

CALIFORNIA'S GOLDEN COAST & YOSEMITE

Classic Flex Tour | 15 Days | Physical Level 1

San Francisco (3N) – Yosemite National Park (2N) – Monterey (2N) – Paso Robles (1N) – Santa Barbara (1N) - San Diego (2N) – Long Beach (2N)

Dramatic landscapes, laid-back seaside resorts, vibrant cities, and world-famous landmarks come together on this Californian adventure. Journey along the Pacific coast, venture into the wilderness of Yosemite and discover charming communities, experiencing the natural beauty, rich culture, and unmistakable character of the Golden State.

- Take a guided walk through Yosemite Valley
- Visit Alcatraz Island and tour its infamous former prison
- Enjoy a winery tour and dinner in Paso Robles
- Discover the coastal wildlife of Morro Bay with an expert guide
- Follow the spectacular Big Sur coastline

TOUR MAP



TOUR INCLUSIONS:

- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land only option is selected)
- All accommodation
- Most meals
- Most sightseeing and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- English speaking National Escorts
- Specialist advice from our experienced travel consultants
- Comprehensive travel guides
- Safe and secure with ABTA, ATOL and IATA

The only thing you may have to pay for are personal expenditure e.g. drinks, optional excursions or shows, insurance of any kind, customary tipping, early check in or late check out and other items not specified on the itinerary.

CLASSIC FLEX TOURS:

Classic Flex tours let you see the iconic sites and signature experiences of each destination on an excellent-value, fully escorted group tour, with a little more freedom to do things your own way. Your international flights, accommodation, transportation, touring and most meals are all arranged, so you can travel with complete peace of mind.

Where it works best for the destination, personal time is woven into the itinerary, giving you the chance to explore independently, seek out a local restaurant, or simply relax at your own pace. Throughout, your National Escort's unparalleled knowledge will bring each destination to life and turn your holiday into an unforgettable experience.

PHYSICAL LEVEL 1:

Our tours come with a physical rating to guide you in selecting a holiday that suits your comfort level. Joining any of our tours involves independent mobility and the ability to stay active throughout the day, which is essential for enjoying California's cities, coastal scenery and national parks.

'California's Golden Coast & Yosemite' is rated as a physical level 1 tour. A reasonable level of fitness is required, with regular sightseeing on foot and some time spent exploring cities, coastal areas and attractions. You will be getting on and off coaches, walking on a variety of surfaces and occasionally spending several hours on your feet. Some sightseeing may involve gentle inclines or uneven ground.

Please consider:

- There will be sightseeing on foot in San Francisco, Yosemite, Monterey, San Diego and Los Angeles.
- Some excursions involve walking on uneven or unpaved surfaces, particularly in Yosemite and when visiting coastal nature areas.
- You will need to get on and off coaches independently, sometimes using steps.
- Some days involve longer coach journeys along the California coast, with stops at scenic viewpoints and attractions.

Our National Escort is dedicated to providing a high level of service and support throughout your journey. However, their primary role is to manage the daily aspects of the tour and they are unable to offer extensive personal physical assistance. We kindly ask our travellers to be prepared for the physical aspects of the tour to ensure a comfortable and enjoyable experience for everyone.

JOINING YOUR TOUR:

The tour is 15 days in duration including international flights or 14 days in duration based on 'Land Only'. Join the tour on Day 1 in San Francisco and end the tour on Day 14 in Long Beach.

Travellers booked on 'Land Only', the price includes your arrival/departure airport transfers if arriving/departing on the start and conclusion date of your tour, or when booking pre and post night accommodation with Wendy Wu Tours.

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1: Fly to San Francisco — Meals: D



On arrival in San Francisco International Airport, you will be met in the arrival hall by your National Escort or a Wendy Wu representative. Together with all other group members who may be arriving at a similar time, you will transfer to your hotel.

Early check-in is not included. Additional nights' before and after your tour can be arranged. Please contact our reservations team to book.

An informal Welcome Dinner will be held tonight. Late arrivals will receive a box dinner.

Destination Information

San Francisco – Set around a natural bay and famous for its steep streets, cable cars and Golden Gate Bridge, San Francisco is one of California's most distinctive cities. Its neighbourhoods reflect the city's diverse history, from the waterfront of Fisherman's Wharf to the colourful streets of Chinatown and historic Nob Hill.

