

A MISSIVE FOR OUR SF BOUND AAEC/ACC MEMBERS AND GUESTS

By Scott Burns



The upcoming AAEC/ACC weekend will have several opportunities for you to be on your own - or in small covens if you prefer. And many of you will be arriving a day or two ahead or staying over. Hence this brief Guide to SF -- both IMPORTANT INFORMATION and to clue you in on some favorite restaurants, bars, and activities.

First THE IMPORTANT STUFF



1. Friday evening's Welcome Reception will be at the Cartoon Art Museum [CAM], 781 Beach St.
2. The AAEC business meeting Saturday morning, as well as the panel presentations and awards [both AAEC and ACC] will be at the Book Club of California [BCC], 312 Sutter St., just around the corner from the Triton Hotel.



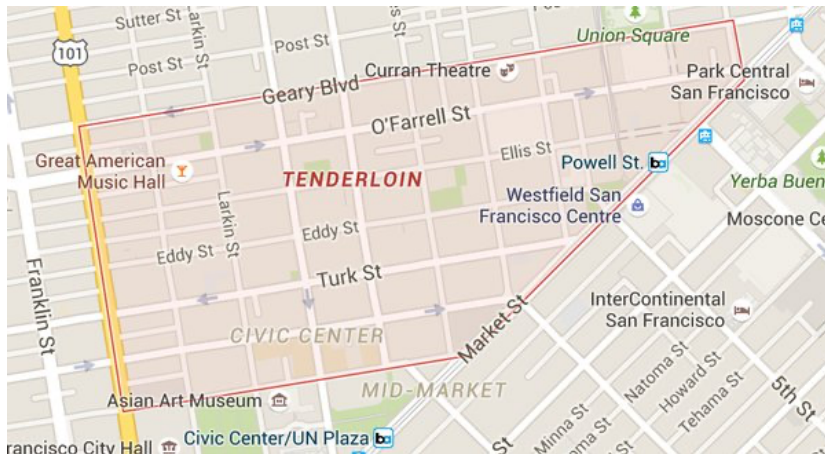
3. Official Registration and check-in will be 3-5 p.m. at the Triton Hotel. Those of you unable to register during those hours will still be able to do so at the Welcome reception Friday evening at CAM.
4. For those of you arriving a day or two early, the AAEC Board of Directors will have their pre-convention board meeting on Thursday from 5-6 p.m. at BCC. You can observe their machinations if you'd like or you can join them afterward for an informal meet-from 6pm-7pm.
5. My sister Maryellen will be arriving at the Triton Hotel Wednesday evening and staying over until Monday. She will be available to help with any last-minute issues as well as give tips on food, drink, comedy, bus, theater, museums, literary or other directions/guidance before and after the conference. Her cell number is 916.456.4930. [email Maryellen_Burns@mac.com. I will be arriving Thursday mid-day; my number is 916.803.2495. [email scott@smburns.com]

SAFETY

If you have a car, be aware that all of SF is notorious for car break-ins – take your valuables with you and hide whatever you leave inside. Otherwise, it is a relatively safe city so long as you avoid certain areas and don't walk alone at night.



The riskiest area is what is known as the Tenderloin, generally bordered by Market St., Geary Blvd, Taylor St. and Van Ness Ave. It has long been an area known for its homelessness, prostitution, drug use, liquor stores, and strip clubs. If that's your thing, enjoy. But the



Tenderloin is also home to an array of architectural gems, theaters, art galleries, and trendy bars, especially along its borders. Go ahead and venture in if you have a destination, but it's not a place to wander aimlessly. It's hard to avoid Market St. – it's where BART [rapid transit] stations are located, with the Ferry Building and

Embarcadero at the eastern end and Upper Market with the fabulous Castro district at the west – both areas full of good restaurants and bars. The worst part of Market St. is between 5th and 10th Sts. It isn't necessarily crime ridden, but there are a lot of empty store fronts, post-pandemic vagrancy, and spare-change artists. For the latter, your best bet is to walk quickly and with confidence, avoiding eye contact, tucking away flashy items. Staying aware of your surroundings will make you less of a target. Remember: you don't need to outrun the bear, just the other tourists.

