



Presents:
Adventure Outdoors on California's North Coast
9 Days / 8 Nights



The redwoods are majestic, the tallest trees in the world. The rugged coast is magnificent; waves wash over the timeless coastline with the ebb and flow of the tide. Scenic drives truly take the roads less traveled to unspoiled places and stunning views. Welcome to Northern California, home of this unique experience, far from the beaten path.

Beginning in San Francisco, you'll be traveling up to Redwood National Park, where, armed with information about all the best scenic drives you can enjoy the landscape. A guided tour will introduce you to the Roosevelt Elk in the park. Meandering back down the Lost Coast and the Avenue of the Giants, you'll arrive in Mendocino, quintessential coastal California. The Skunk Train will take you deep into the redwood forest from Fort Bragg. A whale watching cruise off the coast may also deliver view of dolphins, sea lions, marine birds, and occasional sightings of sharks.

And of course, while in the area, you won't want to miss Sonoma County, headquarters of California wine country and also home to Redwoods State Reserve and Bodega Bay. A Private Limo Tour through the lush vineyards and vine covered hills will be a great way to end your trip. So grab some friends and head for northern California — land of majestic redwoods, mesmerizing waves and wines to savor.



Day One

As you begin your trip, San Francisco opens her Golden Gates beckoning you to “lose your heart.” Prepare to experience a wealth of vibrant sights and sounds found nowhere else. The city’s reputation as a fun-loving rollicking place is well deserved, dating back to the Gold Rush era when jumping saloons were filled with prospectors with stories to tell. The city has held out a welcoming hand to all and today magically blends a myriad of cultures, ethnic groups, and lifestyles. Mountains and coastlines add a beautiful natural backdrop to this very colorful place. To enjoy the natural beauty, plan to get out to experience San Francisco during free time; walk on the beach and ride a cable car to the top of Nob Hill where incredible views await.

Familiarize yourself with San Francisco on the Barbary Coast Trail, a 3.8 mile route following bronze medallions set in the sidewalks that connect 20 of the city’s most important locations. Marvel at a collection of historic ships, the first Asian temple in America, the birthplace of the Gold Rush and more. Follow that with a visit to Fisherman’s Wharf, where you can have incredible views of San Francisco Bay, the Golden Gate Bridge and the cityscape along with your seafood. Nearby Ghirardelli Square transformed a 19th century chocolate factory into a fabulous marketplace of restaurants featuring new one-of-a-kind shops and culinary experts from around the world. The tour will also take you past San Francisco’s famous “Painted Ladies;” blocks and blocks of Victorian homes that survived the earthquake and fire of 1906.

And of course, no visit to San Francisco is complete without a stop in Chinatown. Enjoy authentic Chinese food and revel in the excitement of this energizing, vibrant part of the city.



Day Two

A second day in San Francisco will allow you to explore the Golden Gate National Recreation Area which encompasses the entire area north and south of the Golden Gate Bridge. Highlights include the Presidio of San Francisco, a fort perched at the opening of San Francisco Bay for 218 years, Alcatraz, the island prison made famous in the movies, and Muir Woods National Monument, commemorating the father of the environmental movement in the US. Together these famous parks and attractions and others such as the California Academy of Sciences and the Conservatory of Flowers, reveal the true natural beauty of the city. Within these places, Native American, Spanish, Mexican and Gold Rush history abounds. For a real thrill, take an exhilarating, wind-whipped walk or bicycle ride (rentals are readily available) across the bridge.

The San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park component of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area is located at the Hyde Street Pier, where historic ships include an 1886 square rigger, a steam ferryboat, a steam tug, a paddlewheel tug and a 1915 steam schooner, all available for touring.

The ferry to Alcatraz leaves from Pier 33. Be sure to arrange for pre-reserved tickets, since the ferry can be sold out for weeks in advance. The audio tour of Alcatraz reveals that it is more than just a famous prison. A Civil War fortress, a bird sanctuary, the first lighthouse on the West Coast and the birthplace of the American Indian Red Power movement are a few of the stories of the rock.



Day Three

After a very pleasant drive up the Northern California coast, spend some time exploring the Village of Mendocino, so quaint it has earned a spot on the National Register of Historic Places. A huge collection of Victorians has been lovingly restored into charming inns, restaurants, unique shops and galleries. Perched proudly on a small, hilly peninsula, the town's striking "front yard" is the Mendocino Headlands State Park coastal bluffs. Locals will encourage you to explore the scenic trails with unobstructed views of the sparkling Pacific Ocean.

Fans of "Murder She Wrote" will recognize this seaside village as "Cabot Cove." The long running television show, featuring a writer from Maine, was filmed in town over several years. Be sure to visit the Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens, 47 acres of natural beauty sitting right on the California coast. The magnificent site includes canyons, wetlands, coastal bluffs, and a closed-cone pine forest. The Gardens' main trails take you right to the Pacific Ocean.

