

# Fun on Ferries: Take the Kids on the Bay



Avoid the Traffic;  
Start Your Family Outing on a Ferry!



## Destination No. 1: Vallejo: Six Flags Marine World

"It's playtime," proclaims the *Six Flags Marine World* slogan, a clarion call for both real kids and kids-at-heart. New shows such as Bugs Bunny's musical revue "We Got the Beat!"; colorful fish, walruses, giraffes, alligators and dolphins; and rides ranging from the tame go-carts or ferris wheel to the most hair-raising roller coasters await you there. Why not kick off the trip to Marine World by riding the ferry? Trying to spot "dolphins" from the boat beats sitting in traffic with a car-load of tired kids!

You can pick up a great all-inclusive package that covers admission charge, cost of ferry and bus connections through the Blue & Gold Fleet at Pier 41 ticket booths in San Francisco, at <http://www.blueandgoldfleet.com/html/marineworld.html>, or by phone at (415) 705-5555. There is a per ticket service charge for phone orders. The package cost is: adult \$56.00, senior & child 3-7 \$40.00, 2 & under: free. After mid-June 2004, you can also take the Baylink ferry to Vallejo from the Ferry Building and connect to a Vallejo bus going to Marine World. See <http://www.baylinkferry.com> for upcoming announcements on this new connection.

Marine World is open daily during the Summer (May 28-August 29). (<http://www.sixflags.com/parks/marineworld/index.asp>)

## Destination No. 2: San Francisco

Avoid the fuss and muss of traffic and expensive garages by arriving in the City from Sausalito, Tiburon, Larkspur, Oakland, Alameda or Vallejo via ferry. Ferries offer a unique travel experience, which can be doubly rewarding for the whole family.

### Landing by Boat

Once you've reached San Francisco, landside connections range from the historic streetcar—another fun travel experience that runs along the *Embarcadero* to Fisherman's Wharf and up Market Street—to buses to BART to taxi to pedicab. Of course, bringing your bicycle on the boat with you gives the greatest flexibility of all.

### SBC (Baseball) Park and other Attractions

Hop a streetcar, stroll along the water, or bring your roller blades, bikes or scooters to take you south along the *Embarcadero*. Just beneath the Bay Bridge, you'll see a fire station: be sure to note the fireboat(s) parked alongside it. Further along, Red's Java House, at Pier 30, is a good stop for families on a budget. For under \$5 each, you can dine on their patio on such kid-friendly favorites as hot dogs, burgers, chili, and fries with a spectacular Bay Bridge view thrown in for free.

The downtown ballpark, SBC Park, lies a pleasant mile and a half from the Ferry Terminal. The Coca-Cola Fan Lot inside the park features four special slides

(including one inside a giant coke bottle), a mini-version of SBC Park that allows young fans to run the bases, a giant baseball glove, and a mezzanine level offering picturesque views. It's free for ticket-holders to visit the lot on game days; and, everyone is invited to visit at no cost at other times. Hours: Sept through May-Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; June, July and August - everyday when the team is on the road, from 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

### *Sail, Skate and Bowl*

Although the City lacks snow, it makes up for it by offering an ice-skating rink, a winter wonderland within easy walking or transit distance of the ferry.

Yerba Buena Center ice rink is open year-round. Catch the southbound historic F-line streetcar toward Market Street (or walk, take a cab, bike, or catch a southbound bus on Mission St.); de-board and walk south on Third Street; enter the Yerba Buena Garden just across from the Museum of Modern Art. The ice rink, in Moscone Center South, is upstairs on the west side of Third Street and south across Howard Street on the overhead walkway. Also tucked away near the ice rink is one of San Francisco's few bowling alleys.

The Yerba Buena complex offers many options for kids, including a carousel, playground, and the Zeum participatory art gallery. Closer to the corner of Mission and Fourth, northwest of Yerba Buena Center, lies the Metreon, which offers a multiplex cinema, various shops, interactive dance machines, eateries, and a tribute to Maurice Sendak's "Where the Wild Things Are" and "In the Night Kitchen," a participatory fantasy play space.

Before heading home, cap your experience with a hot chocolate from Starbucks inside the Metreon or relax on a bench overlooking the waterfalls at the upstairs Clouds Restaurant. For a special treat, Mo's Diner, an old-fashioned burger joint above the ice-rink offers giant ice-cream floats and sundaes suitable for any season. (One-way fares into SF range from \$9.50 (Vallejo) to \$5.25 (Oakland) with discount fares available. For instance, one-way fares from Oakland for kids aged 5-12 is \$2.50, kids under 5 ride for free and seniors aged 65+ ride for \$3. See [www.watertransit.org](http://www.watertransit.org) for a one-stop link to all the ferries)

### *Destination No. 3:*

### *Escape \*to\* Alcatraz Island*

For lasting impressions—especially for youngsters who haven't cooperated with family chores—take them to visit the remote Alcatraz Island, dramatic site of a historic federal prison. Requiring at least a week's advance booking during summer months, it is one of Golden Gate National Recreation Area's most popular destinations. Visitors to the island can explore the now defunct cellblock, and learn about the history of the Native American occupation of 1969-1971, early military fortifications and the West Coast's first (and oldest operating) lighthouse. The island's natural features comprise gardens, tide pools, bird colonies and extraordinary bay views. Pick up the boat for Alcatraz at Pier 41.

(Adult Alcatraz fare: \$16 with audio tour, \$14 without; see <http://www.blueandgoldfleet.com> for child and senior discounts and schedules)