

CALIFORNIA: SAN FRANCISCO TO  
POINT REYES

# Guest Handbook

A Self-Guided Walking Adventure





# Table of Contents

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<b>Daily Itinerary .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Tour Facts at a Glance .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Traveling To and From Your Tour .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Information &amp; Policies .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>The United States at a Glance .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Packing List .....</b>	<b>24</b>

## Travel Style

Our Self-Guided Walking Adventures are ideal for travelers with an independent spirit who enjoy exploring at their own pace. We provide authentic accommodations, luggage transfers, and some meals, along with comprehensive Route Notes, detailed maps, and 24-hour emergency assistance. This gives you the freedom to focus on the things that matter to you—no group, no guide, and no set schedule to stand in the way of enjoying your adventure, your way.



## Overview

Only in San Francisco can a walking vacation take you—on foot—from the heart of one of the world’s most beguiling cities to pristine natural areas of sweeping Pacific views, preserved coastal heights and shoreline, and majestic redwood forest. A unique self-guided walking itinerary starts at San Francisco’s bustling Fisherman’s Wharf and eclectic neighborhoods, walks you across the iconic Golden Gate Bridge, and winds its way into Marin County’s coastal region, including historical Sausalito and Mount Tamalpais. The Muir Woods’ awe-inspiring redwoods are followed by a grand finale of Pacific splendor and rich marine life at the Point Reyes National Seashore. Each stop along the inn-to-inn itinerary delights, from sophisticated seaside, to charming English-style, to boutique village accommodations, all serving up fresh and enticing California fare.





# Daily Itinerary

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## 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 and weave your way through the city on a historical and cultural exploration. Including well-known highlights such as Chinatown and Union Square, the fascinating route also 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 a Gold Rush Era ambiance.

## Overnight in 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.

## Overnight in Sausalito

## 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 and its flank tomorrow's destination.





## Overnight in Muir Beach

### 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 Mt. Tamalpais, Mill Valley combines a rustic village flavor with a celebrated arts, culinary, and shopping scene.

## Overnight in Mill Valley

### 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 along the way. 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's 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.



## **Overnight in Olema**

### **DAY 6**

Departure from San Francisco or Oakland

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

### **ITINERARY CHANGES**

Please bear in mind that this is a typical itinerary, and the actual activities, sites, and accommodations may vary due to season, special events, weather, or transportation schedules. We reserve the right to alter the itinerary, since tour arrangements are made up to a year in advance and unforeseen circumstances may arise that mandate change. Itinerary changes are made to improve the tour and your experience.

### **RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL**

Country Walkers is a leader in active travel with responsible tourism an integral part of our core values. Our tours reflect our dedication to best travel practices—and to the preservation of indigenous cultures and the environment. Country Walkers has made a donation on behalf of every traveler to the CW Travelers Fund, which supports designated projects in the communities and habitats in which we travel. We invite you to learn more about our efforts and initiatives for giving back at [countrywalkers.com/sustainable-travel](https://countrywalkers.com/sustainable-travel).

# Tour Facts at a Glance

## TOUR LENGTH

6 days, 5 nights

## DEPARTURES

This tour is available, on request, from March 1 through November 30, 2019. Please note that Saturday and Sunday start dates work best for availability. Please also note that the tour price includes one departure transfer from Olema to San Francisco (International Airport or city hotel) or Oakland (International Airport) on Day 6 of the tour. If traveling in a group of two or more with separate departure times, additional charges will apply for multiple transfers. All prices are per person, based on double occupancy.

## TOUR PRICE

2018 departures	Per person	Single +	Solo Surcharge
March 1–31	\$2,648	\$1,125	\$565
April 1–November 30	\$2,798	\$1,280	\$565

## STARTING POINT

**Argonaut Hotel, San Francisco, California**

## ENDING POINT

- **San Francisco hotel or International Airport (SFO), San Francisco, California**
- **Or Oakland International Airport (OAK), Oakland, California**

**Based upon individual departure times**



## 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 historical Golden Gate Bridge, the majestic redwood forests of the 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!**