Second riskiest is the Mission District, about a mile south of downtown with Mission Street and Valencia Street being the foci and a BART station near dead center at 16th and Mission. That said, it is a vibrant and culturally rich area with many interesting restaurants, shops, galleries, and bookstores. While it has a reputation for a high crime rate, Maryellen and I have walked the area dozens of times with nary a hassle. So, once again, just be aware of your surroundings and don't walk it alone at night.

For more info on the Mission: www.sfgate.com/local/article/mission-district-san-francisco-17484040.php

BTW, you probably won't see much of it in October, but be aware that it is legal to walk down the street naked in SF – hence you may see nude shopping in the Haight-Ashbury district, nude bathing at Baker Beach [officially clothing optional], and occasionally in other parts of the city.

URGENT CARE.

There are private urgent care clinics throughout the city. One of several reasonably close to the Triton Hotel [1/2 mile] is GoHealth Urgent Care at 170 Columbus Ave, one of 14 clinics in the city operated by the Dignity Health chain. City operated urgent care centers are at the Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital Urgent Care Clinic, 1001 Potrero Ave, Building 30 and the Tom Waddel Urgent Care Center at 555 Stevenson Street.



PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION

The Hotel Triton has valet parking at \$65 per night, with in-out privileges. There is a public garage at the corner of Sutter and Stockton Streets, one block southwest. \$24 overnight [6pm-9am] or \$44 for 24 hours, but no in/out. Otherwise, consider downloading a parking app to your phone to see what lots are available and cost. [e.g. Parking Panda or Best Parking] If you should find on-street parking, you will be extremely lucky and should consider purchasing a lottery ticket too. Most lots are not patrolled, so do not leave valuables in your car or anything inviting in plain sight.

CAM is near Fisherman's Wharf about 2 miles northwest of the Triton. There are two public parking lots within 200 yards of CAM [Ghirardelli Square Garage at 3031 Larkin St and a valet/self park at 655 Beach St.] **However, this is San Francisco Fleet Week***, a major attraction, and the lots may be jammed. We do not recommend parking on the street. If you do, be sure not to leave any valuables inside.

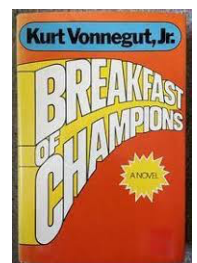
*This weekend culminates **SF Fleet Week** – a major annual attraction with a parade of US Navy ships on Friday, tours of the vessels, and Air Shows over SF Bay. The ship tours are free. For the airshows, seated viewing is not far from CAM -- tickets are pricy at \$125, but you'll have good vantage points for free from pretty much any part of the shoreline surrounding CAM. For details, see <https://fleetweeksf.org>.

If you feel like walking from the Hotel Triton to CAM, the route is level and traverses a safe part of town. Otherwise, from the hotel, you can get there by **cable car, bus, or Uber**. Bus fares are \$3 each way or \$5 for a daily pass – discounts for seniors. Cable Car is \$8 each way. There is a cable car stop at Powell and Bush Sts., two blocks west of the Triton. The line dead-ends at Beach St., just 100 yards from CAM. Similarly, catch the number 30 bus at the corner of Sutter & Kearny, a block southeast of the Triton and you'll end up at CAM. If you plan on bussing around town, download the *Muni Mobile* app.

For more info: www.sfmta.com/getting-around/muni/fares

BREAKFAST

The Hotel Triton has coffee in the lobby from 6-10 am, and a complimentary continental breakfast from 7-9 a.m.



