

TRAVEL TALES

HELPFUL HINTS FOR THE JEWISH TRAVELLER

By MIKE COHEN

SAN FRANCISCO- According to recent figures, the Bay Area is home to the fourth largest Jewish community in North America. San Francisco, the East Bay and San Jose are listed separately, but their combined Jewish population is 391,500, according to the list put out by the Jewish Federations of North America. The breakdown looks as follows: San Francisco (227,800), the East Bay (100,750) and San Jose (63,000).

The community is very proud of The Contemporary Jewish Museum (<https://www.the.cjm.org>), which since 1984 has distinguished itself as a welcoming place where visitors can

connect with one another through dialogue and shared experiences with the arts. Ever changing, The CJM is a non-collecting institution that partners with national and international cultural institutions to present exhibitions that are both timely and relevant and represent the highest level of artistic achievement and scholarship. It is located at 736 Mission Street in the downtown area.

WELCOMING TO ALL TOURISTS: San Francisco (www.sfrael.com) is often called "Everybody's Favorite City," a title earned by its scenic beauty, cultural attractions, diverse communities, and world-class cuisine. Measuring 49 square miles, this very walkable city is dotted with landmarks like the Golden Gate Bridge, cable cars, Alcatraz and the largest Chinatown in the United States. A stroll down the city's streets can lead from Union Square to North Beach to Fisherman's Wharf, with intriguing neighborhoods to explore at every turn. Views of the Pacific Ocean and San Francisco Bay are often laced with fog, creating a romantic mood in this most European of American cities.

WHERE TO VISIT: It is easy to spend weeks in San Francisco and still not experience everything the city has to offer. The

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Golden Gate Bridge, the most famous bridge in the world, manages to impress even the most experienced travelers with its stunning 1.7-mile span. Approximately 120,000 automobiles drive across it every day. A pedestrian walkway also allows for crossing on foot, and bikes are allowed on the western side. The Golden Gate Bridge is said to be one of the most photographed things on Earth.

Cable cars have been transporting people around San Francisco since the late 19th century. The cars run on tracks and are moved by an underground cable on three routes. Their familiar bells can be heard ringing from blocks away. Tickets (\$7) may be purchased at the cable car turnarounds at

the end destination of each route. Each one-way ride will provide spectacular views of the city's celebrated hills as well as exhilarating transportation.

Alcatraz, the notorious former prison, is located on an island of the same name in the middle of San Francisco Bay. Some of the United States' most well-known criminals were incarcerated there. We booked our trip via Alcatraz Cruises (www.alcatrazcruises.com) and this is something you absolutely cannot leave the city without experiencing.

Fisherman's Wharf is also home to Pier 39, a festive waterfront marketplace that is one of the city's most popular attractions. A community of California sea lions has taken up residence

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on the floats in the Pier 39 Marina and visitors line the nearby railing to watch their antics. Union Square is the place for serious shoppers. Major department stores and the most exclusive designer boutiques line streets like Post, Sutter, Geary, Grant, Stockton and Powell. The Westfield San Francisco Shopping Centre houses the largest Bloomingdale's outside of New York and the second largest Nordstrom in the U.S

The entrance to Chinatown at Grant Avenue and Bush Street is called the "Dragon's Gate." Inside are 24 blocks of hustle and bustle, most of it taking place along Grant Avenue, the oldest street in San Francisco. This city within a city is best explored on foot: exotic shops, renowned restaurants, food markets, temples and small museums comprise its boundaries. Visitors can buy ancient potions from herb shops, relax and enjoy a "dim sum" lunch or witness the making of fortune of

cookies.

San Francisco is home to internationally recognized symphony, opera and ballet companies, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Asian Art Museum, the de Young Museum, the Legion of Honor and the California Academy of Sciences - the only place on the planet with an aquarium, a planetarium, a natural history museum, and a four-story rainforest all under one roof.

Do consider purchasing the San Francisco CityPASS, which saves travellers up to 42 percent off combined admission to top attractions. Visit CityPASS.com.

MUIR WOODS AND ITS JEWISH CONNECTION: I must make special mention of Jewish businessman Alan Rosenzweig, who moved to San Francisco 30 years ago from Brooklyn to go to university and never left. He owns Best Bay Tours (<https://bestbayareatours>) (Please turn to following page)

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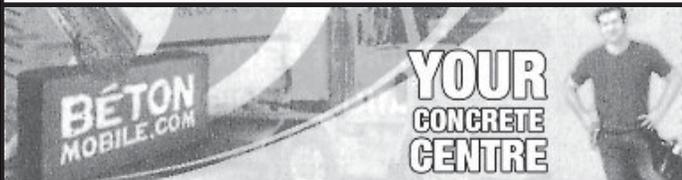


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tours.com), which we used to enjoy the incredible Muir Woods and Sausalito tour. A comfortable van picked us up in front of our hotel and what an incredible chauffeur/tour guide we had in charismatic Paul Berman, a Jewish native of Scotland. He moved here 27 years ago with his wife and never left. The Muir Woods tour took us across the Golden Gate Bridge, past the Marin Headlands, and into a magical Redwood forest known as Muir Woods. It's an incredible sight. The Coastal Sequoias (Redwoods)

in Muir Woods are the tallest trees in the world, found only along the Northern California coast, and after decades of logging only five percent of these old growth trees remain. Tour prices are \$45 for children and \$60 for adults. This does not include the \$10 entrance fee to the Muir Woods National Park.

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EYE ON MONTREAL

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meeting and marrying Joseph Leitner in 1954. The couple had two children, a boy Amy and a girl, Orly. The family moved to Montreal in 1960. Joseph found work in the antique business while Nelly raised the children. She would ultimately go on to study at l'École des Beaux Arts de Montréal, the l'Université de Québec à Montréal and obtained a certificate

in sculpturing from the then Loyola College. Her passion became plastic arts. One day Nelly wound up at an art gallery at Place Bonaventure with one of her paintings. It turned out that the manager had previously worked for the city of Montreal. He thought she'd be a good teacher. That was 1973 and she has been doing so, in French, ever since.

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