



San Francisco to Half Moon Bay

Trip Length: 2 Riding Days | 1 Night

Start & End: San Francisco

Distance: 68 miles or 86 miles

Difficulty: Easygoing/Moderate

Itinerary Summary

Travel through the southern side of San Francisco, past Lake Merced, and enter the quaint town of Pacifica after rolling coastal bike paths. Enjoy a treat at the Half Moon Bay Harbor, check out the local brewing company, and meander down ocean side bike paths before reaching your beachside campsite for the night. Enjoy the small town of Half Moon Bay, forest roads, and even stop into the slew of nurseries along the road on your return ride. Or, take the long option home for vast coastline vistas, farmsteads, and towering thick redwoods. Ride along the ridge of the South Bay hills and past the Crystal Springs Reservoirs for a scenic afternoon. Return to San Francisco along the ocean bike path, and take a moment at the beach before you finish back in Golden Gate Park.

A Note on Bike Touring

[More than just a bike tour](#)

Travel By Bike

We believe that the most powerful journeys are challenging, self-propelled, outdoor adventures. This is why we find bike touring to be one of the most fulfilling ways to travel in the beautiful outdoors. As a cyclist, you truly feel everything on the road. You are more vulnerable and open, allowing you to find connection with those you'd least expect. Your senses are enhanced, and you can take the time to reflect on everything you pass. Bike touring is more than getting from A to B by bike, it is about giving yourself time to explore everything in between.

Travel Local

As a bike tourist, you are making a huge impact on local economies wherever you ride. Comparing the impact of a road tripper to a bike tourer, you will spend on average 4x more time in any given town than someone in a motor vehicle. For each day you could drive your route, you will spend approximately 4.5 days biking that same span of road. This means that you are a huge force in the economic empowerment of the towns you bike through. While this may not seem obvious to some, it is making a huge difference to the small communities along your route. We ask you to keep this in mind when touring, so that you can be a bike touring ambassador to others on your journey, and make decisions that benefit the communities that host you.

Thank You for Greening Our Roads

Bicycle advocacy movements are popping up all around the country. Local communities are petitioning their counties to improve bike infrastructure and educate both drivers and cyclists on road safety. You are a testament to the increased demand for such programs, and just by biking along the coast, you are making a huge statement. On behalf of biking associations all around the country and from Best Coast Biking, thank you for being part of this movement. Now, back to the fun part, below you'll find details about your upcoming trip!

Day By Day

Day 1 | San Francisco - Half Moon Bay | 32.4 miles

Starting in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park, you'll travel south, past Lake Merced, to the coast. Bike along scenic side roads, coastline cliffs, and surfers' paradise, before you reach Half Moon Bay. Go explore town or simply enjoy the ocean-side campsite. Just follow the sound of the waves to find yourself at the beach.

Campground Suggestion: [Half Moon Bay State Park](#)

Price: \$6 per person

Open: Year Round

Facilities: Hiker/Biker site, toilets, coin operated hot showers, picnic tables, fire rings, potable water. Beach Access. Town is about a mile down the road.

Day 2 | Half Moon Bay - San Francisco | 35.2 miles or 53.8 miles

To return, you'll pass through the small town of Half Moon Bay and turn towards the Santa Cruz Mountains. This morning, you can either take an easier, flatter route, or a quieter, more challenging climb. Whichever you choose, you'll ride deep into the forest, which offers winding scenic roads with incredible flora all around. Hit the South Bay, and bike north on reservoir paths and rolling scenic ridge sides until you enter San Francisco city limits. Finish your trip biking along Ocean Beach and end at Golden Gate Park.

For more information on the National, State and Regional Parks in California, we recommend you visit the following sites:

<https://www.nps.gov> | National Park Service official website. Detailed information on national parks (that often provide free camping with limited facilities) and campsites.

<http://parks.ca.gov> | California State Parks official website. Information on campgrounds, recreation sites, and seasonal restrictions/notices.

<http://parks.sonomacounty.ca.gov> | Sonoma County Regional Parks official website. Detailed information on regional campsites and parks.

Equipment, Packing and Preparation

What You Need

Bike Equipment: Touring bike, front and rear racks, waterproof panniers & handlebar bag with map case, pump, helmet, allen key, lock, bungee cords, pedals, 2 water bottles, bike lights, smartphone mount, spare parts and tools for small repairs and maintenance.

Camping Gear: Tent, sleeping pad, sleeping bag, tarp, cookware set, kitchen set, headlamp, first aid.