## INCLUSIONS

- » All breakfasts, two lunches (days 4 and 5), and two dinners (days 4 and 5); beverages not included
- » All accommodations while on tour
- » Local transfers as noted in the itinerary
- » Orientation phone call with a Country Walkers representative
- » Luggage transfers between the hotels
- » Detailed water- and tear-resistant Route Notes and maps
- » 24-hour tour-related support provided by Country Walkers' local partner
- » 24-hour travel-related support provided by One Call International Emergency Hotline and Travel Assistance
- » The unbeatable and cumulative experience of the Country Walkers staff

## LET THE JOURNEY BEGIN

Prior to your adventure you will receive:

### **Within 24 hours of reservation confirmation:**

A Confirmation Email with a link to our online guest portal, My Account, which allows you to view important information and manage parts of your account online. Similar to other web-based portals you may already use for online banking or shopping, My Account will let you:

- a. View your active reservations.

- b. Make a payment.
- c. Access the latest version of your reservation invoice.
- d. Access your guest profile where you'll be able to update essential information and preferences (passport information, important dietary considerations, allergies, etc.).
- e. Ensure that your contact information is the most up to date (name, address, phone number, email).
- f. Provide us with your tour arrival and departure details so that we may arrange any included arrival and departure transfers and/or orientation meetings.

### **One day following reservation confirmation:**

An Online Participation Agreement Form to sign and submit (emailed).

### **Within one week of reservation confirmation:**

- a. Your reservation invoice (emailed).
- b. Welcome Documents including your specific dated Hotel Itinerary and this Guest Handbook (emailed).

### **Approximately one month prior to departure:**

Your Travel Documents including the following items (mailed):

- a. Maps and printed water- and tear-resistant Route Notes (day-to-day walking directions; emergency contact information; detailed daily itinerary; information regarding included meals, transfers, and daily logistics; restaurant recommendations for non-included meals; town maps; and information regarding optional activities and transportation).
- b. Printed Travel Documents (your specific dated Hotel Itinerary, Daily Itinerary Overview, and—if included—Arrival & Departure Transfers Overview).
- c. Luggage tags.

## **GRATUITIES**

Standard gratuities for all hotels, meals, and services that are included in your tour price will be paid by Country Walkers; however additional tips are always welcome, especially by your driver(s). Should you wish to tip for meals or services not included in the cost of the tour, please do so at your discretion. Local currency is preferred.

# Traveling To and From Your Tour

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## STARTING POINT

### **Argonaut Hotel, San Francisco, California**

You may check into the hotel at any time on the first day of the tour. However, if you arrive prior to the hotel's check-in time of 3:00 p.m., and your room is not yet ready, you may store your luggage at reception and set out to explore the fascinating neighborhood.

## MOST CONVENIENT AIRPORTS

San Francisco International Airport (SFO), San Francisco

**[flysfo.com](http://flysfo.com)**

## GETTING TO THE STARTING POINT

- » **By taxi:** The most convenient way to travel from San Francisco International Airport to the starting-point hotel is by taxi. Taxis are available on the arrivals/baggage claim level of all terminals. Approximate fare for the 30-minute journey from the airport to the starting-point hotel is approximately \$60, plus tip, traffic permitting.
- » **By airport shuttle:** Many door-to-door shuttle services are also available, such as Super Shuttle (**[supershuttle.com](http://supershuttle.com)**). Reservations can be made online and the one-way fare is approximately \$17 plus tax from the San Francisco Airport to the Argonaut Hotel. Please note that this shuttle stops at numerous hotels and does charge for extra luggage.

## PRE-TOUR ACCOMMODATIONS

We recommend arriving in San Francisco at least one day before the tour starts to explore the fascinating city. Should you wish to spend a pre-tour night in San Francisco, you may wish to stay at the Argonaut Hotel, our standard property for the first night of the tour. Country Walkers would be happy to make a reservation on your behalf. Please contact us to request this service as soon as possible to ensure availability. The cost, available upon request, is payable directly to Country Walkers and is due with your final payment 90 days prior to departure. Our normal cancellation policy applies. These rooms are reserved as a service for you and include a service charge. Better rates may be available online; however, please note that if you make your reservation directly with the hotel, you may not be able to secure the same room as assigned to you for the night on tour (Country Walkers typically uses King Bay View rooms; if you choose to secure an alternate room category, please note that it will be necessary to move to a King Bay View room on Night 1 of the tour. The reservation for Night 1 of the tour will be under your name, though you may need to identify yourself as a Country Walkers and/or Wine Country Trekking guest).

