
jelly belly factory in cal. Bay Area advice wanted

Posted by Peri - 2008/05/13 18:53

Hi all, Got docs <! for our upcoming Mercury cruise (California coast down to Cabo San Lucas), and are looking for some pre- and post-cruise advice. The cruise is from Sunday, April 4 - 11, and we're arriving in town late Thursday night, 4/1. Plan to Priceline a hotel in the Fishermans Wharf area, as it seems that gives us the best access to sightseeing and the pier from where the Mercury will leave. My first question is about getting from SFO to the city. Do you suggest getting transportation from the airport and staying at the hotel without a car, or renting a car to use for these couple of days? I know parking is impossible (or expensive at the hotel), and I'm not sure we'll actually need a car, but not having visited the city before I really don't know. Coming from Long Island, it's hard to imagine being anywhere without a car! My second question is for when we return. We get back early morning Sunday, April 11, and don't leave until very early Monday morning. I'm kinda stuck as to what our best plan of action for Sunday is. If we stay in the city again we'd need to get ourselves to a hotel and then arrange for VERY early transport to the airport, but if we stay at the airport we'll be stuck in the middle of nowhere on our last day in town. Who knows the area really well and can help me sort this out?? Thank you in advance! ~ Peri

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Posted by Mike Cordelli - 2008/05/13 18:53

advance! ~ Peri

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Posted by Cal Ford - 2008/05/13 18:53

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Posted by JLeary256 - 2008/05/13 18:53

No car needed. Cal gave excellent advice. :) Consider purchasing ahead tickets for Alcatraz Island, very interesting tour, but very popular and most always sells out.

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Posted by fmomoon - 2008/05/13 18:53

advance! Have fun at my back door. :)

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Posted by steve - 2008/05/13 18:53

i agree on alcatraz for no 1 not to miss also like the cliff house.

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Posted by fmomoon - 2008/05/13 18:53

not much to be found, and I'd like to return the favor. ~ Peri Aha! Monterey, now you're talking. I grew up there. :) Lots of fun things to do and bring your walking shoes. Also bring a jacket because Monterey rarely gets warm, even during the summer. Cannery Row is very touristy, but the wharf area is charming and pretty accurate from a historical standpoint. The Aquarium is, of course, not to be missed. The historical places like Colton Hall, Custom House, R. L. Stevenson's home, Pacific House and California's First Theatre are really interesting. Wander down Alvarado Street, which is the closest thing to a main street that Monterey has. The area has changed, somewhat, but you can still see the Monterey style from when I was a kid. Walk on over to San Carlos church for a beautiful idea of old Spanish California mission style. If there is a tour to Carmel Mission, take it! The beach in Carmel is gorgeous (bring a coat), but I would never suggest driving down there. It is a madhouse! If there is a tour bus to Big Sur, that is a lovely trip, but those cliffs may give you problems if you don't like heights. Pacific Grove is charming, especially the old areas and a trip to the Asilomar is always cold, yet beautiful. Did I mention that it gets really cold there?

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Posted by Mike Cordelli - 2008/05/13 18:53

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Posted by RTCReferee - 2008/05/13 18:53

I've been to Monterey many, many times by car, and most recently by cruise ship. The tender will drop you off at the wharf. Once you pass through that area and have sampled all the clam chowders, you can catch a bus or cab to the Monterey Aquarium. This is something you really should see. If you like Irish foods, toiletries, etc., there is a nice little store with friendly shopkeepers just beyond the Wharf area.

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Posted by Dick Goldhaber - 2008/05/13 18:53

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Posted by Thomas E. Parody - 2008/05/13 18:53

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Posted by Lunyma - 2008/05/13 18:53

In the little center where the Ghiradelli store and ice cream parlor is, there is also a Scandinavian store. We cruised with the owners, Marithe and ?, in the Med, a few years ago. They were the NICEST people. Should you happen to stop in, tell them that Pam and Chuck, from the Crown Odyssey, have not forgotten them! (OK.. I forgot the husband's name :)

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Posted by clint - 2008/05/13 18:53

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Posted by cruiseyen - 2008/05/13 18:53

I would rent a car at the wharf Sunday morning on your return, and use that day to either drive N to Napa/Sonoma or Mendocino, or S to Monterey. Then return it to the airport the next day when you leave. If you rent a car at the airport when you arrive, you can use the next day to do another daytrip and again, return the car at the wharf. S.F., like NY, has relatively liberal rules about car returns to city locations. If you are a new visitor to N.Cal, I think you would be silly to spend 3 days in the city, and not spend one going N or S and driving some of the 1. Especially at this time of year. As others have said, you only need a car if you're planning on a daytrip. But you SHOULD plan a daytrip, at least one day.

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Posted by Cathy Kearns - 2008/05/13 18:53

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Posted by RTCReferee - 2008/05/13 18:53

Do as you wish of course, but my very strong suggestion for your visit to San Francisco is that you stay in and very near San Francisco for your very short visit pre-and post-cruise. Easter Sunday weekend would not be when I would schedule a visit to the wine country. I think you would enjoy Golden Gate Park very much. There is a great deal to do there. To get an idea of what you might be able to experience in and near San Francisco, go to <http://www.sfgate.com>. Click on entertainment and search the listings for all events, performances, etc. for the time period you will be in the Bay Area. Sort by date.

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Posted by RTCReferee - 2008/05/13 18:53

Front page of the Entertainment Guide of the San Francisco Chronicle: <http://www.sfgate.com/eguide/> Searchable listing of events: <http://www.sfgate.com/eguide/search/events/>

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Posted by RTCReferee - 2008/05/13 18:53

<http://www.sfgate.com/listings/event.php?events,e166995> Union Street Easter Parade and Spring Celebration

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Posted by Ray Goldenberg - 2008/05/13 18:53

We very well may decide to rent a car for the Thursday night we arrive in SF, drive into the city and keep it for the next day. Hi Peri, I don't know if you are aware of the parking situation. Many of the hotels charge \$20+ a night just for parking in San Francisco. Best regards, Ray LIGHTHOUSE TRAVEL 800-719-9917 or 805-566-3905 <http://www.lighthousetravel.com>

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I don't know if you are aware of the parking situation. Many of the hotels charge \$20+ a night just for parking in San Francisco. I do know that, Ray, thank you though. We're only thinking about keeping the car for a day, and since we need to get to the city from SFO SOMEHOW, a one day rental with one night's parking isn't a bad deal. Even a quick look online finds Intermediate cars from reputable companies at \$40; or about the same price of ground transportation. Add another \$20+ for parking, and I'm good to go (literally) for a day. Works for me! ~ Peri

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I'm not sure what you had in mind on the lay of the land driving. Driving into SF is pretty frustrating. Getting to the wharf is even more frustrating. I hate driving around SF, when I drive up I get to the parking garage I'm looking for, park, and walk or take public transit around the city. SF is a great walking city. Ah, Cathy, I'm a NEW YORKER! I drive in the city all the time!! Don't get me wrong, though, we're not coming in to LEAVE! We WANT to walk around and see whatever we can in the brief time we're there. The point I was making about driving around, though, is that it's often a good way to get the feel of a place...see what's interesting and what you might like to go back to. It also helps (me anyway) have a better sense of where I am in relation to everything else. Guidebooks and maps are great, but for me there's no substitute to actually cruising through an area to best figure it out. I can tell you this, I am very much looking forward to our visit. And once again, I really appreciate all the helpful advice. ~ Peri

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