

CRUISING GROUNDS

EDITED BY REBECCA WATERS

20 MILES AROUND ...

SAN FRANCISCO, CA

BY KIMBALL LIVINGSTON



➤ San Francisco may be the “most European” American city, but San Francisco Bay and the views of whitecaps beyond the cable-car lines make this more than just a California placename. The ocean beyond the Golden Gate is challenging. Within the shelter of the bay is sailing adventure enough, with its typical brisk and chilly sea breeze and strong currents. Then there are the microclimates. Often, the central bay bears the brunt of wind and fog, while the north shore basks in sunshine. Visitors notice a paucity of gunk-hole cruising. Locals say, Yes, but what a spectacular place to sail.

1 Sail the bay The classic daysail is a counterclockwise circuit: reaching across the Golden Gate on

a starboard tack; squaring for a run down the San Francisco cityfront; working west again up the protected north side, through Raccoon Strait.

2 Escape to Angel Island This state park with sheltered anchorages and historic structures shuns the hustle-bustle but lies a mere 5 miles from Market Street. Sail your circuit, then stop here for the night on a mooring at Ayala Cove or at anchor on the eastern reach.

3 Go to a ball game Buy Giants tickets and book ahead for a guest berth at South Beach Harbor, next to the ball park, or anchor in McCovey Cove and wait for home-run balls.

4 Pier 39 Marina A tourist haunt, but a

short walk through Fisherman’s Wharf to the submarine *Pampanito*, historic ships of the Maritime National Historical Park at Hyde Street Pier, or the ferry to Alcatraz.

5 Crissy Field, the Presidio Guest-in at SF Marina and tie up next door to the attractions of the Presidio National Park and the Exploratorium science museum. At sunset, toast the silver kings’ mansions at the crest of the hill.

6 China Camp getaway Abandoned except for one descendant, this restored Chinese shrimping village on San Pablo Bay is now a state park with hiking trails. Anchor off and dinghy in, or anchor at nearby McNears Beach, which has a swimming pool and showers.

7 Oakland-Alameda The shipping channel, aka “the estuary,” is lined with commercial shipping facilities, marinas, yacht clubs, and restaurants. Protected and generally mild, it is a good launching point for a tour of East Bay stopovers, including Berkeley and Richmond.

8 Sausalito This Mediterranean-feel village has a salty, historic waterfront and a designated federal anchorage.



Golden Gate Bridge

JUST THE FACTS

SAILING SEASON: All year, with a sea breeze March through October; winter winds are light, except during storms.

PREVAILING WIND: A “westerly” that is generally just south of west, almost always formed by 1300.

RESTAURANTS:

- ★ **Sam’s Anchor Café, Tiburon** Classic burgers and more on the waterfront; docking is competitive
- ★ **Waypoint Pizza, Tiburon** A few doors from Sam’s; specialty pizzas served up by world-class sailors
- ★ **Quinn’s Lighthouse, Oakland** Varied foods and atmospheres on multiple levels of an 1890 lighthouse
- ★ **The Ramp, San Francisco** Docking and down-home cooking for sailors, socialites, and Hell’s Angels

ATTRACTIONS:

- ★ **Alcatraz** Tours of the former prison get high marks; access by ferry only
- ★ **U.S.S. Hornet** The carrier that picked up Armstrong, Aldrin, and Collins after the first moon landing can be toured in Alameda
- ★ **City Lights Bookstore** In the heart of North Beach, the authentic place to buy a copy of Allen Ginsberg’s *Howl*
- ★ **Bay Model** A 1.5-acre operating model of the SF Bay estuary and river systems, built by the Corps of Engineers; now a public facility on the Sausalito waterfront

CHARTERS:

- ★ **Club Nautique:** Sausalito, Alameda, Richmond
- ★ **Modern Sailing Academy:** Sausalito
- ★ **Atlantis Yacht Charters:** Sausalito
- ★ **J/World:** Alameda
- ★ **Spinnaker Sailing:** San Francisco, Redwood City

PASSING THROUGH:

Sausalito offers anchorages, limited guest berthing, heritage, and atmosphere

MAP ILLUSTRATION BY STEVE STANKIEWICZ; PHOTO BY PAUL LEE