Café le Presse is adjacent to the Triton – it is Francophile friendly but a bit pricey and with a limited menu. Opens at 8 am. <https://www.cafedelapresse.com>

Sears Fine Food: 439 Powell. A San Francisco tradition since 1938. Famous for its '18 Swedish Pancakes.' Opens at 6:30 a.m. <https://www.searsfinefood.com>

Sam's Grill & Seafood: 374 Bush St. 5th oldest restaurant in the U.S. with a large menu and a tavern and patio next door. open for bkfst at 9:30a.m. Also great for dinner. \$\$\$
<https://samsgrill-sf.com>

Lori's Diner: 500 Sutter St. 7am-10pm <https://www.lorisdiner.com>

Mason's Café [Mason's Diner]: 320 Mason St. 630-230pm <https://www.masondiner.com>

Pinecrest Diner: 401 Geary St., 24 hours. <https://pinecrests.com>

Some other options in other parts of town:

Brenda's French Soul Food – beignets, French toast, benedicts and gumbo. 652 Polk St. at Eddy. Opens at 8 a.m. On the western fringe of the Tenderloin district. Uber or taxi over – they have seating, but you can also order online for pickup. <https://frenchsoulfood.com/southern-brunch-everyday/>

Mamas on Washington Square: A North Beach institution: benedicts, French toast, and long lines. <http://www.mamas-sf.com/menu.html>

Maison Danel: 1030 Polk St. at Post. A French Pâtisserie, Viennoiserie, and Salon de Thé. Opens at 8 a.m., including Sundays. <https://www.maisondanel.com>

Roses Café: 2298 Union St.– a dinner trattoria by night, Rose's has an always-reliable weekday brunch beginning at 9 a.m. with dishes like breakfast pizza with ham, fontina, and eggs or French toast bread pudding with caramelized apples and whipped cream.
<https://rosescafesf.com>

LUNCH & DINNER

Far too many places to mention. Just pick an area and let your eyes and noses decide: Chinatown – Union Square – Hayes Valley – Clement Street – Ferry Building – Mission District – North Beach – Fisherman's Wharf – Castro Street.

Some special mentions:

North Beach: What's to say...dozens of great Italian and non-Italian restaurants, cafes, coffeehouses and less than a mile walk from the Hotel Triton. Let your noses wander. My favorite Italian in North Beach: Piazza Pellegrini, 659 Columbus Ave. A small trattoria, but with

added outside seating. Home-made pastas and daily specials; all dishes prepared to order.
<https://www.piazzapellegrini.com>

SF is filled with great pizza places. [<https://sf.eater.com/maps/best-pizza-san-francisco>] But if you can get there early, **Tony's Pizza Napoletana** in North Beach [corner of Stockton and Union] sources their ingredients from Naples and consistently ranks in lists of the top 10 pizzas of the world.

Parking in North Beach. On-Street: Fuhgettaboutit! But if you are bold, there is a city-operated lot at 735 Vallejo St., just west of Columbus. Another large public lot at 721 Filbert St.

Tadich Grill. 240 California St., in the Financial District at Battery St., about ½ mile southeast of the Triton. Seafood, steak and stews. \$\$\$\$ Claimed to be the oldest continuously run restaurant in California, and third oldest in the U.S. Before they all left town during the pandemic, a favored haunt of techies and hedge fund managers.

Rocco's Cafe. 1131 Folsom Street. Scott's #1 favorite SF Italian restaurant – a neighborhood institution, with home-style cooking and the best Cioppino you've ever had – unfortunately, this not a good month for that. Go to North Beach for a taste of Naples, Rome, Perugia, Sicily, etc. Rocco's is more New York City. <http://roccoscafe.com>

Swan Oyster Depot: 1517 Polk St. at California. This 18-seat seafood counter is an institution in San Francisco—it's been in the same location on Polk Street since 1912. Wait time varies, but if you arrive by 10 a.m. on a weekday and wait the 30 minutes until it opens, you've got a good shot at snagging a stool in the first seating. Otherwise, some diners wait as long as two hours (though it's often closer to an hour). Once inside, it's everything a seafood lover can want. No tables—just a marble counter that lines the length of the narrow space. Hours from 1030-530.
<http://www.swanoysterdepot.us>

PUBS

Caution: SF, like most big cities, can be pricey. Many establishments include service charges in the price of drinks. [SF has a 5% surcharge to help fund employee health programs.] Beer hovers around \$7-10 per glass, wine \$12-15, cocktails \$14-18. Prices less in the outlying neighborhoods should you find yourself there.

