

Kid Friendly Summer Fun in the Bay Area

Looking for fun kid-friendly activities in and around San Francisco? We asked our savvy [San Francisco Bay Area Mom Bloggers](#) for their favorites, and the answers are as diverse as the Bay Area itself. Whether you're a local or first-time visitor, [their recommendations](#), as well as the more specific ones below, are sure to be hits with your family.

San Francisco

1. [Crissy Field](#), San Francisco

"We love spending a sunny day at Crissy Field. It has the intense spirit of the ocean, world-class views, and plenty of space to spread out and frolic. We like to bring a picnic and meet several families for a giant day-long party. I grew up in the desert of West Texas so I never take for granted what a gift it is to enjoy the Pacific Ocean and the San Francisco Bay." - [Robin Dutton-Cookston](#) of [The Foggiest Idea](#)

2. Chinatown, San Francisco

[Silicon Valley Mamas](#), [Suz Lipman](#) of [Slow Family Online](#), and [Debbie Abrams Kaplan](#) of [Frisco Kids](#) all recommend exploring Chinatown, where kids can watch how fortune cookies are made and sort through various goods (both quality and kitch) at ethnic stores.

3. [California Academy of Sciences](#), San Francisco

"We are huge fans of the California Academy of Sciences. We go a lot, and my son always finds something new to marvel at." - [Very Bloggy Beth](#) of [Very Bloggy](#)

4. [Golden Gate Park](#), San Francisco

"It has so much to offer — the [Japanese Tea Garden](#), [Academy of Sciences](#), [the Carousel](#), walking trails and lots of space for picnics. We could visit Golden Gate Park once a week and always experience something new." - [Natali, Alex, Jennifer, Nathalee](#) of [MommyBeta](#)

5. [Alta Plaza Park](#), San Francisco

"My daughter Chloe loves the big slides and playing in the sand at Alta Plaza Park. I love going there with her because the breath-taking view of San Francisco is hard to beat." - [Natalie Zee Drieu](#) of [Coquette Maman](#)

Marin

6. [Bay Area Discovery Museum](#), Sausalito

"My favorite kid-friendly activity is going to the Bay Area Discovery Museum. It appeals to all 4 of my kids... ages 2 through 12. They all love it, so no complaining means it is fun for me, too! There are outside areas and inside areas... places to think and places to run." [XLMIC](#) of [Taking It On](#)

7. [Point Reyes National Seashore](#), Marin County

"My son Julian loves to head over to the Point [Reyes](#) National Seashore to explore the large coastal park on a separate tectonic plate from the rest of Marin County — it was once part of Southern California, broke off, and has been inching it's way north ever since. A favorite is the Miwok Village there close to the Bear Valley Visitors' Center." - [Suzuki](#) of [The Julian File](#)

8. [Marin County Fair](#), Marin

"It's a world-class event that happens every 4th of July weekend. This year, we saw Chinese acrobats, a wonderful puppet theater show, fine art, music, dance, an interactive sculpture of San Francisco made of 100,000 toothpicks, and an exhibit all about the Golden Gate Bridge." - [Suzuki](#) of [The Julian File](#)

East Bay

9. [Oakland Zoo](#), Oakland

"The Oakland Zoo is a favorite of ours and the only place we currently have a membership. We usually do a short cruise of the grounds, making sure to stop and see the giraffes and the monkeys, and then make a pit stop in the children's area, set out a blanket on the grass and snack ourselves silly. After that, it's time for the train and the carousel. If the girls had their way, we would ride the train and carousel the whole time."

[Michele Brown](#) of [Papoe](#)

10. [Tilden Park](#), Berkeley

"I think the wide variety of parks to play in is appealing to kids of all ages. We love the steam train in Tilden Park, mainly because our son is just a wee bit obsessed with 'choo-choo's' at the moment." -[Micheline](#)

[Ludwick](#) of [Flyrish Foibles](#)

11. [Ardenwood Historic Farm](#), Fremont

"My girls' hands-down favorite is Ardenwood Historic Farm. It doesn't matter what time of the year we visit, there's always a pioneer outdoors cooking class, a Victorian or Scottish period reenactment or a butterfly naturalist program. That place rocks!" -[Laure Latham](#) of [Frog Mom](#)

12. [Point Isabel](#), Albany

"If we have a couple of free hours, our favorite activity is a romp with our dog (and 300 other happy, off-leash pups) at Pt. Isabel in Albany. It sates the kids' desire to turn our house into a dog shelter." [Nancy Davis Kho](#) of

[Midlife Mixtape](#)

South Bay

13. San Jose Museums

Two of the South Bay's best kid-friendly destinations are museums. [Debbie Abrams Kaplan](#) of [Frisco Kids](#) especially likes the [Children's Discovery Museum](#) and the [Tech Museum](#), both in San Jose.

14. [Happy Hollow Park & Zoo](#), San Jose

"Happy Hollow brings the biggest of smiles to my little ones' faces." -[Amy](#) of [Using Our Words](#)

Everywhere: Beaches, Museums, Libraries, and Farmer's Markets

In addition to these destinations, [Amy Fothergill](#) of [The Family Chef](#) points out that there are beaches up and down the coast, and that for kids, "it does not get better," while Nancy Davis Kho of [MidLife Mixtape](#) lauds the Bay Area's many world class museums: "As a mom of a teen and a tween, we are slowly transitioning away from the abundance of child-friendly museums ([Exploratorium](#), [Habitot](#), [Lawrence Hall of Science](#)) and toward exhibits at art museums like the [DeYoung](#), [SFMOMA](#) and the [Oakland Museum of Art](#)."

For more neighborhood-based family fun, [Julia Linsteadt](#) of [GoatNotes Blog](#) frequents the farmers' markets with her kids: "On any given day there are at least one or two farmers markets taking place," which she says are "a fun way for us to get outdoors together, eat delicious food and have a chance to explore all of those wonderful cities that make up the SF Bay Area;" while [Unknown Mami](#) and her kids are hanging out at one of San Francisco's beautiful public libraries: "My eldest, Put Pie, enjoys checking out videos and books, going to story time, or just hanging out in the kids section. We have been lucky to witness the renovation of many of our local libraries and feel truly lucky to be able to have a place that is a priceless free family-friendly resource."