Day 2: San Francisco City Sights & Alcatraz Island — Meals: B, L



Discover San Francisco on a city highlights tour led by your National Escort, taking in some of the city's best-known sights before lunch at Fisherman's Wharf. Continue to Alcatraz Island for a tour of the former federal penitentiary, learning about its history and infamous inmates. The evening is at leisure to explore San Francisco or dine independently.

Destination Information

Fisherman's Wharf – One of San Francisco's best-known waterfront districts, Fisherman's Wharf is home to seafood stalls, historic piers and views across the bay towards Alcatraz and the Golden Gate Bridge. Pier 39 is particularly known for its colony of California sea lions.

Downtown San Francisco – The commercial heart of the city, home to landmarks including Union Square, the Financial District and the Transamerica Pyramid. The area also provides access to Chinatown and the historic cable car network.

Alcatraz Island – Located in San Francisco Bay, Alcatraz was a military fort, military prison and federal penitentiary before closing in 1963. A self-guided visit explores the former prison buildings and cells, with views across the bay towards San Francisco.

Day 3: San Francisco Flex Meals: B



Today has been left free for independent exploration of San Francisco – a city known for its steep streets, historic cable cars and waterfront setting.

From your hotel, you may wish to:

- Ride one of San Francisco's famous cable cars, travelling along the city's steep streets and taking in views across the surrounding neighbourhoods.
- Visit the Ferry Building Marketplace, home to independent food stalls, cafés and local producers beneath its landmark clock tower.
- Stroll along The Embarcadero, San Francisco's waterfront promenade, with views across the bay and towards the Bay Bridge.

Your National Escort is available to help you plan your explorations and is always happy to point you toward the things that capture your interests, whether that's a particular local food, a specialist sight or activity, or some retail therapy.

Day 4: Sequoia Trees in Mariposa Meals: B, L, D



Travel towards Yosemite National Park today, stopping in Mariposa for lunch. Continue to Mariposa Grove for a guided tour among the giant sequoias, some of the largest and oldest trees in the world. Later, enjoy a group dinner in Oakhurst before spending the rest of the evening at leisure.

Destination Information

Mariposa Grove – Home to more than 500 mature giant sequoias, including the famous Grizzly Giant, which is estimated to be around 2,400 years old. Trails wind through the grove beneath some of the largest trees on Earth.

Yosemite National Park – One of the USA's most famous national parks, known for its towering granite cliffs, waterfalls, giant sequoias and deep valleys. Yosemite Valley is dominated by landmarks including El Capitan and Half Dome.

Day 5: Yosemite National Park Meals: B, D

Spend the day exploring Yosemite National Park, beginning with a guided nature walk through Yosemite Valley with the Yosemite Conservancy. After lunch, visit the Ansel Adams Gallery for a private tour, learning about the renowned photographer's connection to Yosemite and his work documenting its landscapes.



Destination Information

Ansel Adams – One of America's most influential landscape photographers, best known for his black-and-white photographs of Yosemite and the American West. Visit a private gallery dedicated to his work and learn more about the photographer whose images helped shape the way Yosemite is viewed today.

Day 6: Drive to Monterey Meals: B, L

Travel to Monterey, a journey of approximately 2 hours 30 minutes, stopping in Gilroy for lunch along the way. On arrival, take an orientation tour of Monterey, visiting the historic Old Monterey district and passing landmarks including Cannery Row and the Monterey Bay coastline. Learn about the city's history as a former fishing and canning centre before enjoying the afternoon and evening at leisure.



Destination Information

Monterey – A historic coastal city on California's Monterey Peninsula, once a centre of the state's sardine fishing industry. Its waterfront is home to Cannery Row, made famous by John Steinbeck.

Day 7: 17-Mile Drive Meals: B

Follow the scenic 17-Mile Drive along the Monterey Peninsula, passing rugged coastline, beaches and famous landmarks including the Lone Cypress. Continue to Carmel-by-the-Sea, a picturesque coastal town known for its white-sand beach, distinctive architecture and independent galleries. This afternoon, enjoy Flex time to explore more of Monterey.



Destination Information

17-Mile Drive – A scenic coastal road through the Monterey Peninsula, passing rugged cliffs, beaches, cypress forests and views across the Pacific Ocean. The route is known for landmarks including the Lone Cypress, one of California's most photographed trees.