Near the Hotel Triton

Harlan Records – 18 Harlan Place; spacious with lots of small tables. Can be noisy in the p.m. if there is a dj spinning, otherwise a great spot for conversation. The espresso martini is a treat.
<https://www.harlanrecords.com>

The Irish Bank: 10 Mark Lane, 100 feet from Harlan Records. A full-on Irish pub, with burgers, small plates, sandwiches and Irish bkfst [but not open until 11:30 am]
<https://www.theirishbank.com>

E&O Kitchen; next door to the Book Club of California on Sutter St. Pan-Asian cuisine and drinks, from small plates to full dinners. \$\$\$ but the corn fritters are to die for!
<https://eandokitchen.com>

Pagan Idol: 375 Bush St. A Tiki Bar; great décor and ambiance but no food.
<https://www.paganidol.com>.

Rickhouse: 246 Kearny St. Warm ambiance, dimly lit, not large but adequate. Specializes in world whiskies. <http://www.rickhousebar.com>

Sam's Grill & Seafood: 374 Bush St. 5th oldest continuously operated restaurant in the U.S. with a large menu and a tavern and patio next door. Happy Hour; and open for bkfst at 9:30 a.m.
<https://samsgrill-sf.com>

Sool Bar & Lounge: 323 Grant Ave, across the street from the Triton. A comfy Korean sports bar, with interesting craft cocktails, local beers, and a small lounge upstairs. The name comes from a Korean translation for 'alcohol.' Happy our 5-7.

Iron Horse Cocktails: 25 Maiden Lane, 2 blocks south of the Triton. Now just a bar/lounge It was once one of the city's top dining and drinking spots, favored by celebrities such as Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Sammy Davis Jr. and Liberace. Marilyn Monroe and Joe DiMaggio, had their wedding reception here. Happy hour from 4-7 pm.

Near CAM

The Buena Vista Café: 150 feet east of CAM. Bar and Restaurant: introduced Irish Coffee to the U.S. in 1952. A very popular tourist attraction, lines through late afternoon but usually seating at the bar and lines usually disappear by 7pm; a dining room off to the side, and an outdoor patio.

San Francisco Brewing Co: Inside Ghirardelli Square, 100 yards west of CAM. Your typical craft brewery with burgers and sandwiches. Closes at 10 pm.



North Beach

Far to many to mention, EXCEPT:

Specs 12 Adler Museum Café: 12 William Saroyan Place [a small alley off Columbus Ave, just south of Broadway]. A small dive bar with cheaper drinks than anywhere else in North Beach; an unpretentious hang for locals, ex-hippies, and aging beat writers. The name refers to its grandma's-attic-style decor, which ranges from nautical kitsch and questionable knicknacks to antique photographs, maps, political pamphlets, taxidermy, and cocktail napkin illustrations. "It's like walking into a Tom Waits song." Thelonious Monk hung out here and there's a Canadian flag hanging from the ceiling! The bartenders are unionized, have health and

retirement benefits, and are permitted to refuse to make any drink they don't want to make.
<https://www.specsbarsf.com>

And an outlying Tourist Mecca

Tonga Room and Hurricane Bar – in the Fairmont Hotel, Mason at Sacramento Sts. Old-school Tiki Bar. The late Anthony Bourdain once described it as “the greatest place in the history of the world.” Asian-fusion cuisine and tropical cocktails while you relax under thatched bamboo canopies surrounding a lantern-illuminated lagoon with occasional indoor rain. \$15 cover.
<https://www.fairmont.com/san-francisco/dining/tonga-room-hurricane-bar/>

