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Travel

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36 Hours

San Francisco

By JESSE MCKINLEY

SAN FRANCISCO typically wows visitors with its heights or its sights. The hills sear themselves into memory after a few up-and-down-and-up-again cable car rides or punishing walks. Then there are the vistas: the sweeping views of the city, the post-card-ready Victorians below Alamo Square Park. But surrounding all of that is the waterfront: miles of Pacific Ocean coastline and the expansive natural harbor of San Francisco Bay. Once a working industrial area with pockets of outright blight, much of the city's waterfront has been polished into another of its pleasures. Start exploring in the east, south of the Bay Bridge, and loop your way west to the Golden Gate and then south to Ocean Beach. In one weekend romp, you'll join San Franciscans in many of the places they love best — and see what remains of their city's maritime heart.



2 Embarcadero Imbibing

Once home to a raised freeway — demolished after the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake — and long before that a busy wharf area, the Embarcadero is now one of San Francisco's most inviting Friday-night spots. Two inviting places for a drink are Waterbar (399 Embarcadero; 415-284-9922; waterbarsf.com) and Epic Roasthouse (369 Embarcadero; 415-369-9955; epicroasthouse.com). Views of the Bay Bridge are unbeatable at either, but oysters at Waterbar (\$1 before 6 p.m.) can really set the mood.