Should you prefer to stay in a different hotel prior to your tour, there are many fine hotels to choose from, including a selection of our favorites below. Please contact any of these hotels directly for reservations.

### Union Square

(Shopping district)

#### Handlery Union Square Hotel

[sf.handlery.com](http://sf.handlery.com)

A budget-friendly family-run hotel.

#### The Westin St. Francis on Union Square

[westinstfrancis.com](http://westinstfrancis.com)

A celebrated destination for travelers since 1904, this iconic property is beautiful and grand—white marble columns, ornate balconies, and intricate woodwork transport guests back to the elegance of yesteryear. Moderate to expensive.

#### Sir Francis Drake Hotel

[sirfrancisdrake.com](http://sirfrancisdrake.com)

Equal parts regal, retro, and relaxed contemporary style, this boutique hotel balances Renaissance-influenced architectural splendor with welcoming warmth. A Kimpton property. Moderate.

## **Petite Auberge**

**[petiteaubergesf.com](http://petiteaubergesf.com)**

This small “French” bed and breakfast just two blocks from Union Square offers cozy rooms, wine and cheese in the evenings, and full breakfast. Inexpensive to moderate.

## **The Embarcadero Waterfront**

(Beautiful views; pleasant walking to Fisherman’s Wharf, AT&T Park, and the famous Ferry Building Open Air Market.)

## **Hotel Vitale**

**[hotelvitale.com](http://hotelvitale.com)**

A modern, green hotel boasting a great location and rooms. Moderate to expensive.

## **Harbor Court Hotel**

**[harborcourthotel.com](http://harborcourthotel.com)**

A Kimpton Hotel. Super friendly staff. Good views from some rooms. Moderate.

## **Hyatt Regency**

**[sanfranciscoregency.hyatt.com](http://sanfranciscoregency.hyatt.com)**

(Make sure you choose the Embarcadero Hyatt, rather than the Grand downtown). Situated across from the historic Ferry Building, this waterfront hotel offers fantastic views from upper floor rooms. Fun glass elevator. Moderate.

## **Nob Hill**

(Just above Union Square, this upper-class neighborhood is renowned for its city landmarks, including the gorgeous Grace Cathedral, as well as the famous hotels that border Huntington Park.)

## **Fairmont San Francisco Hotel**

**[fairmont.com/san-francisco](http://fairmont.com/san-francisco)**

This historic property sits atop Nob Hill, affording breathtaking views of the city and bay while offering easy access to the Financial District, Union Square, and Fisherman’s Wharf. The Fairmont San Francisco is also located at the only spot in the city where each of the cable car lines meet. Beautiful and luxurious, the newer tower rooms offer fantastic views. Expensive.



## **The Scarlet Huntington**

**[thescarlethotels.com](http://thescarlethotels.com)**

This landmark boutique hotel with its timeless red façade and plush, chandelier-lit lobby is a Nob Hill favorite. Expensive.

## **Pacific Heights**

(Ritzy neighborhood perched on the hillside with panoramic views of Golden Gate Bridge. Great local shopping streets include Fillmore, Chestnut, and Union Streets.)

## **Hotel Drisco**

**[www.hoteldrisco.com](http://www.hoteldrisco.com)**

A very classy hotel in a very classy neighborhood. While quieter than other areas with good walking to local neighborhoods, it is far away from Embarcadero and Union Square. Moderate to Expensive.

## **ENDING POINT AND TIME**

- **San Francisco hotel or International Airport (SFO), San Francisco, California**
- **Or Oakland International Airport (OAK), Oakland, California**

## **Based upon individual departure times**

There are no walks scheduled for the last day of the tour. A complimentary private transfer will be provided from your last hotel to one of the above-listed airports or a San Francisco city hotel. The journey takes approximately 1.5 hours, depending on traffic. Please check flight schedules carefully and contact your airline directly for specific check-in requirements.

