



San Francisco - City Business Guide

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Overview

San Francisco, one of the world's most popular destinations, combines a gorgeous location with charming, cosmopolitan culture. Known for its hilly cityscape, the City by the Bay enjoys a moderate climate as well as one of the West Coast's strongest economies. With one of the United States' most ethnically diverse populations, it is clear that those who cross the country or the world to make San Francisco their home contribute to the city's unique identity. San Francisco is an important international trading center, especially for the Pacific Rim, and a gateway, along with San Jose, for Silicon Valley. The city's other main industries are retail, technology, fashion, finance and business services.

Business Etiquette

* Formal dress is the norm for corporate executives and those working in the legal, consulting, accounting and banking industries. Dress is more casual in other sectors, particularly in the technology domain and particularly during hot summer weather.

* Appointments should be made and kept punctually.

* It is customary to open and end a meeting with a handshake.

* Casual conversation, lasting a few minutes, often starts a meeting.

* Business cards can be presented at the start or end of a meeting.

* Privacy should be respected in business contexts.

* An open and direct business style is the norm.

* Deals should be followed up and confirmed in writing as quickly as possible.

* Friendships in the business community should not be underestimated when it comes to getting things done.

* Ask where (and when) smoking is permitted.

* If invited to someone's house, it is customary to bring flowers or another hostess gift.

Chamber of Commerce

San Francisco Chamber of Commerce Tel.: 415 392 4520

British American Chamber of Commerce Tel.: +1 415 296-8645

Chinese Chamber of Commerce Tel.: +1 415 982-3000

French-American Chamber of Commerce Tel.: +1 415 442 4717

Japanese Chamber of Commerce Tel.: +1 650 522 8500

Korean-American Chamber of Commerce 1115 Keith Avenue Berkeley, CA 94708-1606 Tel.: +415 248-1815

The U.S. and Mexico Chamber of Commerce 530 Water Street, Suite 740 Oakland, CA 94607, Tel.: 510-251-5930 or Tel: 510-251-5900

Embassies and Consulates

Brazilian Consulate, 300 Montgomery Street, Suite 900; Tel.: +1 415 981-8170

British Consulate1, 1 Sansome Street, Suite 850, San Francisco, CA 94104, Tel.: +415 617-1375

Chinese Consulate General, 1450 Laguna Street; Tel.: +415 674-2900

Honorary Consulate of the Czech Republic, 201 Filbert Street, Suite 700; Tel.: +1 415 391-1313

French Consulate, 540 Bush Street; Tel.: +1 415 397-4330

German Consulate, 1960 Jackson Street; Tel.: +1 415 775-1061

Italian Consulate, 2590 Webster Street; Tel.: +1 415 931-4924 *Japanese Consulate*50 Fremont St., Suite 2300; Tel.: +1 415 777-3533

Republic of Korea, 3500 Clay Street; Tel.: +1 415 921-2251

Mexican Consulate, 532 Folsom Street; Tel.: +415 354-1700

Business Centers

Business centers provide a range of services that include secretarial, translation/interpretation, and office services, including computer rentals, audio/visual equipment rentals, cellular phone rentals, copy and printing services, and temporary office space and staff.

Bay Area World Trade Center 544 Water Street, Oakland, CA 94607; Tel.: +1.510.2515900

Hq Global Work Places 50 California Street; Tel.: +1 415 439-5200

Hq Global Work Places One Sansome Street; Tel.: +1 415 951-4600

Hq Global Work Places 425 Market Street; Tel.: +1 415 781-5000

Hq Global Work Places 1750 Montgomery Street; Tel.: +1 415 954-8500

Hq Global Work Places One Embarcadero Center; Tel.: +1 415 433-6363

Regus Business Center 795 Folsom St Ste 1; Tel.: +1 415 848-2300

Regus Business Center 35th and 36th floors San Francisco CA 94105; Tel.: 1-415-293-8000 / 1- 877-734-8787 Fax : 1-415-293-8001

Premier Business Centers 225 Bush St, 16th Floor; Tel.: +1 415-439-8300

Conference and Exhibition Centers

Concourse Exhibition Center 635 Eighth Street; Tel.: +415 490-5800

Herbst International Exhibition Hall Laguna Street; Tel.: +1 415 441-3400

Moscone Center 747 Howard Street; Tel.: +415 974-4000

South San Francisco Conference Center 255 Airport Boulevard; Tel.: +1 650 877-8787