Carmel-by-the-Sea – A small coastal town known for its white-sand beach, storybook-style buildings and independent galleries. The town was incorporated in 1916 and has long attracted artists and writers, including photographer Ansel Adams.

Day 8: Big Sur & Paso Robles

Meals: B, L, D

Spend the day travelling south along California's iconic Highway 1, stopping at scenic viewpoints along the Big Sur coastline to admire rugged cliffs, forested hills and sweeping Pacific Ocean views, with time for lunch along the way. Continue on towards Paso Robles, visiting a local winery for a tour and tasting, learning about the region's vineyards and wine production before sitting for dinner.



Please note: Travel along California's Pacific Coast Highway is subject to local road and weather conditions. In the event of road closures, an alternative route will be taken.

Destination Information

Big Sur – A rugged stretch of California's central coast where the Santa Lucia Mountains meet the Pacific Ocean. Highway 1 follows the coastline through Big Sur, passing landmarks including Bixby Creek Bridge, Pfeiffer Beach and Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park.

Paso Robles – A wine-growing region in California's Central Coast, with more than 200 wineries spread across its surrounding vineyards. It is particularly associated with Cabernet Sauvignon, Zinfandel and Rhône varieties.

Day 9: Morro Bay & Santa Barbara

Meals: B

Begin with a visit to the Piedras Blancas Elephant Seal Rookery, where you can see hundreds of elephant seals gathered along the coastline. Continue to Hearst Castle for a guided tour of the hilltop estate, learning about the history and collections of William Randolph Hearst.



Later, enjoy a nature walk in Morro Bay with an Eco Expert, before continuing to Santa Barbara for an orientation tour of the city. The evening is at leisure.

Destination Information

Piedras Blancas Elephant Seal Rookery – A year-round gathering site for northern elephant seals on the coast near San Simeon. Hundreds can be seen on the beach at certain times of year, with the males reaching up to 4 metres in length and weighing several tons.

Hearst Castle – The former estate of newspaper publisher William Randolph Hearst, built on a hilltop between 1919 and 1947. The estate contains 165 rooms, extensive gardens and an art collection featuring works from Europe and the Mediterranean.

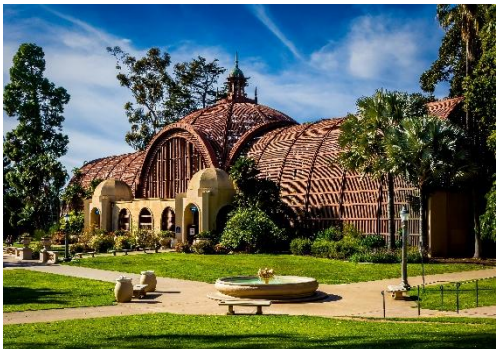
Morro Bay – A coastal city centred on Morro Rock, a 176-metre volcanic plug at the entrance to the bay. The area is known for its harbour and marine wildlife, including sea otters, seals and sea lions.

Santa Barbara – A coastal city founded as a Spanish mission settlement in 1786. Its architecture reflects Spanish colonial influence, with notable landmarks including the Old Mission Santa Barbara and the Presidio de Santa Bárbara.

Day 10: San Diego

Meals: B, D

Travel south from Santa Barbara to San Diego, a journey of approximately 4 hours, stopping in Huntington Beach for lunch. Continue to San Diego for an orientation tour, taking in landmarks including the waterfront, Balboa Park and the historic Gaslamp Quarter, while learning about the city's history and distinctive neighbourhoods. In the evening, enjoy a Mexican-themed dinner in San Diego's historic Old Town.



Destination Information

Huntington Beach – A coastal city in Orange County known for its long sandy beach and strong surfing culture. Its 15.5-kilometre shoreline includes the Huntington Beach Pier, which dates from 1904 and extends 560 metres into the Pacific Ocean.

San Diego – California's second-largest city, located near the Mexican border on the Pacific coast. It is home to attractions including Balboa Park, the USS Midway Museum and the historic Old Town district.

Gaslamp Quarter – San Diego's historic downtown district, covering around 16 blocks of Victorian-era buildings and streets. The area developed rapidly in the late 19th century and takes its name from the gas lamps that once illuminated its streets.

Day 11: San Diego Flex Meals: B



Today has been left free for independent exploration of San Diego – a coastal city known for its beaches, historic neighbourhoods, Spanish-influenced architecture and waterfront setting.