**In order to arrange your departure transfer, please provide us with your arrival and departure details at least 45 days prior to departure through our online portal, My Account. (A Confirmation Email with a link to My Account will be sent to you within 24 hours of reservation confirmation.)**

Please note that the tour price includes one departure transfer from Olema to San Francisco (International Airport or city hotel) or Oakland (International Airport) on Day 6 of the tour. If traveling in a group of two or more with separate departure times, additional charges will apply for multiple transfers.

## **MOST CONVENIENT AIRPORTS**

San Francisco International Airport (SFO), San Francisco, California  
**[flysfo.com](https://flysfo.com)**

Oakland International Airport (OAK), Oakland, California  
**[flyoakland.com](https://flyoakland.com)**

# Information & Policies

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## GUARANTEED DEPARTURES

Country Walkers guarantees the departure of every tour\*, which gives peace of mind for every guest. From the moment your reservation is confirmed, you can start preparing for your adventure. We take care of all the details to ensure a seamless Self-Guided experience. For best availability, reserve your trip early.

*\*except in cases of force majeure*

## RESERVATIONS

Please note that the method by which Self-Guided Adventures are reserved differs in important ways from typical scheduled tours. We encourage all guests to refrain from purchasing plane tickets or making contingent plans until they receive confirmation from us. Here's how the process works:

1. **Reservation Request.** The process begins when you make a reservation request for this tour, either online at [countrywalkers.com](https://countrywalkers.com) or by calling Country Walkers at 800.464.9255. Please note the online form does not on its own constitute a final reservation or a guarantee of tour space. If you use the form, one of our Tour Consultants will call within one business day. Outside of 90 days prior to the tour start date, a \$350 per person deposit is required at the time of the reservation request. Within 90 days prior to the tour start date, your final tour cost is required. If we are unable to accommodate you on your preferred dates/tour (or an alternative of your choice), this payment is fully refunded.
2. **Reservation Request Receipt.** Upon receipt of your deposit and preferred tour start dates, you will be provided with an emailed reservation request receipt, stating your reservation number and reconfirming the details of your reservation request (tour name, departure date, and tour price), while we get working on securing availability with all the hotels.
3. **Confirmation.** Our goal is to confirm your reservation request within five business days; however, this may take longer for a variety of reasons. All of our accommodations are available on a request basis; we do not hold blocks of rooms and, therefore, must confirm availability at the time of your request. If possible, we recommend you provide a range of back-up tour start dates at the time of your initial request. Once your reservation is confirmed, a Tour Consultant will contact

you. Once you have received our official confirmation, you can make flight reservations.

4. **Final Payment.** Final tour payment is due 90 days prior to tour departure date. As pricing is determined over a year in advance, we may be forced to change our listed price over time. However, please note that once your reservation is confirmed, we will always honor the price quoted when you booked.

## TOUR ACCOMMODATIONS

**Hotel Availability:** Since we typically use small, boutique properties for Self-Guided tours, securing availability can sometimes prove challenging, especially on short notice. (Again, we encourage guests to book early and be flexible.) On some tours, if our standard property is not available, we may have alternate hotels of equivalent quality that we have approved. We'll book one of these alternates if the standard property is not available. If the hotel or room type requires a surcharge, we will contact you prior to reserving it. We will not reserve non-approved properties.

**Room Category:** We typically book standard rooms. If you are interested in upgrading your room type, please contact a Tour Consultant. Please bear in mind that upgrades are not available at every hotel; surcharges will be determined once we know what's available. Triple rooms (or rooms with two beds) can be a rarity. Should you desire such an accommodation, we may need to offer two rooms—supplements may apply. Please allow us extra time to sort the options out.

## ORIENTATION MEETING & TRANSFERS

Though Self-Guided tours are a predominantly private experience, there are occasions where you may be in contact with others. Because guests are allowed to pick their own start dates, there may be other Country Walkers travelers staying in the same properties as you or even starting on the same date. For this reason, we may need to combine your orientation meeting with that of other guests or ask you to share on-tour transfers. This does not mean you need to walk together.