Translation Offices

RWS Group 340 Brannan Street, 5th Floor; Toll-Free Tel.: +1 888

2TRANSLATE, Tel.: +1 415 512-8800

Golden Gate Translation Service Tel.: +1 415 771-1706

A to Z translations and interpreting 388 market street suite 500, Tel.: 415 677 0970

Courier/Messenger Services

A Speedway Delivery and Messenger Service Tel.: +1 415 243-8600

Western Messenger Services, Inc. Tel.: +1 415 487-4100

Western Messenger Tel.: +1 415 487 4100

DHL Tel.: +1 800 225-5345

FedEx Tel.: +1.800.247.4747

UPS Tel.: +1 800 742-5877

World Courier Inc. Tel.: +1 650 952-2630

Internet Connection Place

All upper-range and most medium-priced hotels are equipped with dataports that allow guests to use laptop computers. Many hotels offer business centers equipped with computers and Internet access. Outside hotels, cyber cafes are available including:

Quetzal Internet Cafe 1234 Polk Street, Tel : +1 415 673-4181

Compusa 750 Market St Ste 435, Tel : +1 415 391-9778

Golden Gate Perk Internet Cafe 401 Bush St, Tel : +1 415 362-3929

Cafe.Com 120 Mason St, Tel : +1 415 433 4001

Chit Chat Cafe 5 W Manor Dr, Tel : +1 650 738-2380

Visas & Customs

Passports valid for at least six months after arrival are required for all. In general, travelers visiting the U.S. are required visas. However, under the Visa Waiver Program, citizens of Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brunei, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, San Marino, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom are allowed to stay for 90 days without a visa. Citizens of Canada and Mexico do not need a visa but must carry proof of citizenship and identity.

Beginning October 26, 2004, all travelers, including children of any age, who want to travel visa-free to the United States under the Visa Waiver Program must have a Machine-readable passport.

Duty-free allowances are 200 cigarettes or 50 cigars or 2 kilograms of tobacco, 1 liter of alcohol, and gifts worth up to \$100. Meat products, seeds, plants, fruits, and hazardous goods are prohibited.

Phone Information

The area code in San Francisco is 415.

Emergency Phone Numbers

Emergency police, fire, and ambulance 911

Tips and Rules for Use of Phone in Country

For local calls, dial the seven-digit telephone number. For long-distance calls within the U.S., dial 1, then the three-digit area code, then the seven-digit number. For long-distance calls outside the U.S., first dial 011 and the country code. Four special prefixes, "800," "888," "877," and "900," are not area codes but indicators of special services. "800," "888," and "877" are toll-free calls. The "900" numbers charge you for the call and are often expensive. For collect calls or operator-assisted calls, dial "0" instead of "1". For local directory assistance, dial 411. For long-distance information, dial 1, and then the appropriate area code followed by 555-1212.

The most common public phone is the coin-operated type. Telephone-card phones are becoming increasingly common.

Tips and Rules for Use and Rental of Mobile Phones

There are several cellular service providers in the U.S., including: Verizon Wireless, T-Mobile, Cingular, AT&T Wireless, and Sprint PCS. Mobile phone numbers follow the regular telephone number convention, with the seven-digit telephone number followed by the area code.

If you choose to bring your cellular phone into the U.S., be sure to check with your home cellular service provider to establish compatibility of your phone with systems abroad. Rent a locally compatible cellular phone before you arrive to obtain reasonable rates and reliable service.

Money

Foreign currency must be exchanged to U.S. dollars. Money can be exchanged at banks and various foreign-exchange services. Most restaurants, shops, and hotels will take travelers' checks and major credit cards. Travelers can also withdraw cash from ATMs.

The basic unit of U.S. currency is the dollar, which equals 100 cents. Coins are the copper penny (1 cent) and four silver coins: the nickel (5 cents), the dime (10 cents), the quarter (25 cents), and the half-dollar (50 cents). Silver \$1 coins and "golden" dollar coins also exist. Paper bills come in denominations of \$1, \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50, and \$100.

Tippling

* **Restaurants** 15 to 20 percent of bill, none at fast-food restaurants

* **Bars** About US\$1 per drink or 10% to 15% of drink prices

* **Airport Skycap/Porter** US\$1 per piece of luggage

* **Taxis** 10 percent of fare

* **Hotel Bell Desk** US\$1 per piece of luggage or per taxi summoned

* **Hotel Housekeeping** US\$1 per person per day

* **Hotel Room Service** 15 percent of bill

* **Parking Attendant/Valet** 15 percent of parking rate

* **Haircare/Personal Services** 20 percent of bill

Time Difference

San Francisco lies in the Pacific Time Zone (Greenwich Mean Time minus eight hours). During the spring and summer months, San Francisco, like all of California, observes Daylight Savings Time.