BOOKSTORES



CITY LIGHTS

City Lights. 261 Columbus Ave [North Beach] 10am-10pm. Like *Shakespeare and Company* in Paris, a Mecca for book lovers. Specializing in world literature, the arts, and progressive politics. It was founded in 1953 by poet Lawrence Ferlinghetti and became widely known following the obscenity trial of Ferlinghetti for publishing Allen Ginsberg's influential collection *Howl and Other Poems* (City Lights, 1956).

Green Apple Books. 506 Clement St. 10am-9pm. Ask other SF booksellers about their favorite bookstore and most will mention Green Apple. The largest bookstore in SF, full of nooks and crannies. Both new and used; a great remainder section, and adjacent space with music, comics and manga.

Kinokuniya – Japan Center Mall, Laguna and Geary Sts. 10-30-7pm. Notable for its enormous Anime/Manga section with both Japanese and English options. While there, check out Mochidonut on the second floor of the mall: ring shaped mochi donuts in bright colors and grazes: matcha oreo, black sesame, fruity pebbles.

Dog Eared Books – 900 Valencia [Mission District] 10-10pm. New books, but specializing in off-beat, small press, local lit. <https://www.dogearredbooks.com>

William Stout Architectural Books. 804 Montgomery in North Beach – 1230-530 pm. Thousands of titles on architecture, art, and design.

WHERE TO WANDER AIMLESSLY

Clement Street: from Arguello Blvd westward to Presidio Park

2 miles of Asian and European eateries, groceries, bakeries, shops, spices. On-street parking is very difficult and few public lots. Uber or bus. <http://www.sanfranciscodays.com/richmond-clement/>

Hayes Valley. 12 square blocks of restaurants and bars, centered at Franklin and Hayes Sts.

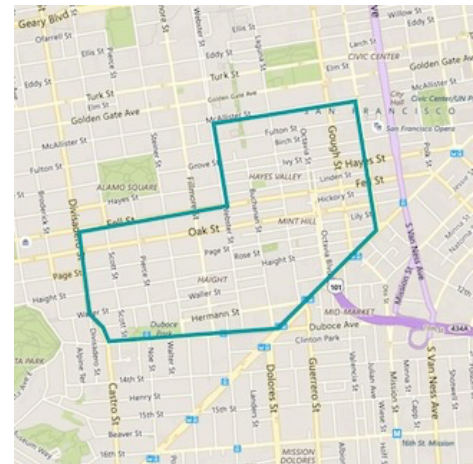
On-street parking impossible; a large public lot at the corner of Gough and Grove Sts.

A few suggestions for Hayes Valley, in no particular order:

Chez Maman West. 401 Gough. Neighborhood French bistro

Ebb & flow at Gough and Ivy Sts. Wine shop and bar

Sugar Lounge. On Hayes between Franklin and Gough. Comfy bar with 50's vibe. Happy hour 4-730



Salt and Straw ice cream. 377 Hayes; SF outlet of national chain partially owned by Dwayne the Rock Johnson

A Mano. 450 Hayes; housemade pasta, pizza, and Italian wine. Spacious; menu items mostly under \$20. Special counter for pick up and go Italian. <https://www.amanosf.com>

Anina. 482 Hayes. It's a friendly bar, with a patio and wide selection of beer.

True Sake. 556 Hayes. If you like Sake, there is probably no better place on the planet outside Japan.

Il Borgo Family Italian Restaurant. 500 Fell St., at Laguna. A small gem with a chef from Milano who makes homemade pasta and bread from scratch. Cozy & charming, with red-checkered tablecloths.

Patxis pizza. 511 Hayes – Chicago style and Neopolitan pizza. A local chain but features deep-dish.

Hayz Dog. 364 Hayes. Open til 1130pm: Chicago Dogs, Elote dogs, hotdog banh mi.