## GUEST RESPONSIBILITIES

Each guest has the responsibility to select a trip appropriate to his/her abilities and interests and to prepare for the trip by carefully reading the confirmation materials. To join this trip, you must be in good health and capable of

completing activities as described in the day-to-day itinerary. Our in-house experts welcome the opportunity to discuss the tour in more detail. In order to meet your needs, we ask that you please share any relevant physical limitations or health conditions when you make your reservation. Prior to your adventure you will be asked to sign a Participation Agreement to accept your responsibilities.

## **CHANGES IN PLANS**

After booking, you may change your reservation's destination, departure date, departure city, or Tour Extensions for a \$100-per-person administrative fee. We will waive this fee for changes made within the first two weeks of booking. Any cancellation charges or applicable fees imposed by hotels or operators will be passed along to the guest. We encourage you to consult our cancel policy for the particular trip you have booked. All changes are subject to availability and cannot be guaranteed. Please note that tours with seasonal pricing may involve a higher price point. Please note: This change policy does not apply to Special Departures. Please notify us in writing.

## **CANCELLATIONS AND REFUNDS**

Cancellations must be made in writing and fees are applied as noted. Cancellation refunds will be calculated as of the date we receive your written cancellation. All payments for travel services not provided to the guest will be refunded in accordance with these Terms and Conditions and in accordance with Country Walkers' cancellation policy. Exceptions to this cancellation policy cannot be made for any reason, including personal emergencies, illness, or weather. Please note that the tiered tour price is based on a guarantee of a specified number of guests—should your group decrease in size, we reserve the right to alter the per person price if necessary as reflected in the Tour Price table.

### **Self-Guided Adventures**

- » Cancellations received on or before 91 days prior to the start of the trip: \$150 per person
- » Cancellations received 90 to 61 days prior to the start of the trip: 25 percent loss of trip price
- » Cancellations received 60 or fewer days prior to the start of the trip: 100 percent loss of trip price



### **TRAVEL PROTECTION PLAN**

We offer guests the opportunity to purchase a Travel Protection Plan. Please contact us for details.

### **TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS**

Travel arrangements not included in the price of your trip (such as local train tickets or post-tour excursions) can be purchased through your local travel agent, or Better Travel, a Vermont-based agency (800.331.6996 or [bettertravel@madriver.com](mailto:bettertravel@madriver.com)).

# The United States at a Glance

## ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

For information about entry requirements, see [travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov).



### Travel Tip

Have a variety of monetary options to start your trip: cash, ATM card(s), and credit card(s).

## CURRENCY

For up-to-date exchange rates for the U.S. dollar with other currencies, see [oanda.com](http://oanda.com).

Always contact your bank or your credit-card company for details on fees and card use when traveling.

## TIME ZONE

Find the official time at your U.S. destination at [time.gov](http://time.gov).

## PHONE & INTERNET

United States country code: +1

Cell phone coverage throughout the United States is extensive, but cannot be guaranteed to be accessible on all mobile carriers or to function at all times while on the trail or in remote areas.

For more information regarding international phone use, please refer to [countrywalkers.com/phones](http://countrywalkers.com/phones).



Internet access is generally very good in towns and villages; however, it is not guaranteed at all of the hotels used on the tour. For more details regarding Wi-Fi availability, please refer to the Itinerary Overview.

## LANGUAGE

The official language of the United States is English.

## ELECTRICITY

Alternating current of 120V and 60Hz is used in the United States. The majority of plugs are Type B, with two square and one round prong. For a full listing of electrical outlets worldwide, see [electricaloutlet.org](http://electricaloutlet.org).

## WEATHER

Country Walkers visits a range of U.S. destinations, spanning the continent from Maine to Washington State. Tour dates coincide with the ideal weather and conditions for an active vacation.

Fall in New England means stunning foliage, warm days, and crisp nights. Spring and fall in the desert climates of California's Death Valley, Colorado, and Utah start off with chilly mornings that turn into dry and sunny days. Summer in Washington State, Montana, and California can offer sunny days and cooler nights—with local variation and seasonal precipitation in all regions.

For up-to-date forecasts, see [qwikcast.com](http://qwikcast.com). For historical average temperatures and rainfall, see [weatherbase.com](http://weatherbase.com).

## FOOD & DRINK

In addition to the well-known standard repertoire of American food, considerable regional variation reflects the cultural heritage and seasonal harvest of individual areas.

