

travel
itinerary
family

FAMILY BONDING IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

A 10-day Northern California
family adventure in **the Bay Area**
and **beyond**

visit
California

- 
- Day 1: **SFO to San Jose**
Day 2: **San Jose to San Francisco**
Day 3: **San Francisco**
Day 4: **San Francisco**
Day 5: **Santa Rosa &
Sonoma County Surrounds**
Day 6: **Santa Rosa to Napa**
Day 7: **Napa to Sacramento**
Day 8: **Sacramento to Lake Tahoe**
Day 9: **North to South Lake Tahoe**
Day 10: **Lake Tahoe to Berkeley**

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Itinerary overview

Make memories with the whole family on this fun-filled adventure traveling from Silicon Valley and San Francisco to wine country, the state capital and Lake Tahoe. Educational and entertaining opportunities are peppered in at every stop to ensure kids of all ages have the time of their lives. Experience where tech pioneers innovate and athletes compete in San Jose. Explore the natural world and see the iconic sights of

San Francisco. North of the city, savor the farm fresh flavors and slower pace of Sonoma County and Napa Valley. Learn about California history in Sacramento and charming Gold Rush-era towns on the road to Lake Tahoe, where the great outdoors is your ultimate fresh air playground. Wrap up the journey amid the collegiate, colorful vibes of Berkeley's urban landscape.



● Day 1: SFO to San Jose

- After arriving at SFO, drive US-101 S (36 mi/58 km) to **San Jose**, the heart of Silicon Valley and global hub of tech innovation.
- Tour the 160-room **Winchester Mystery House**, a quirky haunted mansion dating back to 1884.
- Browse around nearby **Westfield Valley Faire** and **Santana Row**—the latter is considered the “Rodeo Drive of Silicon Valley” for its designer stores, luxury electric car showrooms and the only virtual reality dining room in the world.
- Delight your inner sports fan attending a **professional sports game**; San Jose is home to Major League Soccer, National Football League and National Hockey League teams as well as indoor football and minor league baseball.
- Overnight in **San Jose**.

● Day 2: San Jose to San Francisco

- Spend the morning at **The Tech Interactive**, a world class science and technology center in downtown San Jose. Get hands on with exhibits such as robot building and cyber-sleuthing and catch a film in the IMAX Dome theater.
- Find something to satisfy everyone’s palate at the vibrant **San Pedro Square Market**.
- After lunch, drive north to San Francisco on I-280 (53 mi/93 km) heading for **Golden Gate Park**.
- Spend the afternoon at the magnificent **California Academy of Sciences**, an aquarium, planetarium, rainforest and natural history museum all in one.
- After getting settled into your hotel, head out for dinner in **Chinatown**—the oldest in North America.
- Overnight in **San Francisco**.



Day 3: San Francisco

- Use the **Cable Car** system to set out for a day exploring the City by the Bay.
- Peruse the many vendors in the iconic **Ferry Building** marketplace and graze through the excellent eateries.
- Continue along the Embarcadero to the **Exploratorium**, a public learning laboratory where the whole family can explore the world through science, art and human perception.
- Board the **Bay Discovery Cruise: A National Park Tour** at Pier 33. The 90-minute sightseeing cruise goes by the **Golden Gate Bridge**, **Alcatraz Island**, **Marin Headlands**, **Fort Point** and more. (Note: the tour does not dock at Alcatraz; audio is available in 20 languages)
- Back on land, walk over to the iconic **Pier 39** and **Fisherman's Wharf**, both buzzy areas with plenty to see, do and eat.
- Treat the family to the **Ghirardelli Chocolate Experience** at **Ghirardelli Square**.
- Wander through **The Presidio Tunnel Tops** park and visit the **Walt Disney Family Museum** in the **Presidio**.
- Overnight in **San Francisco**.



● Day 4: San Francisco

- Depart San Francisco via US-101.
- After crossing the Golden Gate Bridge, stop at **Muir Woods National Monument** (16 mi/26 km) for a hike among the old growth redwoods (parking reservations are required).
- Continue up US-101 to **Petaluma** (32 mi/51 km), one of California's oldest cities with a lovely walkable historic downtown district along its namesake river.
- Let the kids play lawn games over lunch at spacious **Brewsters Beer Garden**, where you can try local brews and wines.
- Get back on the road to **Santa Rosa** (20 mi/32 km), stopping at the **Charles M. Schulz Museum**, dedicated to the creator of Peanuts and his beloved Snoopy character.
- Overnight in **Santa Rosa**.