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VAT & Taxes

The sales tax in San Francisco is 8.5%. The tax on hotel rooms is 14%.

Voltage

110V AC, 60Hz. Plugs are of the flat, two-pin type.

Local Transportation

If you only plan to stay in San Francisco, you can easily get by with walking, using public transportation, and taking taxis. If you are staying at a major hotel have them hail a cab for you. If it is late at night on a weekend you can call for a cab but always ask how long the wait will be, it could easily be 45 minutes before it finally arrives. The best places to hail cabs are near hotels downtown or along Market Street. An average cab fare will run you about US\$10, depending on your destination.

The AC Transit bus system runs between the East Bay and San Francisco's Transbay Terminal at First and Mission streets. Several routes, the F/Berkeley and T/Oakland, run until 2am, two hours after BART's last train. The N/Oakland runs 24 hours a day. Golden Gate Transit offers daily bus service to and from Marin and Sonoma counties and San Francisco. Muni, San Francisco's main public transportation system, operates buses, trolleys, and an underground system. All Muni fares are one dollar for a one-way ticket.

Health Info

No specific immunizations are needed to enter the United States. For more information, contact the Center for Disease Control at 1-800-311-3435.

Climate

Although San Francisco's climate is generally mild, fog is common in the area. From November through February rain alternates with clear, sunny days. This period, with temperatures hovering in the 50's, is San Francisco's least foggy. The periods of March through June and September through October experience slightly warmer temperatures and more sunshine. Summer temperatures rarely exceed 70 degrees Fahrenheit (21 C). Winter weather may feel colder than the reported averages between 8 and 14 degrees Celsius due to sea breezes, but truly bitter cold is very rare.

Public Holidays

- * **New Year's Day** January 1
- * **Martin Luther King Jr. Day** Third Monday in January
- * **Presidents' Day** Third Monday in February
- * **Easter** Sunday in mid-March or early April
- * **Memorial Day** Last Monday in May
- * **Independence Day** July 4
- * **Labor Day** First Monday in September
- * **Columbus Day** Second Monday in October
- * **Veterans' Day** November 11
- * **Thanksgiving** Fourth Thursday in November
- * **Christmas** December 25

Where to Eat

Lulu is renowned for its menu inspired by Southern French cuisine and its carefully selected wines. **Chez Spencer** is an elegant French restaurant with a flowered garden and a heated and fully covered patio. A celebrity-studded clientele frequents **Black Cat** for its inventive Continental-style cooking and decadent desserts. For an amazing view of The Golden Gate Bridge and imaginative vegetarian cuisine, try **Greens** and its Mediterranean, Asian, Mexican and American Southwest inspired cuisine. A 1930s interior sets the tone at **Bix**, considered by many to be one of San Francisco's best restaurants; the menu features refined American cuisine. Award-winning chef Michael Mina serves wonderful seafood in his eponymous restaurant **Michael Mina** in the Westin St. Francis Hotel, while **Ponzu** attracts a dining crowd looking for Thai, Malaysian, Japanese, Chinese, and Vietnamese food.

Local Gift Ideas

San Francisco's extensive Chinatown is a good place to find unusual, exotic gifts. Imported jewelry can often be found at a significantly discounted price. The Flea Market on Treasure Island, operational on Sundays, hosts many vendors selling antique objects and collectible items. For brand name fashion, visit the department stores and designer boutiques in the Union Square area. Internationally renowned Ghirardelli Square chocolate is also a good gift, as is Californian wine. For authentic tasting tours, take an excursion to Napa and Sonoma.

Leisure Time

For a spectacular view of the bay, visit Coit Tower. A cable car ride is a quintessential San Francisco experience. Taking it in the early morning to Fisherman's Wharf is a worthwhile excursion. A visit to Chinatown takes you through a sensory labyrinth that includes food stalls with tasty treats. The Museum of Modern Art has a fine collection.

If there is no fog, a spectacular view of the Marin headlands can be had from the coastal trail that extends from Cliff House to the Golden Gate Bridge. For awe-inspiring views of the city, climb to the top of the Marin headlands, which also serves as an outdoor recreation site. The beautiful Golden Gate Park is the site of the Asian Art Museum, Japanese Tea Garden and Conservatory of Flowers. California's giant redwoods can be appreciated by driving through the Muir Woods.

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