BEACHES:

You can't swim in SF waters without a wetsuit. But for sunbathing and some great views: <https://www.sfgate.com/local/article/san-francisco-beaches-17836872.php>

HIKING:

For casual walks with window shopping, turn right from the Hotel Triton to enter Chinatown – about ¾ of a mile to North Beach, another walker's paradise.

For similar walks with a very wide variety of ethnic eateries, take an Uber to Clement Street from Arguello Blvd west to Park Presidio. [You can also take the bus: 38 Geary; catch it at Geary and Stockton a couple of blocks west of the Book Club]

For true nature walks: just about anywhere in **Golden Gate Park** or **the Presidio**. See also: <https://www.alltrails.com/us/california/san-francisco>

Angel Island. Take the ferry from Pier 39. Angel Island State Park, the largest natural island in the San Francisco Bay, offers some of the best views of the surrounding Bay Area. With great hiking trails and many other recreational opportunities readily available. Take your own food and water.



For stair-steppers:

THE 16TH AVENUE STAIRCASE [aka Moraga Steps] is 163 steps of colorful mosaic tiles, hidden in the quiet Sunset district of San Francisco. Located on Moraga Street between 15th & 16th avenues. This neighborhood has few other tourist draws, but those who find the staircase will be rewarded with sweeping views of the city from Grandview Park at the top, and a beautiful garden design. The artists were Collette Crutcher and Aileen Barr, working with 300 neighbors. <https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/secret-tiled-staircase>



MUSEUMS

The City is filled with them. See:

<https://artguide.artforum.com/artguide/place/san-francisco?category=museums>
<https://www.timeout.com/san-francisco/things-to-do/best-san-francisco-museums>

Special mentions:

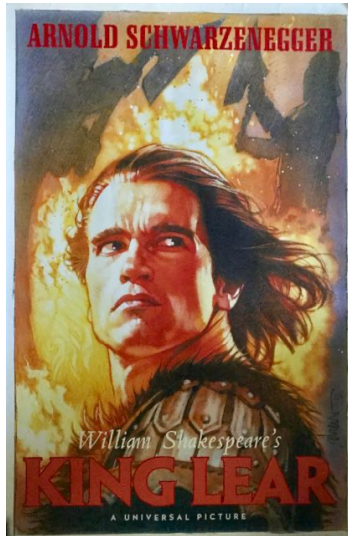
At the **de Young Museum** on Golden Gate Park, 50 Hagiwara Tea Garden Drive.

The de Young Open, featuring nearly 900 works from professional and outsider bay area artists, jury selected from nearly 8000 submissions displayed in floor-to-ceiling salon style. All works for sale and the artists retain 100% of the profits.

Palace of Legion of Honor: In addition to a great collection of Renaissance art, the building is a work of art itself, suitable for a perch over Lake Como, with great views of the Bay and City.



Musée Mécanique, at the top of Fisherman's Wharf. Pier 45. A tourist trap to be sure, but what a way to be trapped. This penny arcade has been around since 1933 and is one of the world's largest collections of mechanically operated musical instruments and arcade machines – many playable.



Art Galleries near the Triton

Caldwell Snider. 341 Sutter

Rebecca Camacho. 794 Sutter

Ryan Graff. 804 Sutter

COL Gallery. 887 Beach

Dolby Chadwick. 210 Post

Et Al. 620 Kearny

Euquinom; K. Imperial; and Robert Koch Gallery. 49 Geary

Jessica Silverman. 615 Grant

For a list of current exhibitions:

<https://artguide.artforum.com/artguide/place/san-francisco?category=galleries>

PLACES TO BE A FULL-FLEDGED TOURIST

Golden Gate Park. The west coast version of New York's Central Park stretches 1.5 miles and contains countless activities including the Conservatory of Flowers, a great Arboretum, lakes, hiking trails, a Bison Paddock with a grazing herd, a central museum complex, and a fantastic Japanese Tea Garden.

