

# BUDGET and BLOWOUT guide to San Francisco

The culinary jewel of America dazzles with its amazing line-up of restaurants and cafés, both great and small

Words FAREEDA KANGA



San Francisco has been at the helm of many cultural revolutions. None more so than the way people produce, eat and think about food. Away from the boulevards, this city unveils its soul in its lanes and alleys, where there's a culinary gem to be found in every corner.

## BUDGET

LUNCH



- The ambience tops at **Java Beach Café** that lies along the area facing the Pacific Ocean, locally known as the oceanfront. The nautical-themed interior is as inviting as its sandwiches. Try the classic club with pastrami, \$ 8. ([javabeachcafe.com](http://javabeachcafe.com))
- **Perry's** is a San Francisco institution noted for its fried chicken, \$ 15, and pulled pork sandwich, \$ 11. Located on Union Street, it offers hearty fare at reasonable prices. ([perrysf.com](http://perrysf.com))

## BLOWOUT



- **Scoma's**, along Fisherman's Wharf, is a must-visit. This culinary landmark, family owned and operated since 1965, serves the best cracked crab roasted in garlic and olive oil. Other signature dishes include a hearty cioppino or seafood stew, \$ 37. ([scomas.com](http://scomas.com))

DINNER



- **Hang Ah**, tucked away in one of Chinatown's alleys, bills itself as San Francisco's oldest dim sum house. Relish the barbecue pork steamed buns, \$ 7.50 and fried rice with salted fish, \$ 6.95. (Tel: +1 415 982 5686)
- Just off Market Street, **Chow** offers affordable pizzas, pastas and roasted meats. It has been in the prestigious San Francisco Chronicle Top 100 Bay Area Restaurants list for 11 years in a row. All mains from \$ 8 upwards. ([chowrestaurant.com](http://chowrestaurant.com))



- Alice Waters returned from a trip to France in 1971, mesmerised by its use of fresh produce, simple ingredients and bold flavours. Inspired, she opened **Chez Panisse**, creating a new style of Californian cuisine. Opt for the duck leg with roasted figs, \$ 29, and the chocolate pavé with almond ice cream, \$ 9. ([chezpanisse.com](http://chezpanisse.com))

DRINK



- Experience the beats of flamenco music and the burning intensity of the tango at **Destino's** every evening. Cool down with the best mojitos in town, (coconut and pomegranate), \$ 9. ([destinosf.com](http://destinosf.com))
- At the **Nova Bar**, the vodka infused cocktails are a hit, as is the trendy decor. It's a great place for an after-work drink, because of its relaxed atmosphere. Try their jalapeño-infused Skyy vodka Bloody Mary, \$ 10. ([novabar.com](http://novabar.com))



- Right in the middle of Jackson square, **The Bubble Lounge** is an upscale champagne bar, with around 300 bubbly and sparkling wines. The main room exudes a clubby feel with plenty of cosy corners. Try the Bubblicious, a cocktail made with Prosecco, peach liqueur and peach nectar, \$ 14. ([bubblelounge.com](http://bubblelounge.com))

HOTEL



- The handsome art deco hotel, **Hotel Frank**, dates back from 1908 and boasts several Edward Hopper prints. Parking is offered – a rare find in the city, especially at Union Square where the hotel is located. Doubles from \$ 150. ([hotelfranksf.com](http://hotelfranksf.com))
- Try the **Cliff Crest B&B Inn** surrounded by redwoods and decorated with fresh flowers and stunning views of the bay. Rooms from \$ 95. ([cliffcrestinn.com](http://cliffcrestinn.com))



- **The Fairmont Hotel** enjoys great views of the city all the way to Alcatraz. This is the Grande Dame of Californian hotels, having played host to almost every head of state. It was within these marbled rooms that Tony Bennett gave his first performance of "I left my heart in San Francisco." Doubles from \$ 300. ([fairmont.com](http://fairmont.com))

MUST DO



- **Stockton Street Market** in Chinatown with its stalls hawking everything from arthritis-curing herbs to leafy green bokchoy, is a must do. Duck past the stalls selling entrails and 'thousand year eggs' if you are squeamish! (San Francisco, CA 94133)
- Don't miss the **Golden Gate Bakery**. It's known for its custard-filled confections, especially the egg tart, \$ 2, as well as its densely sweet lotus seed bean paste. (+1 415 7812627)



- Visit the world-famous **Ghirardelli** chocolate store and enjoy mouthwatering treats from \$ 10 upwards. Feeling nostalgic? Take home a chocolate cable car for the family! ([ghirardelli.com](http://ghirardelli.com))