

California: San Francisco to Point Reyes

Tour-Only Itinerary

From the bustle of Fisherman's Wharf in San Francisco to the giant redwoods in Muir Woods, Northern California offers a profusion of renowned landscapes to explore. Your unique, self-guided walking tour starts in San Francisco—a vibrant city of eclectic neighborhoods, daring street art, and amazing restaurants. Traverse the iconic Golden Gate Bridge (on foot of course) into Marin County's quaint coastal region. While there, you can stroll the artistic streets of Sausalito, marvel at the 100-mile view from atop Mount Tamalpais, and feel the timeless hush of the 800-year-old Cathedral Grove. Further north, coastal splendor and rich marine life await you at Point Reyes National Seashore. This inn-to-inn, San Francisco walking tour is a splendid way to experience California's natural beauty.



Highlights

- Stay in the heart of iconic San Francisco, taking time to browse Ghirardelli Square, ride a cable car, or people-watch in Chinatown.
- Discover the protected coastline of Point Reyes National Seashore, watching for whales and harbor seals as you stroll dramatic bluffs and sandy beaches.
- Wander from your charming hotel, patterned after a 16th-century English country estate, to beautiful Muir Beach.
- Escape the hustle of the city and enter Muir Woods, where stands of massive, old-growth redwoods evoke an ageless sense of tranquility.

On all Self-Guided Adventures you can count on ...



A local representative available 24/7.



Gracious accommodations that are a clean, comfortable home away from home.



Detailed maps & route notes featuring turn-by-turn directions and places of interest.



Experts to handle all the details, including moving your luggage between hotels while you're out exploring.



Scheduled taxi transfers to bring you to and from each day's walks.



Access to a Self-Guided Flight Concierge—ask our knowledgeable team to find flights that sync with your planned trip.



Delicious meals—many are included.

DAY 1

Arrival in San Francisco. Optional Barbary Coast Trail

4 miles, easy, 100-ft. elevation gain and 300-ft. elevation loss

Upon arrival at your boutique hotel, ideally located near Fisherman's Wharf and Ghirardelli Square, you can set off for today's optional walk, weaving your way through the city on a historical and cultural exploration. Including well-known highlights such as Chinatown and Union Square, this fascinating route brings you through quieter neighborhoods and to hidden gems such as Maiden Lane and Telegraph Hill.

You may shorten the walk as you wish, or, if you arrive later in the day, you may relax at your hotel or stroll along the waterfront, perhaps ride a historical cable car, or visit one of the local museums or art galleries. Complimentary bicycles are also available at the hotel. Adjacent to your hotel is the Maritime National Historic Park's Visitor Center and Interactive Museum, which provides an excellent introduction to the history of San Francisco and its surroundings. World-class restaurants abound at your doorstep (advance reservation of approximately two months recommended), or you may dine at the hotel's casual seafood restaurant in Gold Rush Era ambiance.

Accommodation: Argonaut Hotel, San Francisco

DAY 2

San Francisco to Sausalito

8.5 miles, easy, 250-ft. elevation gain and loss

From vibrant San Francisco to the charming, historical village of Sausalito, this full day of walking is rich in natural scenery and culture. Leaving your hotel on foot, you walk along the San Francisco waterfront, passing Ghirardelli Square (of chocolate fame), historical Fort Mason Park, and the Palace of Fine Arts before following Marina Street, with views of the Bay on one side and lovely San Francisco homes on the other, on the way to cross the majestic Golden Gate Bridge. At 1.7 miles long, this famous suspension bridge offers a pedestrian lane where you can linger over views of the city, bay, and Alcatraz and Angel islands. Leaving the bridge, a quiet road passes a former fort and museum before climbing slightly to a headland. The final few miles of walking follow a road leading to the Sausalito waterfront promenade, lined with cafés and art galleries.

Accommodation: The Inn Above Tide, Sausalito

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 3

Sausalito to Muir Beach

5.5 miles, easy to moderate, 700-ft. elevation gain and loss

A short mid-morning transfer takes you to the Tennessee Valley and a wide, well-maintained trail. In just under two miles of walking, you reach the lovely Tennessee Valley Cove—nestled between bluffs on either side, this small beach is perfect for a break. As part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, this protected region is home to over 1,200 plant and animal species and encompasses 59 miles of bay and ocean shoreline. A gradual climb rises to a coastal plateau offering spectacular views of the ocean and, on a clear day, the San Francisco skyline. The trail then hugs the coastline, with a short but steep descent into a lush gully before climbing back to the ridge. As you approach Muir Beach, with its beautiful cove (and one of the only swimmable beaches in the area) and hamlet, you are also walking in the foothills of Mount Tamalpais—the highest peak in the Marin Hills whose flank is tomorrow’s destination.

Accommodation: Pelican Inn, Muir Beach

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 4

Muir Beach to Muir Woods and Mill Valley

6.5 miles, moderate, 600-ft. elevation gain and 1,900-ft. elevation loss

Today’s walk combines open trails with sweeping panoramas and wooded paths as you leave the Golden Gate National Recreation Area and enter Mount Tamalpais State Park. You leave the inn with a short transfer to the trailhead and start a leisurely 15-minute walk to a stunning hilltop view before descending toward the Muir Woods. At the Muir Woods National Monument, you enter the cathedral-like setting of this ancient and magical redwood forest. The Muir Woods is the only old-growth coastal redwood forest in the Bay Area, and one of the last on the planet. John Muir described this area as “the best tree-lover’s monument that could possibly be found in all the forests of the world.” The trail snakes through fern and redwood canyons, following gullies and streams before reaching the canyon floor. A final climb and descent along the Dipsea Trail, location of the famed annual Dipsea Race—the oldest cross-country trail running event and one of the oldest foot races of any kind in the United States—leads you to your home for the night in the picturesque town of Mill Valley. Boasting a superb natural setting on the flank of Mount Tamalpais, Mill Valley combines a rustic village flavor with a celebrated arts, culinary, and shopping scene.

Accommodation: Mill Valley Inn, Mill Valley

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 5

Transfer to Point Reyes National Seashore. Limantour Beach to Olema

8.5 miles, moderate, 1,300-ft. elevation gain and 1,100-ft. elevation loss

After a scenic one-hour transfer along the ridge of Mount Tamalpais, you arrive at the Point Reyes Peninsula. This national seashore is known for its dramatic headlands, steep cliffs, white sand beaches, marine life, and tranquil bays. The walk begins along the coast at Limantour Beach, adjacent to an estuary and Drakes Bay, with intriguing tidal pools. With luck, you may spot harbor seals bobbing offshore or, in the spring, gray whales guiding their calves along the shoreline. Leaving the beach, you enter coastal scrub and eventually traverse lush forest, slowly descending to the Bear Valley Visitor Center, where you may wish to learn more about the diverse ecosystems and cultural heritage of the park before continuing 15 minutes to your hotel. Dinner this evening is included at a favorite local restaurant.

Accommodation: Olema House, Olema

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 6

Departure from San Francisco or Oakland

After breakfast, a transfer takes you back to San Francisco or Oakland for onward travels.

Included Meals: Breakfast

What's Included

Tour Only

Boutique accommodations	✓
9 meals: 5 breakfasts, 2 lunches and 2 dinners	✓
Detailed water- and tear-resistant Route Notes and maps	✓
Orientation phone call with a Country Walkers representative	✓
Local representative available 24/7	✓
Scheduled taxi and luggage transfers (Please note: If unable to walk, it is possible to transfer with your luggage from one accommodation to the next; there may be an additional charge.)	✓
Emergency travel assistance hotline available 24/7	✓