu, [Alice Waters](#) and her Bay Area cohort

invented hyperlocal cooking. And it's still got that swagger (the food at Cala or Tartine Manufactory is proof). The city's pioneering counterculture spirit permeates every corner, fueling constant change.

THE BASICS

Population: 870,887

Average Rent for 1 BR: \$3,433

Median Home Value: \$1,231,000

Jobs in Tech: 68,000

Number of Minutes it Takes to Drive from SFO to Downtown: 30

Local Talking Points: The awesomeness of Steph Curry; Oakland gentrification; the controversial 61-story Salesforce Tower going up in SoMa.

The Only Shoes You'll Need: Slip-on leather flats for her (like the ones from Loewe), and dressy-enough sneakers (like [Allbirds' wool runners](#)) for him.

Average wait time at the no-frills seafood joint Swan Oyster Depot: 2 hours

The average number of years servers work at [Tadich Grill](#), California's oldest restaurant, which still serves the best cioppino in town: 16

WHERE TO STAY

[The Laurel Inn](#)

At the outer edge of Pacific Heights and a few blocks from the Presidio, this 49-room hotel (with a brand new mid-century-style renovation) is smack in the middle of a quiet residential neighborhood.