

Parks & Recreation: Revel in Northern California's Great Outdoors

Destinations Health & Wellness

BY MEENA RAMAKRISHNAN ON AUGUST 30, 2016

John Muir was a lifelong observer of the natural world. His love of science and geology took him from the shores of Scotland to the Sierra Nevada, finally settling in the Bay Area in 1868. Muir saw Northern California as an abundance of terrain waiting to be explored.

Striking cliff domes of Yosemite, blooming wildflowers along the trails of Diablo Valley and majestic redwood trees still decorate the landscape, thanks to the Father of the National Park Service.

Following Muir's footsteps, the next generation of nature enthusiasts is invited to discover evergreen wonders and outdoor attractions in the Bay Area and beyond. A multitude of team-building activities take advantage of the coastal location, sunshine and temperate climate, often warmest during September.

Napa Valley and Sonoma County beckon wine connoisseurs to taste the fruits of never-ending vineyards. The East Bay is a warm reprieve from the rolling fog, with a trendy dining scene and urban vibe. Silicon Valley is the capital of tech innovation, while San Francisco beckons visitors to photograph the iconic Golden Gate Bridge.

"All of these views—of the ocean, the bay, the parks, the hills—help inspire San Francisco to embrace green, sustainable practices so the environment continues to be beautiful for future generations," says Kathryn Horton, vice president of convention services and events for San Francisco Travel.

Unwind in Wine Country



Napa Valley Wine Train

One of the best ways to explore Napa's legendary wineries is aboard Napa Valley Wine Train, which travels up and down the American Viticultural Area. The restaurant-cum-locomotive features memorable fine-dining experiences alongside stops at premier wineries, such as V. Sattui, Robert Mondavi, Grgich Hills Estate and Raymond Vineyards. Vintage Pullman train cars can be chartered for private parties.

No visit to Napa is complete without a day at the spa. Groups can embrace the dirt with mud therapy at The Bathhouse at Spa Solage in Solage Calistoga luxury resort. The signature three-part treatment is a mineral-rich experience that incorporates detoxifying mud and pure essential oils. It is encouraged to soak and rehydrate in healing geo-thermal pools, which improve circulation. The final step is a deeply relaxing rest in state-of-the-art sound chairs that course soothing vibrations throughout the body.