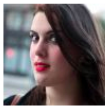


Via > [The Via Blog](#) > [No-Car-Necessary Trips From San Francisco](#)

The Via Blog

travel news + notes + tasty tidbits



No-Car-Necessary Trips From San Francisco

Posted by [Ashley Goldsmith](#) on January 17, 2017



PHOTO: F11PHOTO / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

Sausalito is only a quick ferry ride from San Francisco and has plenty of sights to explore for an easy half-day trip.

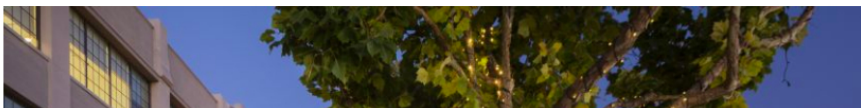
A quick drive outside of [San Francisco](#) can take you to scenic woodland hiking spots or unique neighborhoods in nearby cities. But if you're visiting sans vehicle—or just want to get out of the city without worrying about traffic—we've come up with four destinations outside San Francisco that can be reached via alternative transportation.

SAUSALITO

ESTIMATED TRAVEL TIME: 30 MINUTES

Prefer to start with baby steps as you venture outside of the comfort of San Francisco? Head across the bay to Sausalito for a half-day trip. Stroll along the waterfront and check out the houseboats along the pier, stop for a sip at one of downtown's three tasting rooms, or take a short taxi ride to Vista Point for some of the most picturesque views of the Golden Gate Bridge and San Francisco. You'll also want to grab lunch or an early dinner at one of the many local restaurants with a view, such as [The Trident](#) or [Barrel House Tavern](#).

GETTING THERE: From the San Francisco Ferry Building, catch the [Golden Gate Ferry](#), which departs every couple of hours on weekends. If you're partial to two wheels, a bike ride over the Golden Gate Bridge is just over 8 miles and a bicycle rental will run you \$30 for the day from the popular [San Francisco Bicycle Rentals](#) in North Beach. (You can also ride to the ferry terminal, board your bicycle on the ferry, and pedal around town for the day.)



Related Posts



6 Great Children's Museums for Outdoor Play

Where in the west children's museums are expanding outdoors.



Woodland, California: Strolling Through History

In the quaint Northern California town of Woodland, history is ever present and always on display.



Miniature Trains in California



PHOTO: BONDROCKETIMAGES / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

With numerous dining options along the waterfront, Jack London Square is ideal to visit on a sunny day or for a nice evening out.

OAKLAND

ESTIMATED TRAVEL TIME: 30–40 MINUTES

Oakland is a quick BART ride from San Francisco and boasts numerous activities for Bay Area visitors. Lively [Jack London Square](#) offers shopping and dining options, a Sunday farmer's market, access to a portion of the 500-mile [Bay Trail](#), and [kayak rentals](#) in the Oakland/Alameda estuary for \$40/hour.

If you prefer a low-key afternoon trip, we recommend digging into a plate of house-made noodles and dumplings at [Shandong Restaurant](#) before a stroll around Lake Merritt. For an evening option, visit [Friday Nights at Oakland Museum of California](#). From 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., museum entry is half-price for adults (free for those 18 and under). You'll find live music and lots of dancing, hands-on art workshops, local brewers, food trucks, and local makers selling their creations.

GETTING THERE: Hop on the Dublin/Pleasanton or Fremont lines at any downtown BART station and get off at the Lake Merritt station. From there, it's three blocks northeast along Oak Street to the Oakland Museum—two blocks farther and you'll reach Lake Merritt—or a mile walk northwest to Jack London Square.



PHOTO: ZACK FRANK/SHUTTERSTOCK

For an outdoor excursion, visit Muir Woods National Monument in Marin County and marvel at the mighty redwoods surrounding the hiking trails.

MUIR WOODS

ESTIMATED TRAVEL TIME: 1.5 HOURS

A car-less city trip shouldn't mean missing the chance to explore Northern California's beautiful landscape. Just north of San Francisco in [Marin County](#), Muir Woods offers multiple hikes ranging from scenic 30-minute jaunts to longer, more challenging trails that extend to Mount Tamalpais State Park. Bring a packed lunch and stop at one of the picnic areas on the trails. Alternatively, make your way toward Stinson Beach and refuel with carne asada tacos at the [Siren Canteen](#) or fish and chips at 96-year-old [Sand Dollar Restaurant](#). (Note: Check [conditions at Muir Woods](#) before you go. Rainy weather may have impacted trails and roads.)

GETTING THERE: From San Francisco, take the Golden Gate Ferry to Sausalito, where you can catch [Marin Transit's Muir Woods Shuttle](#).



Miniature Trains in California

For pint-size trains with big-time fun, check out these five mini-train rides in California. They're not just for tots.

AAA Tips



How to Pack a Car Emergency Kit

When building your car's emergency preparedness kit, consider these essentials.

[See more](#)



PHOTO COURTESY OF SAN PEDRO SQUARE MARKET
Choose from dozens of food stalls at the popular San Pedro Square Market in downtown San Jose.

SAN JOSE

ESTIMATED TRAVEL TIME: 2 HOURS

Heading south to San Jose is an often-overlooked option for a day trip, but California's third-largest city promises a plethora of activities to fill your day. Downtown, the [San Jose Museum of Art](#) and the [Tech Museum of Innovation](#), on opposite sides of Plaza de Cesar Chavez, offer enough exhibits to keep you occupied for an afternoon. [San Pedro Square Market](#) serves up a variety of bites from over a dozen food stalls, and you can grab a glass of wine or beer from the food hall's Market Bar. Consider taking your food to-go: A 10-minute Uber ride will get you to the [San Jose Rose Garden](#). There, you can have a picnic before strolling through the garden, which boasts nearly 200 varieties of roses.

GETTING THERE: From the San Francisco station, [Caltrain](#) gets you to San Jose in just under two hours. Get off at Diridon Station and walk less than a mile east to reach Plaza de Cesar Chavez. From the plaza, it's a 10-minute walk north to San Pedro Square Market.

Find more [places to visit in San Francisco](#) and the Bay Area.



Related Stories



Children's Museums in the West

A guide to kids' museums in California, Utah, and Nevada.



Favorite Piers and Wharves

Via readers share walkable piers where you can stroll out over water in California, Oregon, and Utah.



Twelve Places for Indoor Fun

Weather less than ideal? Take it inside at one of these Western spots.



What Do AAA Diamond Ratings Mean?

In all of Northern California, Nevada, and Utah, just 18 hotels and restaurants earned a AAA five Diamond rating for 2015.

[Places to Visit in California](#)

[Places to Visit in California](#) > [Berkeley & East Bay](#)

[Places to Visit in California](#) > [Marin County](#)

[Places to Visit in California](#) > [Silicon Valley & the Peninsula](#)