



## The Gay Life - San Francisco Style

*San Francisco has one of the most fascinating collections of cultures in the United States, and few have transformed The City as much as the large gay and lesbian community, which comprises approximately 20% of San Francisco's total population. We couldn't possibly list all there is to offer the gay or lesbian visitor, so pick up one of the many free publications such as the Bay Times or Bay Area Reporter, the weekly gay news and entertainment papers.*

*All of Joie de Vivre's hotels are gay-friendly, but certain ones have built a particularly loyal clientele: The Phoenix is popular for its groovy vibe and proximity to Polk Street and the Hotel Rex is for the more sophisticated types who also want to be in the Union Square area.*

### The Gay Community

The Charles M. Holmes Campus at The Center, the only LGBT Community Center built specifically for that purpose, encompasses meeting rooms, exhibition areas, performance venues, and non-profit offices. The Center (1800 Market St.) is a great resource for residents and visitors. Learn more about their services by calling 865-5555, or on their website at [sfgaycenter.org](http://sfgaycenter.org). You can explore the history of gay life in San Francisco at the James C. Hormel Gay & Lesbian Center at the Main Library on Larkin and Grove Streets. This is the only center of its kind in the world. In addition to the collection and art in the center itself, there are often exhibits on LGBT art and history at the library. You can find details about the center and its collection online at [sfpl.org/librarylocations/main/glc/glc.htm](http://sfpl.org/librarylocations/main/glc/glc.htm)

### The Castro District

#### SHOPPING

The Castro is jam-packed with stores selling everything from books to tiaras. Stroll along Castro St. heading south, and Market St. heading east and you're bound to find someplace to spend your hard-earned dollars. Cliff's Variety (479 Castro St.) is a favorite for just about anything. For clothing visit Rolo (2351 Market St.) or In-Jeanious (432 Castro St.). A visit to Under One Roof (549 Castro) where all profits benefit local AIDS organizations, is a must. You'll find great gifts and souvenirs here! For cheesy, campy and just plain bizarre music visit Medium Rare Records (2310 Market St.). For the written word try the queer-oriented A Different Light Bookstore (489 Castro St.) and Jaguar Adult Books (4057 18th St.) which has a selection of gay erotic titles.

#### DINING

There are some great dining options in the Castro neighborhood, with everything from bargain eateries to hip dining spots. Here are a few to look for:

**BAGHDAD CAFÉ** (2295 Market St., 621-4434) inexpensive diner food; open 24 hrs a day.

**BLUE** (2331 Market St., 863-2583) another diner, this one more hip and trendy.

**CHOW** (215 Church St., 552-2469) cheap and hearty pastas, pizzas, and more.

**HOME** (2100 Market St., 503-0333) comfort food and an excellent value.

**2223** (2223 Market St., 431-0962) chic bar scene and great food. Good for brunch.

**MECCA** (2029 Market St., 621-7000) a 'see and be seen' spot with Asian Fusion food.

**LIME** (2247 Market St., 621-5256) Modern décor, small plates and a great brunch spot.

## NIGHTLIFE

When the sun goes down, the energy picks up and the Castro really comes to life. There are any number of good bars for all types of people so we'll just point out a few and encourage you to go and explore on your own. Moby Dick (4049 18th St.) offers a relaxed, casual atmosphere; The Mix (4086 18th St.) offers a friendly atmosphere with a mixed crowd, pool table and rear deck and The Bar on Castro (456 Castro St.) is loungey and comfortable. For dancing in the neighborhood try The Café (2367 Market St.), an upbeat friendly place, with a small dance floor and outdoor deck, or Badlands (4121 18th St.), which has a youngish mainly white clientele. The friendly Pilsner Inn (225 Church St.) has a patio and pool table. Away from the heart of the Castro is Martuni's (4 Valencia St.) a fun piano bar with a lively crowd.

## *Other Neighborhoods*

---

**The Mission District:** Take in a drag show at the Latino-oriented Esta Noche (3079 16th St.). Ladies should visit The Lexington Club (3464 19th St.). They have an awesome jukebox, pool tables, and good inexpensive drinks. (Men allowed in only with a female escort.)

**Polk Gulch:** Though sections of Polk can be seedy, there are some respectable bars including Cinch Saloon (1723 Polk St.), a welcoming neighborhood bar; the 'N Touch (1548 Polk St.) is popular with Asian gays. Diva's (1081 Post St at Polk 474-3482) is home to the TS and TG community, 4 floors of music, dancing and shows nightly.