● Day 5: Santa Rosa & Sonoma County Surrounds

- See African animals like giraffes and zebras at **Safari West** (kids must be 4 and older to take the guided Safari tour).
- If you have kids 10 and older, soar above the redwoods in Occidental with **Sonoma Canopy Zipline Adventures**.
- Spend the afternoon at a family-friendly winery such as **Belden Barns Farmstead & Winery** or **Benziger Family Winery**—both have activities to entertain the kids in bucolic agricultural settings and reservations are recommended.
- Overnight in **Santa Rosa**.



● Day 6: Santa Rosa to Napa

- Head inland to **Napa Valley** (via CA-12 E, Calistoga Road and CA-128 E), stopping in the wellness-centric town of **Calistoga** for **breakfast** and a walkabout.
- The whole family will feel like royalty at **Castello di Amorosa**, a grand Tuscan-style estate winery on the outskirts of Calistoga where kids can do a grape juice tasting, admire the moat and drawbridge and visit with the resident peacocks, emus, chickens, pigs, sheep and goats.
- Take a nature walk in **Bothe-Napa State Park**, just down the highway.
- Continue south (9 mi/14 km), stopping at **Oakville Grocery**, a Napa staple going back to 1881 and California's oldest continually operating grocery store.
- End the day in walkable **Downtown Napa** (13 mi/21 km), filled with enticing dining options (including famed burger joint, **Gott's Roadside**), charming historic architecture, public art and the **CIA at Copia**.
- Overnight in **Napa**.



Day 7: Napa to Sacramento

- Enjoy breakfast at **Boon Fly Café**, renowned for its mini doughnuts and brunch fare.
- Stop in American Canyon for a walk at **Wetlands Edge Park** (10 mi/16 km) on your way out of town via CA-29 S.
- Take I-80 E to **Fairfield** (14 mi/23 km) for a tour of the **Jelly Belly Factory** and museum.
- Continue on to the state capital, **Sacramento** (44 mi/71 km).
- Enjoy the Old West vibes of **Old Sacramento** along the river.
- Visit attractions such as the **California Railroad Museum**, **Sacramento Zoo** and **Fairytale Town**.
- Overnight in **Sacramento**.

Day 8: Sacramento to Lake Tahoe

- Have breakfast at a Sacramento classic such as the **Tower Café** or **Orphan Breakfast House**.
- Hop on I-80 E heading towards the Sierra Nevada mountains.
- Stop in the quaint Gold Rush town of **Auburn** (36 mi/58 km) for a wander around and to pick up goodies at **The Baker & Cakemaker**.
- Continue on I-80 E to **Truckee** (68 mi/109km) and stop to explore the historic downtown before driving the last leg to **Lake Tahoe** (12 mi/19 km).
- End the day on North America's largest alpine lake, strolling along **Kings Beach**.
- Overnight in **North Lake Tahoe**.



● Day 9: North to South Lake Tahoe

- Embark upon a guided hike or other land-based adventure with [Tahoe Adventure Co.](#)
- Take a scenic drive (28 mi/45 km) around the lake to [Emerald Bay](#), a picturesque state park and National Natural Landmark.
- Head to [Heavenly Mountain Resort](#) (24 mi/39 km), offering off-snow-season adventures such as gondola rides and a zipline course and plentiful diversions in [Heavenly Village](#).
- Overnight in [South Lake Tahoe](#). ([Coachman](#) and [Margaritaville Resort Lake Tahoe](#) are the newest additions to the lodging scene.)

● Day 10: Lake Tahoe to Berkeley

- After a morning enjoying last looks of the lake, hit US-50 W to make your way back towards SFO.
- Stop in [Placerville](#) (61 mi/98 km) to walk the Historic Main Street and explore [Gold Bug Park](#), a former mining location (check seasonal hours).
- Once back in the Bay Area, make the bohemian college town of [Berkeley](#) (119 mi/191 km) your last destination.
- Check out the prestigious [UC Berkeley](#) campus, visiting the [Lawrence Hall of Science](#) and [UC Botanical Garden](#).
- Savor a final family vacation feast in one of Berkeley's famed foodie and cultural neighborhoods such as [North Shattuck](#) or [Telegraph Avenue](#).
- Overnight in [Berkeley](#) or nearby [Oakland](#). (OAK is 13 mi/21km away and SFO is 24 mi/39 km away).