

California cool

From its hippie chic street beat to its international cuisine, San Francisco's a-sizzling!

By Lara Ceroni

Where Home to more than 7.2 million people, San Francisco is the fourth most populous city in California and, surprisingly, measures only 49 square miles. Located at the tip of the San Francisco Peninsula and the Pacific Ocean to the west, this city is one of the biggest international tourist destinations in all of the United States.

The vibe San Francisco has a rich history from its beginnings in 1849 when, due to the Gold Rush, the small village became the largest city on the West Coast of the United States. In 1967, San Francisco staged the *Summer of Love* revolution -- the biggest of its kind in the world -- whereby hippies, revolutionaries and politicians alike converged on the infamous neighbourhood of Haight Ashbury to explore sexual freedoms, music and a fair share of trippy drugs.

Where to dine: The question is more where not to dine! San Francisco is renowned for their top-level cuisine, and with good reason. Whatever your gastronomic tastes, you're sure to find something to tempt your palette in this coastal city. Here, the list of our must-visit restaurants:

For the quintessential steakhouse experience head to **Epic Roasthouse** (www.epicroasthouse.com). The dining room, designed by world-renowned designer and restaurateur Pat Kuleto, is at once elegant and industrial in feel with its masculine furniture and floor-to-ceiling glass windows offering picture-perfect views of the Bay. The exhibition kitchen where Chef Jan Birnbaum prepares his sumptuous menu, has a custom-built wood-burning oven which offers signature dishes like their naturally raised Kobe beef, Carlton ranch pork and lemon rosemary garlic chicken with toasted brioche salad. The deserts are almost as delectable as the mains: Beignets with Biceron café au lait is the choice du jour with an espresso. Or, opt for the cornmeal black mission fig galette with sweet summer corn ice cream. You won't be disappointed!