**SOMA:** The area bordered by 6th & 12th Streets and Folsom & Harrison Streets offers a bar for every taste and lifestyle. The Eagle Tavern (398 12th St.) is a leather biker bar; The Lone Star Saloon (1354 Harrison St.) is the place to find bears guzzling beer; Hole in the Wall Saloon (289 Eighth St.) is dark and divey, but welcoming to all queers.

**Union Square/Financial District:** An older relaxed crowd gathers at Ginger's Trois (246 Kearny St.).

## *Where the Boys Are...*

---

For the gay man in San Francisco there is something fun to do almost every night of the week. While the club scene predominates, you can also find theater, cabaret and comedy shows. Theatre Rhinoceros (2926 16th St., 861-5079) presents gay-themed plays as does The New Conservatory Theatre (25 Van Ness 861-8972). Castro Country Club (4058 18th St., 552-6102), an all-male no-alcohol establishment offers a relaxed friendly atmosphere to enjoy movies, pinball machines, and lounging on the sun deck. Here are some other suggestions for things to do:

### MONDAY

Check The Stud (399 Ninth St., 252-STUD) where you'll find a mixed-gender, mixed-race crowd dancing to the funkier music in town.

### TUESDAY

If you're up for a wild, wild scene of drag queens and cross dressers check out Trannyshack at The Stud (399 Ninth St.). This is a Tuesday night San Francisco tradition that shouldn't be missed.

### WEDNESDAY

Relax with a hip crowd and mellow tunes at Trax (1437 Haight St.).

### THURSDAY

Head to Faith (715 Harrison St.) where an 18 plus mixed queer crowd gyrates on two dance floors. The Endup (401 6th St.) offers Kit Kat where the international funk will get you moving.

### FRIDAY

Check out the vibe at Fag Fridays at the Endup (401 6th St.), a one-of-a-kind San Francisco nightspot. Space 550 (550 Barneveld) offers a mix of trance, house, hip-hop and top '40s for your dancing pleasure.

### SATURDAY

The club for late night dancing is Mezzanine which is located in an alley behind the Mint just off 5th and Mission Streets (go behind the Mint and look for the security guards in the alley that runs right into the back of the Mint). Satisfy your sweet tooth at Sugar at The Stud (399 Ninth St.). This queer dance club is getting raves for its friendly vibe and great DJ.

### SUNDAY

The Eagle (398 12th St.) throws their ever-popular Beer Bust from 3-6 p.m.; and if the weather is nice the patio will be packed. To work off any excess energy head to Club Six (60 Sixth St.) for Gemini where Hi-NRG and house beats will get you moving. If you're more energetic you can try your luck with salsa dancing at El Rio (3158 Mission St.). Same sex dance lessons are taught from 3:15 to 4:15 p.m.

## *Where the Women Go...*

---

The lesbian community may be subtler and less outwardly visible than the gay community, but the ladies are just as politically powerful. If you're looking to meet someone new visit Osento, a women-only bathhouse at 955 Valencia St., 282-6333. Theatergoers should catch a performance at Luna Sea, a women's performance project in the Mission. Call 863-2989 for show information.

### MONDAY

Knit night at the S.F. LGBT Community Center at 1800 Market St. Catch up on your knitting, crochet and other art with fellow community artists 7 p.m.

### TUESDAY

Relax, and listen to some tunes at the always-cool Lexington Club (3464 19th St.).

### WEDNESDAY

Explore one of the lesser known women friendly bars in the City, Wild Side West (424 Cortland St. 647-3099). This off the beaten track bar features a sculpture garden with fire pits to ward off the evening chill on the steeply raked back yard.

### THURSDAY

Get ready to get your groove on at 26MIX (3024 Mission St.). The DJ's spin everything from rock-steady to old soul to dancehall. Broke as \*&#%\* Tuesdays feature cheap drinks, a lively crowd and free wi-fi.! Dyke DJs spin the best of the female divas from the 80's and 90's.

### FRIDAY

For major sex appeal check out the Hot Pants, girls dance part at the Cat Club (1190 Folsom St.), Hip Hop, 80's, Indie, Electro music with a hot vibe! And Friday is always ladies night at The Stud (399 9th St.).

### SATURDAY

Mango comes to El Rio (3158 Mission St.) on the fourth Saturday, where the action starts at 3 p.m. on the patio.

### SUNDAY

On the day of rest, there's no better place to do it than the women-only bathhouse, Osento, at 955 Valencia. Street (282-6333). After that, head nearby to El Rio (3158 Mission St.) for great outdoor salsa dancing from 4 til 8p.m.