From your hotel, you may wish to:

- Stroll through San Diego's Little Italy, known for its Italian heritage, independent restaurants, cafés and lively piazzas.
- Visit Balboa Park, home to gardens, museums and Spanish Colonial Revival architecture, or take a walk through its landscaped grounds.

San Diego Optional Excursion

Embarcadero - Explore the Embarcadero waterfront, following the promenade around the harbour and taking in views of the bay, boats and the city skyline.

Your National Escort is available to help you plan your explorations and is always happy to point you towards the things that capture your interests, whether that's a particular local food, a specialist sight or activity, or some retail therapy.

Day 12: Long Beach Meals: B, L



Travel north from San Diego to Long Beach, a journey of approximately 2 hours, stopping in La Jolla along the way. Take time to admire the coastal scenery and explore this seaside community, known for its rugged coastline, beaches and marine life. Continue to Laguna Beach for lunch before travelling onwards to Long Beach.

Upon arrival at your hotel, the afternoon and evening are free for Flex time, giving you the opportunity to explore Long Beach independently.

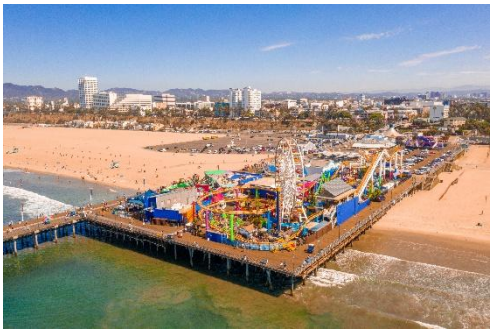
Destination Information

Long Beach – Just south of Los Angeles, Long Beach is home to one of the busiest ports in the United States. Its waterfront is home to attractions including the historic Queen Mary ocean liner, which has been permanently moored in Long Beach since 1967.

La Jolla – Known for its rocky shoreline, sea caves and marine wildlife, the area is home to La Jolla Cove and the San Diego-La Jolla Underwater Park, while California sea lions and harbour seals can often be seen along the coast.

Laguna Beach – A coastal city in Orange County known for its beaches, coves and long association with the arts. The Laguna Art Museum, founded in 1918, is the oldest museum in California dedicated exclusively to California art.

Day 13: Los Angeles & Hollywood Meals: B, D



Spend the day discovering some of Los Angeles' best-known landmarks, beginning at Santa Monica Pier on the Pacific coast. Continue through Beverly Hills and Hollywood, passing famous sights and learning more about the city's film and entertainment heritage. Later, visit Griffith Observatory for panoramic views across Los Angeles and the Hollywood sign. In the evening, come together for a farewell dinner to toast to an incredible adventure.

Destination Information

Santa Monica Pier – A historic and iconic pier extending into the Pacific Ocean, first opened in 1909. It is home to Pacific Park, an amusement park with a Ferris wheel, and marks the western end of the original Route 66.

Hollywood – A district of Los Angeles closely associated with the American film industry and home to the Hollywood Walk of Fame, which features more than 2,800 stars honouring figures from film, television, music and theatre. The Hollywood Sign was erected in 1923 and originally read "Hollywoodland".

Griffith Observatory – Opened in 1935 on the southern slope of Mount Hollywood, the observatory contains exhibits on astronomy and a planetarium. Its grounds provide views across Los Angeles and towards the Hollywood Sign, while the building has featured in numerous films.

Days 14 - 15: Depart Los Angeles to UK Meals: B

Any time before your flight is at leisure. You will be transferred from your hotel to Los Angeles International Airport, according to the departure time of your international flight, arriving home the following day.

Late check-out is not included. Additional nights' before and after your tour can be arranged. Please contact our Reservations team to book.

NORTH AMERICA TRAVEL INFORMATION

VISAS:

British Citizen passport holders do not generally require a visa to enter the United States for tourism for stays of up to 90 days under the Visa Waiver Program, but an Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) is required before travel. The ESTA is linked electronically to your passport and must be approved before you travel to the United States. The current cost of an ESTA is US$40.

Visa and entry requirements can change at any time. Approximately 10 weeks before departure, we will send you information electronically with the latest entry requirements, including details of the ESTA application process and any documentation required. This information is based on passengers travelling on a full British Citizen passport. If you hold any other type of passport, please contact us for further information.

