

California: San Francisco to Point Reyes

Tour-Only Itinerary

Every city should be so lucky to have a national park in its own back yard. Emerging onto Tennessee Valley's black-sand beach, you can't believe you're just 10 miles from San Francisco. The rugged beauty rivals anything on the Pacific Coast, with pounding surf and spring-green hillsides carpeted in wild mustard, lupines, and California poppies. Gulls squawk and pelicans fly in formation beneath golden afternoon sun as you continue towards your British-themed inn opposite lovely Muir Beach. Tonight your San Francisco walking tour features a home-cooked dinner, followed by darts and pints in the cozy pub downstairs. Tomorrow, an English breakfast and new adventures in the old-growth redwoods up the road. Just when you thought you left your heart in San Francisco, the Golden Gate's wilder side is starting to work its wiles.



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.

Activity Level

This tour is one of our Self-Guided Walking Adventures, rated easy to moderate, with an average of 4-9 miles per day, with limited options. The terrain includes daily elevation gains up to 1,300 feet and losses up to 1,900 feet. Walks are on pavement, well-maintained dirt trails, either packed or with loose rocks and

roots, as well as grassy paths and sandy beaches. This diverse itinerary includes some of San Francisco's most scenic attractions, such as the historic Golden Gate Bridge, the majestic redwood forests of Muir Woods, and the sweeping Pacific coastal scenery and diverse marine life of Point Reyes National Seashore. The tour offers full walking days with stops and stays in the charming historical towns of Sausalito and Olema. Remember: preparation is the key to ensuring your tour readiness; the more you walk or participate in aerobic exercise prior to your trip, the more you will enjoy your experience!

DAY 1

Your California: San Francisco to Point Reyes tour begins. 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. Weave 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 historic cable car, or visit one of the local museums or art galleries. Complimentary bicycles are also available at your accommodation. 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.

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

with 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. On your way to cross the majestic Golden Gate Bridge, follow Marina Street, with views of the Bay on one side and lovely San Francisco homes on the other. At 1.7 miles long, the famous Golden Gate suspension bridge has 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 a 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.

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 drive 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, the small beach cove 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 takes you to a coastal plateau offering spectacular views of the ocean and, on a clear day, the San Francisco skyline. The trail then hugs the coast, with a short but steep descent into a lush gully before climbing back to the ridge. Soon you approach Muir Beach, with a beautiful cove home to one of the only swimmable beaches in the area. Here, you are also walking in the foothills of Mount Tamalpais—the highest peak in the Marin Hills, and whose flank is tomorrow's destination.

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 4

Muir Beach to Muir Woods and Mill Valley

6.5 miles, moderate, 700-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 drive to the trailhead and start a leisurely 15-minute walk to a stunning hilltop viewpoint before descending toward the Muir Woods. At Muir Woods National Monument, you enter the cathedral-like setting of this ancient and magical redwood forest. 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 takes you along the Dipsea Trail, the 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. Your destination, and your home for the night, awaits 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.

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 5

Travel 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 drive 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 the 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.

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 6

Your California: San Francisco to Point Reyes tour concludes

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

Included Meals: Breakfast

What's Included

Tour Only

Boutique accommodations	✓
5 meals: 5 breakfasts	✓
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 transportation (Please note: If unable to walk, it is possible to travel with your luggage from one accommodation to the next; there may be an additional charge.)	✓