In the southwestern states and California, dishes are Mexican- and cowboy-influenced. In Washington State, the bounty includes fresh salmon and other Pacific seafood. In Montana, game, freshly caught fish, and steaks predominate. And in New England, seasonal produce and local specialties such as cheese and maple syrup are ubiquitous, and of course, delectable Maine lobster and seafood are a highlight.

### Travel Tip

For international visitors bringing a hair dryer or other electrical device:

- Bringing your own hair dryer or other electrical device? You'll need a travel converter, available at most hardware, travel, or consumer electronic stores.
- For laptops or an electronic device with a dual voltage switch, you'll need the adapter plug but not a converter.



## LIFE IN THE UNITED STATES



### Shopping and banking hours

Shops and stores are generally open Monday to Saturday between 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., and on Sundays from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Shopping malls, department stores, and supermarkets are open all day, every day of the week, from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. (or later; check locally).

Banks are open from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday to Friday, and some branches are open from 9:00 a.m. to noon on Saturday.

### Travel Tip

For both U.S. and international travelers, a fascinating resource on American history and culture is the U.S. Library of Congress: [loc.gov](https://www.loc.gov).

Originating as Thomas Jefferson's personal collection, the library maintains a website that is not only a library catalog, but a clearinghouse for wide-ranging information on U.S. history, folklife, geography, the performing arts, and more.

### Mealtimes

Breakfast is served at hotels from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. In restaurants, lunch is served from noon to 3:00 p.m. and dinner is usually served from 4:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. (but with substantial local variation).

### Tipping

In restaurants and bars, leave 15 to 20 percent of the total. Taxi drivers receive 10 to 15 percent of the fare. For luggage assistance, from \$2 to \$5 depending on the service offered.

## TRAVEL RESOURCES

### National U.S. official tourist board

[discoveramerica.com](https://discoveramerica.com)

### Public holidays

To assist in travel planning, it may be helpful to be aware of U.S. public holidays. See [opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/snow-dismissal-procedures/federal-holidays/#url=2016](https://opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/snow-dismissal-procedures/federal-holidays/#url=2016) for an official list; and for a description of U.S. holidays, visit [usa.gov/citizens/holidays.shtml](https://usa.gov/citizens/holidays.shtml).

## TRAVEL IN THE UNITED STATES

A wealth of travel information is available at [discoveramerica.com](http://discoveramerica.com). For a list of all U.S. official state tourist boards, visit [usa.gov/Citizen/Topics/Travel-Tourism/State-Tourism.shtml](http://usa.gov/Citizen/Topics/Travel-Tourism/State-Tourism.shtml).



### Airports

The United States has an enormous international and domestic air network with dozens of companies and hundreds of airports. For travel to various regions and airports, individual state tourist boards offer travel and airport information: [usa.gov/Citizen/Topics/Travel-Tourism/State-Tourism.shtml](http://usa.gov/Citizen/Topics/Travel-Tourism/State-Tourism.shtml).

### Trains

**Amtrak:** [amtrak.com](http://amtrak.com), the national railway company site with schedules, fares, and pass options.

### Other local transportation

Long-distance bus travel can also be a convenient way to reach a destination. National companies include Greyhound ([greyhound.com](http://greyhound.com)), Trailways ([trailways.com](http://trailways.com)), and Megabus ([megabus.com](http://megabus.com)); check locally for smaller regional long-distance bus companies.

Major car rental agencies are available at airports, city centers, and train and bus stations. Taxis are available at all major airports, cities, train and bus stations, and in smaller towns, and can be reserved in advance (your hotel can usually provide assistance).

For more information contact Country Walkers.

