



PHOTO: STEPHEN KAPINOS

Where: From the iconic Golden Gate Bridge to the charming streetcars that navigate the steep inclines of the seven hills, to the largest Chinatown outside of Asia, San Francisco has plenty to offer travelgirls and is one of the most visited cities in the world.

Why: Even if you've listened to the honks of the seals at Pier 39, grabbed

the pole on a passing street car and purchased exotic herbs in Chinatown, there's still plenty of places to explore and experience in this cultural capital of Northern California.



They've Got Personality: Ghirardelli chocolates, red wine and OPI nail polish are included in the Girls Night Out package at **Hotel Diva**, perfectly named and situated for a girlfriend getaway. For a more traditional stay,

try the grand dame of the Diva's sister hotel, **Kensington Park**. Located right on **Union Square**, this elegant 1925 hotel serves afternoon tea and eve-

ning sherry to its guests under the hand-painted ceiling of its stylish lobby.

Urban Sips: You don't have to hit the Napa or Sonoma regions to visit a winery. Experience a tasting where California winemaking really began — right in San Francisco. Before the 1906 earthquake devastated the city, more than 100 win-

eries and commercial cellars flourished in the **SoMa** area, which stands for South of Market. Vintners returned to the reconstructed city but were shut down by Prohibition. Revisit the roots of the industry at **Bluxome Street Winery**, where you can sip on that day's pours from Napa or the Russian River Valley, while watching wine being produced at this working winery.



PHOTOS THIS PAGE: COURTESY; HOTEL DIVA; BOURBON & BRANCH; SAN FRANCISCO CVB; JAN SCHROEDER



Dining: Take a step into **Farallon** and you're transported to a world under the sea, a perfect setting for the coastal cuisine created by Chef Mark Franz. Seafood is the specialty and you can dine on caviar, soft shell crabs, Hawaiian ono and Pacific spearfish. For a sampling of several varieties of iced shellfish, try the Fruits de Mer, an "extravagant platter" that comes in grand and royal sizes. Enjoy a premier vegetarian lunch with a view at **Greens Restaurant**, where you'll dine on deliciously prepared local produce while enjoying the vistas of the Golden Gate Bridge and the Marina.

You'll have your choice of cuisine at the **Ferry Building Marketplace**. Try the Messy Pig — a pulled pork and spicy pepper sandwich — from **Boccalone**, sample artisan cheeses at **Cowgirl Creamery** or feast at the renowned Vietnamese restaurant **Slanted Door**, with windows overlooking the Bay. The Ferry Building is a must-see, even if you aren't able to take home any of the fresh seafood, meat and produce for sale at the certified farmers market every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. Before you leave, take a seat outside



PHOTOS THIS PAGE FROM TOP: SLANTED DOOR BY AYA BRACKETT; JAN SCHROEDER; CALIFORNIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCE

around the back for great people watching and a view of the bay.

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Retail Rendezvous: How to choose which district for shopping? For high-end designers, walk down the street from Hotel Diva to Union Square for Prada, Armani and Gucci. Beauty product fans will want to head to **Fillmore Street**, where the charming neighborhood houses perfumeries, beauty retailers as well as interior design boutiques. Hippie chicks can head to **Haight Street**, where funky clothing shops showcase local designers, while European designs can be found in the Italian district of **North Beach**. Bargain hunters will want to check out **Jeremy's Department Store** in SoMa, stocked with



PHOTO: MELISSA LIEN

Sky, Land and Sea: Travel through the coral reefs of the Philippines, the flooded forest of the Amazon and visit the remote islands of Madagascar and the Galapagos, all under the roof of the magnificent **California Academy of Science**. This is the only place in the world where an aquarium, natural history museum and planetarium are housed under one roof. Be sure to check out the living roof as it showcases 2.5 acres of native California plants. Go Thursday nights for Night-Life, voted "Best Steamy Date Night," where you can munch and mingle, enjoying cocktails and music while exploring the exhibits. Or reserve the one-hour VIP tour that includes an open bar in a reserved area before the tour, VIP access to the Rainforest, a reserved seat at the planetarium show and interaction with Academy researchers in the lab. *Travelgirl tip: get \$5 off the entrance fee with your key from a Personality Hotel.*

Start Here: www.sanfrancisco.travel



Opposite page from left: The iconic Golden Gate Bridge; Hotel Diva; Bourbon & Branch; Bluxome Street Winery. This page from left: dish at Slanted Door; Haight-Ashbury; shopping near Fillmore Street; California Academy of Science