Route Design: Download or print your day-by-day route suggestions, essential tips, campsite options, places of interest, and dining recommendations along the way.

Accommodation Costs: We provide suggestions and details of the best campsites. They average \$5 per person per night. Should you want to stay indoors, there are several apps and websites that offer booking assistance for your trip.

Meals and Beverages: We outline our favorite cafes, restaurants, and grocery stores, so you can tailor your trip just as you like.

Emergency Services: 911 is always your first point of contact in an emergency situation. This document contains a list of hospitals and clinics along your route.

Travel Medical Insurance: It is recommended to have medical insurance (or travel medical insurance if coming from outside the USA) before embarking on your journey.

Personal Travel Expenses: All costs associated with personal travel before and after your ride should be considered so you don't have any surprises.

What To Pack

Clothing, Personal Items, Toiletries & Electronics

Essential Clothing		✓	Recommended Clothing		✓
Bike shorts	2-3		Casual t-shirts	1-2	
Biking Jerseys	2-3		Shorts	1	
Rain jacket	1		Casual pants	1	
Down or fleece jacket	1		Sports bras	2	
Biking gloves	1		Warm hat	1	
Underwear	2-5		Warm gloves	1	
Socks	2-5		Biking cap	1	
Long sleeve layer	1-2		Pair waterproof booties	1	
Swimsuit	1		Pair cycling sleeves	1	
Pair biking shoes	1		Casual shoes	1	
Waterproof sandals	1		Organizing bags	2-3	
Long athletic pants	1				

Personal Items		✓	Toiletries		✓
Wallet			Toiletry Bag		
Government ID/Passport			Toothbrush/Toothpaste		
Keys			Soap		
Sunglasses			Shampoo/Conditioner		
Notebook and pen			Deodorant		
Book/e-reader			Sunscreen & lip sunscreen		
Eye Mask			Insect Repellent		
Ear Plugs			Hand sanitizer		
Luggage/Locker Lock			Mirror		
Quick dry towel			Razor		
Sleeping Bag			Tweezers		
			Tissue and wet wipes		

Electronics		✓			✓
Smartphone			Headphones		
Camera			Charging plugs		
External battery			Charging cables		

Start & Finish City: The Rundown

San Francisco

Things to do

- **Outdoor Adventures:** Explore Golden Gate Park (closed to traffic every Sunday), hike through Land's End or down to Baker Beach from the Presidio, stroll the length of Ocean Beach or get in the water.
- **Famous San Francisco:** Gather items for a picnic lunch, and people watch at Dolores Park or Alamo Square (get a photo of the Painted Ladies here); walk the length of the Embarcadero and visit the Ferry Building, the Exploratorium, Pier 39, Cannery Row, and Ghirardelli Square; take a mural tour through the Mission District and get a sense for the city's politico-art culture; get your culture fix at the SFMOMA, De Young Museum, and the Legion of Honor; step into China Town or North Beach for some instant world travel; catch some live music at a famous venue like The Fillmore, Great American Music Hall, The Independent or one of the smaller venues in the Mission.
- **Bay Area Excursions:** Head across the bay, and visit Oakland's Uptown neighborhood or Jack London Square. Bars, music venues, and dining options will keep you busy all evening; surf? Head down to Pacifica for the Bay's surf Mecca; take a day trip on the water and visit Angel Island and Alcatraz; catch a home game from one of the Bay's sport teams.

Our drinking & dining recommendations

- **Brunch:** After riding 780 miles, you're allowed to indulge. Our favorite spots include: Maven, The Corner Store, Ella's, Zazie, Starbelly, Sabrosa, Boxing Room, State Bird Provisions, Tartine Bakery & Foreign Cinema.
- **Lunch:** SF has some of the best tacos and Mexican cuisine around. See for yourself: Taqueria Vallarta (low key & delicious), Cholita Linda, Lolo, Nopalito, food carts abound in the Mission.
- **Dinner:** With more than something for everybody, here's a short list of our top picks: Foreign Cinema, El Techo (rooftop), Gracias Madre (vegan), Marlowe, Scotland Yard, Nopa, Liholiho Yacht Club & Tadich Grill.
- **Liquid Dinner:** It's time to celebrate your journey. For something casual, try Biergarten or Speakeasy Tap Room. For something with a bit more ambiance, check out Trick Dog, The Hideout, Bourbon and Branch (reservation only Speakeasy), or Yield (biodynamic & organic wine bar).

