

## The Insider's Guide to San Francisco Nightlife



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*In this guide we'll attempt to do the impossible, namely narrow down the vast nightlife options to a three-page guide. We'll cover a variety of entertainment options including dance spots, live music venues, and lounges. Keep in mind that the club scene is ever-changing and the only way to be really 'in the know' is to check out the listings that are in some of the free weekly newspapers or to get the inside scoop from some club going locals. The best, and easiest papers to find, are the Bay Guardian and S.F. Weekly, which list current events and concerts. Both also exist on line [sfbg.com](http://sfbg.com) and [sfweekly.com](http://sfweekly.com)*

### The Live Music Scene

*San Francisco has long been home to a healthy local music scene and we encourage you to visit one of the many venues offering live music from jazz to rock to blues and back again.*

#### JAZZ CLUBS

##### JAZZ AT PEARL'S

Resurrected by jazz vocalist Kim Nalley, this legendary North Beach hot-spot has been restored for a jazz aficionado's visual, culinary and aural pleasure. 256 Columbus Avenue, 291-8255. • [jazzatpearls.com](http://jazzatpearls.com)

##### RASSELAS

Rotating talent and plush couches insure that you will be entertained and relaxed. In addition they serve wonderful Ethiopian food, the perfect excuse to eat with your hands or even romantically feed your date! 1534 Fillmore Street, 346-8696 • [rasselasjazzclub.com](http://rasselasjazzclub.com)

##### YOSHI'S

A fantastic sound system and soothing Japanese décor provide the best setting for live jazz in the Bay Area. This is where the biggest names want to play, and where a true jazz lover will want to go. 510 Embarcadero West, Oakland, 510-238-9200. They are working on a new location which will be near Rasselas in the new Fillmore Jazz District. • [yoshis.com](http://yoshis.com)

#### BLUES CLUBS

Singing the blues has long been popular in the Bay Area, to which the growth of the S.F. Blues Festival can attest. The festival is held yearly in September. • [sfblues.com](http://sfblues.com) • If you can't catch this annual event check out some music at the following:

##### BISCUITS & BLUES

This is one of the best places to catch live music. This downtown club features hearty Southern cuisine and live music nightly. The great location and fine bookings keep this joint jumpin'! 401 Mason Street, 292-2583 • [biscuitsandblues.com](http://biscuitsandblues.com)

##### BOOM BOOM ROOM

This is the place to hear some down and dirty blues beats in a low-key atmosphere. Owned by the late great John Lee Hooker, and now run by his daughter, this is a great neighborhood spot with world-class music and a blues loving mixed crowd. 1601 Fillmore at Geary, 673-8000 • [boomboomblues.com](http://boomboomblues.com)

##### LOU'S PIER 47

We wouldn't normally send you to the Wharf for good music, but Lou's does have live blues seven nights a week along with some spicy Cajun seafood. 300 Jefferson St., 771-5687

## CONCERT VENUES

### BIMBO'S 365 CLUB

This huge and lavish '40s-era club is one of the classiest places in town to see live music, even the punk bands seem a bit more chic in these surroundings. Past performers include The Brian Setzer Orchestra, Tito Puente, Aimee Mann, and Richard Ashcroft. Don't miss the live girl-in-the-fishbowl illusion behind the bar! 1025 Columbus Avenue, 474-0365 • [bimbos365club.com](http://bimbos365club.com)

### THE FILLMORE

This historic club, where Bill Graham first presented Jefferson Airplane and the Grateful Dead, is still a great venue for big, and not so big, touring bands. The music poster-covered walls are awe-inspiring. 1805 Geary, 346-6000 • [thefillmore.com](http://thefillmore.com)

### GREAT AMERICAN MUSIC HALL

History practically oozes from the frescoed walls of this old club. Built in 1907 as a restaurant/bordello, it still retains the swank charm of its past in the ornate chandeliers, columns and heavy drapes. This is a great place to see all kinds of live music. 859 O'Farrell, 885-0750 [musichallsf.com](http://musichallsf.com)

### SLIMS

With a great sound system and a variety of bookings this is one of the better live venues in town. Expect a casual crowd, and low-ticket prices. Arrive early if you want to snag a seat at one of the balcony tables. 333 11th St., 522-0333 • [slims-sf.com](http://slims-sf.com)

## BAR VENUES

### BOTTOM OF THE HILL

This small club at the base of Potrero Hill is one of the most popular spots to catch touring independent-label rock bands and local favorites. Mostly inhabited by college-age rockers, but there is no attitude to get in the way of the music. A fun, hassle-free experience. 1233 17th St., 621-4455 • [bottomofthehill.com](http://bottomofthehill.com)

### CAFÉ DU NORD

Head down the long stairs into this atmospheric club and you'll feel like you're in a prohibition era speakeasy. A well-established nightclub/restaurant/bar, Café Du Nord offers a variety of entertainment including live jazz, folk, cabaret, and performance pieces. 2170 Market St., 861-5016 • [cafedunord.com](http://cafedunord.com)