Chinatown. The Chinatown Gate is literally across the street from the Triton. Restaurants, Groceries, Shops, Dim-Sum, Bakeries. A ¼ mile stroll down Grant Avenue to North Beach. Grant Avenue is the tourist boulevard. If you want to check out more down-home establishments wander the cross-streets, or Stockton St. which parallels Grant one block to the West. Far too many places to mention, but will give it a go for two:

Sam Wo Restaurant: 713 Clay St. 115 Years old; an institution – but may close in 2024 or 2025 because of economic and land issues.

Hang Ah Dim Sum Teahouse [aka Hang Ah Tea Room]: 1 Pagoda Place. Purportedly the oldest dim sum restaurant in the U.S., similarly over a century.

Coit Tower. One of the city's most famous Art Deco landmarks. 210 feet of elegance and reinforced concrete at the crest of Telegraph Hill, North Beach. An arcaded observation deck at the top and a number of great WPA murals inside.



Balmy Alley [in the Mission District]

Only a block long, but the greatest concentration of mural art in the city.

https://www.foundsf.org/index.php?title=Balmy_Alley:_a_Modernist_Approach

Ferry Building [Embarcadero at the foot of Market St]. Aside from sitting by the dock o'the Bay, filled with small restaurants, boutiques, and artisan foods. The Hog Island Oyster Company, a Napa/Tomales Bay institution, has an outlet there.



Vermont St between 20th and 23rd with seven hairpin cutbacks in three blocks is more crooked than world-famous Lombard St. Nothing to see here; no views; no tourists – just something to brag about.

DAY TRIPS within 30-40 minutes of SF

Battery Spencer, across the Golden Gate Bridge in Marin County, is one of the premier view and photo spots for the Golden Gate Bridge and San Francisco. Many of the most famous photographs of the GG Bridge and SF were taken here, including the photo on the Hotel Triton's home page. [and there is a wide area to shoot from so you have everything from broad ocean vistas (facing west) to views of the Bay Bridge, Alcatraz and Fort Baker to the east. Not particularly easy to get to...this was a gun emplacement during WW2 so they did not want it to be exposed to enemy attack, nor to make its presence obvious to would-be enemies. It's located on top of a bluff above the Golden Gate Bridge, with a path that connects it along a ridgetop to Conzelman Road in the Marin Headlands. **Driving via Northbound Highway 101:** Take the Sausalito-Alexander Ave. exit just north of the Golden Gate Bridge. Bear left immediately and you'll come to a stop sign. Turn left onto Alexander Ave. and go under the freeway, then make the first possible right turn onto Conzelman Road. The first turnout will be a short distance past the entrance to the Conzelman Road Parking Lot. If you don't want to risk there being no space in the turnout or the Conzelman lot you can park in the Vista Point lot off 101 and take the passageway under the road to the Conzelman Road Parking Lot.

Stinson Beach – Golden Gate National Recreation Area. 20 miles north of SF. White sand and oceanfront. If you want to dare swim in N. Calif. Waters, this is the place to do it. The road down is steep and winding. <http://stinsonbeachonline.com>

Muir Woods National Monument: an old growth redwood forest with well-maintained trails. The trees are from 400-800 years old and up to 250 feet tall. Also alders, maple, tanoaks, fir, and ferns and fungi. Alas, a heavily visited tourist haven.
<https://www.parksconservancy.org/parks/muir-woods-national-monument>

Mt Tamalpais State Park: A twisty ride up and down, but the magnificent vistas include the Farallon Islands 25 miles out to sea, the Marin County hills, Tomales Bay, SF Bay and City, the East Bay, and Mount Diablo. *"Just makin up poems in my head as I climb toward Mount Tamalpais. See up there, as beautiful a mountain as you'll see anywhere in the world, a beautiful shape to it, I really love Tamalpais."* – *The Dharma Bums*, by Jack Kerouac