From Mendocino, it's all aboard in Fort Bragg with Captain Tim on the Sea Hawk for a whale watching and/or fishing cruise out of Noyo Harbor. Depending on the season, you can see California Gray Whales migrating from Alaska to Baja California. At other times of the year, you can go salmon fishing, rock cod fishing, crabbing, or take a coastal sightseeing cruise.



Day Four

The “only in California” experiences just keep coming today as you take the Skunk Train deep into the redwood forest near Fort Bragg. Built as a logging railroad, the Skunk line was created to bring massive redwood logs out to Mendocino sawmills. Residents along the tracks dubbed the trains, the skunk, saying they could smell the gasoline engines before they could see them. Along your route, the train crosses 30 bridges and trestles and passes through two mountain tunnels.

For those who want to venture still farther afield, the tallest and oldest living things in the world can be found nearby in the ancient Redwood Forest. Contrast these magnificent specimens to the pygmy forests at Van Damme and Jughandle State Parks. Explore both parts of Russian Gulch State Park, where the ocean side features the “Devil’s Punch Bowl” and the east side, a scenic hike to a graceful waterfall.



Day Five

No visit to Northern California to enjoy nature would be complete without a visit to Redwood National Park. The National Park Service describes the trees of Redwood National Park as "immense, ancient, stately, mysterious, powerful." We know you'll add your own words when you stand below one of these timeless giants. Why they grow so tall is a mystery. Take your time, meander the coast and savor the time to be totally awed by these incredible trees.

The Redwoods are rich in Visitors Centers, exhibits and scenic drives. Five Visitor Centers feature different aspects of the story and a variety of ranger-led programs are available to learn more. Redwood Highway 101 traverses the heart of Del Norte State Park. Howland Hill Road, nestled deep in the forest, puts you in the heart of Jedidiah Smith Redwoods State Park. Enderts Beach Road offers elk-viewing, whale watching and stunning coastal views. Further south, Requa Road features breathtaking views from the Klamath River Overlook, towering 650 feet about the sea. The Coastal Drive Loop delivers stunning views of crashing waves and rugged coastline.



Day Six

After you had an overview of Redwood National Park yesterday, you can arrange to join Redwood Adventures Tours on a guided tour in search of the Roosevelt Elk that live in the park. The elk are the largest and most visible land mammals in the northern redwood region. There are elk watching "hot spots" in Redwood National Park and State Park. Open prairies allow for safe viewing. In addition to spotting elk, Redwood Adventures will take you deep into Redwood National Park to hike the trails less traveled.



Day Seven

Today we recommend you take the long way around and all the while, it'll be a journey that few people have the opportunity to do. Dropping down from Eureka to Ferndale, you'll have reached the gateway to the Lost Coast Loop, a drive that takes you through the longest stretch of wilderness beaches in the continental United States. On a portion of the drive, you'll be traveling a route called Wildcat Ridge. Prepare for impressive vistas, deserted beaches, tide pools, and ultimately Humboldt Redwoods State Park before again reaching Highway 101.

From there, head back north a bit on Highway 101 to Highway 36 and enter the Avenue of the Giants, a 31 mile avenue that winds through a series of impressive old growth redwoods.

On the way to California wine country, be sure to stop at the Solar Living Institute where you can explore the latest in fascinating technology in solar and wind power to environmentally friendly building materials, passive and active solar design, organic gardening and permaculture. There are 44 points of interest on the 12 acre site of the Solar Living Center.

At some point, after another scenic drive, you'll reach your accommodations in California wine country.



Day Eight

Having had such a memorable trip, we of course, would not want the last day to be any different. To deliver the best possible experience in California Wine Country, take a Beau Tours limousine for a 6 hour Private Sonoma Valley Wine Tour. After being picked up from your hotel, you'll have your own personal chauffeur/guide for the day who will begin the trip pampering you with complimentary champagne. You'll be visiting four to five premium wineries and taste several different wines in Sonoma Valley's friendliest tasting rooms. You can also take informative tours of the vineyards if you choose. And, no winery tour would be complete without a gourmet picnic lunch at a scenic winery overlooking the vineyards. You'll be delivered back to your accommodations around 4PM. What a wonderful way to complete your trip!

If you would prefer to engage in more nature oriented activities, you can arrange to join Burke's Canoe Trips for a trip on the scenic Russian River. You can also visit Armstrong Redwoods State Reserve with trees dating from the 1880s.



Day Nine

As you depart San Francisco today, we are confident you have had a great nature adventure in Northern California. We wish you a safe and pleasant journey home.