For more information on the United States ESTA and Visa Waiver Program, please visit: U.S. Department of State – Visa Waiver Program

GROUP SIZE:

Most of our groups consist of 16 travellers or more and will be accompanied by both a National Escort and local guides. On Classic Flex Tours, will be no more than 28 travellers in each group although you may encounter other Wendy Wu our groups while you are travelling.

EATING IN THE UNITED STATES:

On our Classic Flex tours, most meals are provided from your arrival until the day of departure, giving you the opportunity to experience the wide range of regional flavours and specialities found across the United States. American cuisine varies considerably between regions, from fresh seafood and clam chowder in New England to barbecue in the Deep South, Cajun and Creole dishes in Louisiana, Tex-Mex in the Southwest and fresh produce and seafood on the West Coast. You may also encounter classic American dishes such as burgers, steaks, fried chicken, apple pie and regional specialities along the way.

Breakfasts are generally served buffet-style at hotels, with a choice of cooked and continental options. Lunches may be served at restaurants, cafés or as packed lunches on longer touring days. Evening meals are typically served in local restaurants or hotels, with menus offering a mixture of regional American and international dishes.

The United States is well equipped for a wide range of dietary requirements, although choices can become more limited when travelling through rural areas or smaller towns. If you have specific dietary needs, please let us know when booking so these can be communicated to our local partners in advance.

ACCOMMODATION:

Your accommodation in the United States is carefully selected for its location, comfort and character, with a mixture of well-established hotels, locally owned properties and larger city hotels possibly used throughout your journey. Accommodation will generally be of a good three- to four-star standard, comparable with what you would expect in the UK, although individual hotels may vary in style, facilities and size.

All group tour hotels have private Western-style bathroom facilities, air conditioning or heating, a TV and Wi-Fi. In some smaller towns or more remote areas, hotel facilities may be simpler than those found in the major cities, but all properties are selected to provide a comfortable base from which to explore the destination.

If you experience any difficulty during your stay, please speak to your National Escort or Local Guide. All hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly reviewed by our staff and local partners to ensure they meet our standards.

TRANSPORT:

Coaches: Air-conditioned coaches are used for sightseeing, excursions and longer journeys throughout this tour. Coaches generally have comfortable reclining seats and an onboard toilet, although facilities vary between vehicles. The US is a vast country and some journeys involve several hours of driving, particularly when travelling between national parks and smaller towns. Journey times are approximate and may be affected by traffic, road conditions, weather and scheduled stops.

TIPPING POLICY:

Tipping while on holiday is common in most parts of the world and the United States is no exception. However, it is not always clear who it is appropriate to tip and how much. Furthermore, travellers may not have the right amounts of cash available at the right time.

In order to avoid any inconvenience, Wendy Wu Tours operates a tipping policy where a stated amount is given to your National Escort at the beginning of your tour and tips are disbursed to local guides and drivers throughout your tour. The amount is designed to be at a reasonable level for travellers while being fair to the local people and includes a gratuity for the National Escort.

We generally find that most customers appreciate the convenience of our tipping policy but we do recognise that it may not suit everyone. However, as this is a group tour we ask that everyone follows the same protocol to be fair to other group members and to ensure smooth operation of your tour.

INSURANCE:

It is a condition of booking with us that you take out suitable travel insurance. You must provide us with the name of your insurer, policy number and their 24-hour emergency contact number when you book with us or as soon as possible thereafter. These details will be available to your National Escort should they be required. Wendy Wu Tours will not be liable for any costs incurred by you due to your failure to take out suitable travel insurance from the date of booking.

VACCINATIONS AND YOUR HEALTH:

Wendy Wu does not give specific health advice, but we do recommend you see your doctor at least six weeks prior to travel for advice and to allow time for any necessary vaccinations. Please remember to take your itinerary with you.

For more information, we recommend you visit the NHS Fit for Travel website https://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/home

ITINERARY CHANGES:

It's our intention to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, the order of events or sightseeing may change as we look to improve our tours or as local conditions dictate. In these circumstances we'll make the best possible arrangements maintaining the integrity of your trip.

AFTER YOUR BOOKING:

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive an email with your confirmation invoice, along with a link to our website where you can find your visa information (if applicable) and other important information. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately 2 weeks prior to departure.

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