

5 TOWNS YOU SHOULD KNOW

THERE'S SO MUCH TO EXPLORE AROUND THE BAY AREA



284 ALAMEDA

A short ferry ride from San Francisco, this 12.4-square-mile island city is hiding in plain sight in the East Bay. Once home to a prominent naval base, visitors can now tour the Naval Air Museum or spend the night on the USS *Hornet*, a decommissioned aircraft carrier. Visit Alameda Point—also known as Spirits Alley—for an epic view of the city. While you're there, sample vodka from Hangar 1, Cabernet Franc from Rock Wall Wine Company, or German-style suds from Faction Brewing.

285 BENICIA

The one-time capital of California (1853–1854), this waterfront city in Solano County needs to find its way onto more travel itineraries.

Grab provisions from One House Bakery, run by French Laundry alum Hannalee Pervan, then embark on a self-guided tour of historic spots. Visit the old Capitol State Park, the 19th-century sandstone clocktower, and the Southern Pacific Train Depot. Get a sense of the thriving art community by visiting the city's many galleries and public art displays, such as Neptune's Daughter, a nearly 7-foot-tall bronze statue on the shoreline walkway.

286 BOLINAS

A mere 25-mile drive north from San Francisco, this coastal town's wonderfully weird vibe is the polar opposite of city bustle. Legend has it that for years, residents of the unincorporated township cut down highway signs to keep Bolinas a

secret. Still, locals are friendly and you can experience coastal counterculture at the Bolinas People's Store (check out the aptly named "Free Box"), the quirky Grand Hotel, and Smiley's Schooner Saloon, which dates back to 1851. Most of all, don't miss the stunning shoreline at Bolinas Beach.

287 PESCADERO

An enchanting mix of farmland and rugged shore sandwiched between Santa Cruz and San Francisco, tiny Pescadero looks like Northern California's version of a 19th-century painting. Spend the afternoon popping in and out of 1800s-era storefronts, grabbing coffee at Downtown Local or freshly baked artichoke bread from Arganceli Grocery Co. In spring, visit the baby goats—or

enjoy a cheese and wine pairing—at Harley Farms Goat Dairy. Come winter, head to Año Nuevo State Park to see the elephant seal pups frolic on the sand.

288 WOODSIDE

Tucked into the Santa Cruz Mountains high above Silicon Valley's tech campuses, Woodside feels like a dreamy, forested escape. Hike through shaded trails in Wunderlich or Huddart parks. Tour the gorgeous Filoli Historic House and Gardens, and don't miss the scrumptious breakfast sandwiches from The Village Bakery. If you want to unwind, make a reservation at Canyon Ranch Woodside, a luxury wellness retreat where guests stay in glass-walled treehouses and recharge with daily sound baths and spa treatments.



Faction Brewing, Alameda