### PARADISE LOUNGE

Nothing fancy but with three different performance spaces the Paradise promises more bang for your buck. Showcasing a variety of local favorites, as well as up and coming bands on the two ground level stages, and smaller acoustic acts in the smaller Above Paradise space, pretty much guarantees something for everyone. 308 11th St., 621-1911

## Red Hot and Cool Bars

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*If you just want to go out for a drink and some people watching this city is full of interesting bars and lounges. Here we'll serve up a few suggestions of places we enjoy, but feel free to ask your Host for their personal picks.*

### 111 MINNA

This 'underground' gallery/bar draws a chic 'in-the-know' crowd with a changing schedule of performance art, indie movies, live bands and DJs spinning hip-hop, drum and bass, dub, etc. 111 Minna St., 974-1719 • [111minnagallery.com](http://111minnagallery.com)

### ANNIE'S SOCIAL CLUB

This unassuming local favorite got its start in a small room just opposite the Hall of Justice. Last year they moved north and took over the larger space that once housed The Covered Wagon. With the bigger room they now have bands, DJ and a back room dedicated to Karaoke, truly something for everyone! The collection of punk Karaoke collection is not to be missed, channel your inner Johnny Rotten. 917 Folsom Street, 974-1585 • [anniessocialclub.com](http://anniessocialclub.com)

### BEAUTY BAR

Is it a beauty parlor? Is it a bar? It's both! This fun spot in the Mission offers up cocktails with names like Aqua Net and Prell, as well as manicures. Snag one of the old chairs complete with helmet-like hairdryer and you're sure to feel like a glamour queen! Bring cash, because they don't take plastic. 2299 Mission, 285-0323 • [beautybar.com](http://beautybar.com)

## BUBBLE LOUNGE

If you're fond of the bubbly this is the place for you. With over 300 different domestic and imported champagnes on the menu you'll know you're in heaven. Order by the glass, or sample their special champagne cocktails. The crowd is well-heeled and well-dressed though the atmosphere is fairly casual. A bar menu is available. 714 Montgomery St., 434-4204 • bubblelounge.com

## BUTTER

A tribute to 'white trash' culture- if you can believe it! Butter is a bar/restaurant where you can eat crispy Tater Tots and Beanie Weenies, or take to the small dance floor and shake your groove thang to some funky tunes. 354 11th St., 863-5964 • smoothasbutter.com

## HI FI

If you're in the Marina District this bar might be a good option. The glowing 'stained glass' wall and white booths, as well as a mix of electronica music and live Acid Jazz tends to attract a youngish crowd. 2125 Lombard St., 345-8663

## THE RED ROOM

This spot is red hot, and we do mean RED! One customer described it as 'like being inside Jeannie's bottle!' Descriptions don't really do it justice though; this place must be seen to be believed. Drinkers of martinis and cosmopolitans will be in seventh heaven. 827 Sutter St., 346-7666

## VESUVIO

This cluttered bar has been popular since the Beat Days, partly due to it's prime location right across from City Lights Bookstore. Grab a seat and look around you, if the crowd isn't too interesting, check out the pictures and knick-knacks, which cover every inch of the walls. 255 Columbus, 362-3370 • vesuvio.com

Tell 'em Joie sent you!

**BOURBON AND BRANCH** was and is a speakeasy. An intimate room that you can't find from the street so secret that they don't even publish their address. Lucky for you we know it is 501 Jones Street. Reservations are mandatory. To make reservations visit [bourbonandbranch.com](http://bourbonandbranch.com)

## *Dance Joints*

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### 1015 FOLSOM

A mainstay of the local dance scene for many years, 1015 Folsom is a huge multi-floored structure with a variety of beats. The Chill-Out room on the upper floor is a popular place to hang out and catch your breath. 1015 Folsom St., 431-1200

### CLUB SIX

Six's upstairs lounge area with sofas galore is a rarity in the city. With a high ceiling and minimal decor, the Lounge is a great place to relax with friends and listen to the phat beats being played downstairs in the Basement. 60 6th St., 863-1221 • clubsix1.com

### SUITE 181

The seedy surroundings don't keep this from being a popular place to dance to 'hot DJ's spinning the latest tunes. 181 Eddy St., 345-9900 [suite181.com](http://suite181.com)

### ROCCAPULCO

If salsa is your dance of choice Roccapulco is the place to be. The bands are hot and the dancing is steamy! If you're not up on your dance moves inquire about their salsa lessons. They also serve up some tasty Latin cuisine. 3140 Mission St., 648-6611 • roccapulco.com

### RUBY SKYE

A former theatre that has been transformed into a beautiful dance club, this club attracts an older more conservative crowd. The location off of Union Square can't be beat. Call for their dress code. 420 Mason St., 693-0777 • rubyskye.com