For more on things to do & see in San Francisco, visit: www.sanfrancisco.travel

Safety and Health

Staying Healthy on the Road

Hydrating

Staying hydrated is key to a successful bike trip. Make sure you are staying well hydrated throughout each day, despite cool temperatures. Remember to drink a bottle every 1 to 1.5 hours to make sure your body and energy stay in top shape. We also strongly recommend you keep electrolyte packs or tablets with you for when you need a little help to recover from a hot day or difficult climb. These can be found at most bike shops and sports stores. Should you ever run out of water and you are not near a potable water source, there are iodine tablets in your first aid kit to purify stream or river water.

Stretching

Make sure to take a little time every afternoon to stretch out your legs, back, and shoulders. Biking long distances can take a toll on your joints if you're not in the habit of biking long distances on a regular basis, and stretching can help you avoid swelling, joint pain, and injury.

Eating

You will burn a lot of energy bike touring. Make sure you are taking in enough calories throughout the day to maintain balanced energy levels to avoid fatigue and weakness. Depending on your body and the difficulty of the day's ride, you'll need to eat three proper meals a day, and snack on healthy sources of energy to feel strong and energized. Keep a few snack bars, nuts, and/or fruit handy at all times so you can have easy access to energy when you need it most. Dehydrated meals are also a great option for a quick easy meal on the go. Keep your meals balanced, and make sure you consume enough carbohydrates in your system throughout the day.

Hygiene

Most campsites along the route will have shower access to campers, so you can stay clean and fresh on your trip. As you will have limited clothing with you on your journey, we suggest you wash or rinse your bike clothing each day while you shower so that it is relatively clean for the following ride. You can alternate two sets of bike attire to ensure that clothing is dry before you wear it again. Bike shorts especially should be clean to avoid bacterial infection, and dry to avoid rash and chafing. Some cyclists like to keep baby powder or shammy butter with them to keep the groin area dry and comfortable during long distance rides. We suggest you bring any ointments or products you are used to using to help you avoid irritation.

Road Etiquette

Riding With Others

Riding with friends, or meeting other cyclists on your ride is part of the fun. However, it is important to follow a few safety protocols to avoid common accidents.

- Ride side by side only in quiet areas where cars have ample time to reduce their speed and go around you.
- When passing another rider, let them know! (“*On your left!*”) And always pass on the left.
- When stopping to take a photo, make sure anyone behind you knows you’re going to stop and pull off as far to the right as possible.

Visibility

It’s extremely important to be visible on the road. This means being aware of changing light when entering forests or near dusk, and making yourself seen when you might camouflage into the shadows on the road. Keep your lights handy for when you think cars might have a hard time seeing you, and take the time to stop in order to turn them on.

Road Shoulder

Sometimes, the route has a great bike lane (or path) that gives cyclists ample space to ride. Other times, the shoulder becomes much smaller or even disappears. It is extremely important that you give yourself enough space to feel confident and well balanced regardless of shoulder width. If you ride too close to the white line when there is no shoulder, you risk losing your balance or riding off the road. If you ride to the left of the white line, cars will wait to go around you. If you try to ride as far to the right as possible, cars will try to squeeze by. You are much safer riding left of the white line when the shoulder is too narrow than trying to stay close to it.

General Safety

Helmets

As a participant on our trip, you must wear your helmet while riding at all times. At orientation, please make sure the helmet fits you properly and comfortably. If you would prefer to bring your own helmet, we encourage you to do so.

Pedals

We provide flat pedals to all of our riders. If you have your own pedals that you’re used to (clip in or other), we encourage you to bring them to orientation so we can install them on your bike.

Having the right pedals is the first step to being well balanced. Please do not bring clip in pedals that you have never used, as it is common to fall when you're learning to clip in and out.

Hospitals & Clinics En Route

Half Moon Bay

Hospital: San Mateo Medical Center Clinic | 225 South Cabrillo Highway Suite 100A, Half Moon Bay, CA. Tel: (605) 573-3941. Web: www.smchealth.org/location/coastside-clinic | 8 am – 5 pm M-F. 8 am – 4 pm Sat.

San Francisco

Hospital: UCSF Emergency Department | 505 Parnassus Ave. San Francisco, CA. Tel: (415) 353-1037. Web: www.ucsfhealth.org | 24 hr.

Clinic: Golden Gate Urgent Care | 2395 Lombard St. San Francisco, CA. Tel: (415) 796-2242. Web: www.goldengateurgentcare.com | M-F: 7 a.m. -10 p.m. Sat & Sun: 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.