### Travel Tip

Country Walkers' U.S. itineraries include many of the country's best-known national parks; for more information, visit [nps.gov](http://nps.gov)



# Packing List

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## PACKING TIPS

Pack light! Keep in mind most hotels are small and family-run and may not provide luggage assistance from the reception area to the room so there will be times you may have to carry your own luggage short distances. Due to space constraints, we require you to limit your luggage to one medium piece (approximately 18x15x29 inches or 8,000 cu. in.) and one small carry-on, per person. Please note that due to health and safety reasons, our local representatives are not permitted to carry (individual) bags that exceed 30 lbs (15 kg). We recommend packing any personal necessities, medications, your hotel itinerary/emergency contact information, your hiking boots (or shoes), and extra clothes in your carry-on luggage in the event that your baggage is delayed. We suggest leaving valuable jewelry at home. A copy of your passport or other important documents should be kept in a separate area of your luggage. Always be alert when carrying a purse, camera, money belt, or backpack in busy cities, airports, and train stations.

## FOOTWEAR

- » Hiking boots or shoes. There are many brands to choose from. Proper fit is crucial, so try on new boots or shoes while wearing socks you plan to use on tour. Be sure to break in new footwear well before your tour begins. If you are bringing a favorite pair of older boots, please check that soles and seams are in good shape before you depart! By the time you're ready to join your walking tour, you should be able to complete 4–9 miles of walking without discomfort. We require lightweight boots or shoes with proper ankle support and good tread to ensure stability on all types of terrain. Waterproof footwear keeps feet dry in heavy rain and water resistant footwear keeps feet dry in heavy dew.
- » Comfortable shoes for evening strolls
- » Synthetic, moisture-wicking socks (cotton socks are not recommended for walking as they will quickly cause blisters)
- » Blister remedy

## CLOTHING

- » Lightweight, wash-and-wear long pants

- » Long-sleeved, wash-and-wear shirt
- » T-shirts and shorts
- » Polar fleece or light wool pullover (it will keep you warm even when wet)
- » Dinner attire: dress is smart casual
- » Light jacket or sweater for evening strolls

## OUTERWEAR

- » Waterproof rain gear: jacket, pants, hat, or hood
- » Windbreaker with hood (your rain gear may be suitable)
- » Hat with a broad brim or visor

## EQUIPMENT

- » Cell phone: for both practical and safety reasons, **we strongly advise that you carry a cell phone while traveling and at all times while you are out walking.** (Please note you may encounter intermittent coverage while on the trail or in remote areas.)
- » Pack (minimum size of 25L): large enough to carry water, extra clothing, rain gear, lunch, and personal items (camera, etc.)
- » Waterproof cover for pack
- » Water bottle, canteen, or CamelBak-type water reservoir or hydration pack to carry your own water while walking (equivalent of one to two liters)
- » Sunblock and lip balm
- » Insect repellent
- » Sunglasses
- » Toilet kit for when facilities are not available on the walks. Include zip-lock baggies, tissues, and moist towelettes, which can be disposed of upon return to the hotel
- » Personal first-aid kit including any medications you ordinarily take (in their original container)

## OPTIONAL

- » Telescopic walking sticks (Please note that while telescopic walking sticks ***are recommended*** for this tour, they are not provided by Country Walkers. Therefore please plan on bringing your own should you wish to use them.)

- » Binoculars
- » Bathing suit for optional swimming in the ocean and hotel pools or spas
- » Flip flops or water sandals
- » Camera and charger and/or extra batteries
- » Zip-lock bags (to keep camera and valuables dry)
- » Small notebook and pen
- » Field guides
- » Folding umbrella
- » Waterproof poncho (in addition to aforementioned rain gear, especially if expecting wet weather): while the aforementioned rain gear may suffice, a poncho offers the advantage of being lightweight, compact, big enough to cover both you and your backpack, long enough to allow for sitting on wet surfaces or act as a shelter, cool enough to wear during summer rains, and is cheap!
- » Bandana
- » Hand sanitizer and/or moist towelettes
- » Motion sickness bracelets or other non-sleep-inducing remedy if prone to motion sickness on bus, car or boat rides
- » Alarm clock

## ONLINE STORE

To help you prepare for your trip, we've carefully selected a range of comfortable, easy-packing travel apparel and accessories from leading brands such as Eagle Creek, Craghoppers, Patagonia, Tilley, and others. Whether you're traveling to Vietnam, walking in Canada, or exploring the hills of Ireland, our Travel Shop is here to ensure you're ready to enjoy your adventure to the fullest.

**Visit the CW Travel Shop at [cw.newheadings.com](http://cw.newheadings.com).**