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Things to do at Fisherman's Wharf, San Francisco

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By Jan Ross

The most important piece of advice I have for you about visiting Fisherman's Wharf is to avoid the guy who is hiding behind the fake bushes.

In a moment of wild hilarity for everyone (except you), he jumps out with a loud shriek and scares whoever is passing by. Absolutely hilarious for everyone except the person who is standing there clutching their chest, about to expire from a surprise-induced stroke. OK, maybe it's not quite that serious but the bushes guy is always there so don't say I didn't warn you.

But fortunately, being one of the foremost visitor attractions in San Fran, there are plenty of **things to do at Fisherman's Wharf**, other than die of a premature heart attack:

Things to do at Fisherman's Wharf, San Francisco



Along with crazy bush guy, there are always plenty of other entertainers in this long stretch of waterfront community called the Embarcadero which runs beside San Francisco Bay.

Hotels, restaurants, stores and a wide range of attractions make this a location you will want to set aside at least a full day to visit.

The famous San Francisco cable cars run from one end of Fisherman's Wharf to the other;

just be aware of where you are hopping off since the area is huge and you may have a long walk to where you actually want to be.

A visit to the Aquarium of the Bay (<http://www.aquariumofthebay.org/>) is a great place to spend some time, especially if you have kids in your group. A variety of family-friendly movies are shown daily in the theater, check out a behind the scenes tour, and there is even a magic show on the weekends.

Fisherman's Wharf is also where you will find the ferries which run out to Alcatraz Island. There are several cruise lines which offer scenic cruises of the bay, including views of the island, but since Alcatraz Island is a National Park, there is only one approved cruise line which actually docks at the island.

A visit to the island provides a truly fascinating glimpse into the history of this jail perched on a rocky island. (<http://www.alcatrazcruises.com/>)

Just a couple of blocks from Fisherman's Wharf, Ghirardelli Square (<http://www.ghirardellisq.com/>) is a fun place for a stroll, a little shopping, and a visit to the world-famous Ghirardelli chocolate store for a bag of freshly made candies to take home.

You can't miss a visit to Pier 39 (<http://www.pier39.com/>) during your time at Fisherman's Wharf. Located at the northern end of the Embarcadero, it's a two-story marketplace with over 100 shops and 13 restaurants.

Be sure you see the California sea lions which sprawl all over the marina, the huge two-tier carousel, and the many street performers and musicians. The California Welcome Center is also located here.

Don't leave Fisherman's Wharf without eating because the food is great and you will have tons of choices. My best suggestion is to try the local clam chowder, preferably in a sourdough bread bowl.

All the restaurants serve great chowder and local seafood, but I personally recommend the Blue Mermaid where you can choose from several types of chowder. (<http://www.blumermaidsf.com/>) The Blue Mermaid is located at the extreme south end of Fisherman's Wharf right beside a cable car turntable.

Spend some time watching how they turn the cable cars around by hand, then take a ride to the other end of Fisherman's Wharf and work your way back, visiting the attractions on the way.

Just watch out for crazy bush guy. Take my word for it.

Vacation Rentals in San Francisco

Fisherman's Wharf is a popular place for visitors and there are plenty of accommodation options in the area. For a full range of San Francisco vacation rentals, check the ByOwner listings now.