



San Francisco is home to not only a strong LGBTQIA+ community, but a powerful Pride each June, too. | Getty Images

PRIDE

# How to Celebrate SF Pride 2024 Like a Local

Here are the best places to eat, drink, and dance during this year's festivities

by [Paolo Bicchieri](#) | Jun 4, 2024, 12:45pm PDT

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Touching on Pride in the San Francisco Bay Area is tricky. It's the region perhaps most well-known for its queer communities, tracing the first notable **transgender uprising** in the country to the Tenderloin's Gene Compton's cafeteria at 101 Taylor Street. The city's first Pride parade marched to Aquatic Park along Polk Street in June 1970, with San Francisco's **Grubstake Diner** still just a block away keeping folks full of Portuguese fare and meaty burgers **while providing a safe space** through the late-night. This year, the **main event** and parade is June 30.

But Pride's tricky to discuss since, as many are well aware, it is a fairly corporatized, **pink-washed affair** in 2024. There are loads of havens for **queer and gay Baydestrians** who live full-time in the area, the touristy brouhaha at the end of the month notwithstanding. Still, the Bay has a rich landscape for those looking to tap in with gay and queer chefs, bartenders, baristas, and pastry whizzes that support the queer community more than corporate interests.



Lion Dance Cafe remains one of the most popular Bay Area eateries, despite its restaurant space closing. | Emma K. Creative

## Here's where to eat during Pride

Oakland's **Lion Dance Cafe** may be without a restaurant, but that doesn't mean it is down and out. The Italian Singaporean **fusion** outfit is partnering with **Terah**, a queer Palestinian woman, California-based winemaker, and certified sommelier, on Sunday, June 9. **Tickets** are available online for \$188. There's also Garrett Schlichte of **Virgo Supperclub** and Amazon's *America's Test Kitchen: The Next Generation* fame teaming up with plant-based pop-up **phenom the Mushroom** on Saturday, June 22. Dubbed "A Bitchy Little Gay Dinner," there'll be two seatings at 6 and 8 p.m. Picture vegans, drag queens, cocktails, and things like that. Tickets go live on June 10, so **watch Instagram** for that drop.

Supper club **Deluxe Queer** — known for **themed feasts for LGBTQIA+** folks — will throw a '90s prom for Pride. On Saturday, June 15 at 7 p.m. the group will throw a fancy party at Deluxe Queer's new West Oakland location. Bites, pizza, NA and boozy beverages, and wine from queer vintner **Miscreant Wines** are on the menu. There'll be tunes from **DJ Chungy** with drag performances from **Sassi Fran**, plus a screen printing setup by trans masc clothing label **Both& Apparel**. Tickets go live on Wednesday, June 5 through the group's newsletter and website and run \$50, though a sliding scale is available.

There are several Pride-centric deals afoot, too. **Kokak Chocolates**, a queer-owned Filipina confectioner on 18th Street, just dropped its **offerings** for the year. Nine chocolates including pineapple coconut and calamansi arrive in a rainbow-shaped box for less than \$45. The SoMa Star, a **Ritual Coffee Roasters** canned coffee available at all the business's cafes, features legendary drag performer Juanita Moore on the can and proceeds go to LGBTQQ youth empowerment nonprofit **Lyric**.

Longtime lighthouses in the gay community include **El Rio** on Mission Street with its ongoing lesbian and femme party Mango; **Last Call Bar** near Dolores Park; **Hey Neighbor Cafe** in the Bayview; **Mothership** and **Mother** in the Mission; **Badlands** in the Castro; and the youngest in the mix is **Friends and Family** in Oakland alongside the oldest in the Bay, White Horse Bar in Oakland, too.



FRED ROWE FOTO

The JM! Pride Float at Starbelly combines bergamot, vodka, Fruity Pebbles, and more. | Fred Rowe Foto

# Grab a drink at these Bay Area bars

For those visiting the city, staying at the Beacon Grand is, for the first time in a minute, the must-visit hotel downtown. Mostly that's thanks to **Starlite**, one of the country's **sexiest cocktail lounges**, but companion lounge **the Post Room** will serve a tequila and agave cocktail alongside enormous cookies from gay-owned Castro favorite **Hot Cookie**. Also in hotel land but for underage and teetotaling observers, **Palace Hotel** will host an afternoon tea service each Saturday in June with \$4 of each rainbow-laden assortment of pastries benefiting the SF LGBT Center.

Ghirardelli Square rooftop wonderland **Barrio** is ringing in the festivities with a rainbow margarita, where proceeds support the **San Francisco AIDS Foundation**. Last but not least, duck into **Starbelly** for another Moore-partnered pour, this time the JM! Pride Float, a medley of bergamot, vodka, Fruity Pebbles, and more. Benefits from that drink also support **Lyric**.

In the South Bay, hit **Nokori** for the Rainbow Candy. The strawberry gin-based drink is available throughout June, but it's worth visiting the hotel restaurant during the **Oasis Makers Fair: Pride Edition** on Wednesday, June 5 as vendors and drag troupe **Rice Rockettes** take over the space. Up north, Sausalito has events **all month long** with a calendar stuffed with food and drink from some of the Bay's finest.



## Check out these Pride parties around San Francisco

While major players including the recently reborn [Stud](#) and the leather-clad lovelies in SoMa hold it down year after year, there are a few events worth underlining. Head to Noe Valley's [Mr. Digby's](#) for chicken and waffles, breakfast pizzas, bloody marys, and a full-on drag brunch on Sunday, June 9 in partnership with the [Richmond/Ermet Aid Foundation \(REAF\)](#). There are two seatings, 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., with drag performances accompanied by [DJ Big Kev](#). Reservations are available through [OpenTable](#). El Rio's [Family Affair](#) celebrates its second anniversary on Friday, June 7; tickets at the door are just five bucks.

Downtown the weekly Thursday show [Drag Me Downtown](#) is back thanks to the nonprofit [Downtown SF](#). There are a slew of shows, but June 6 is the kickoff at [Harrington's Bar and Grill](#). There are a ton of performers including Afrika America, and Amoura Teese. All the shows are free-to-attend but [RSVPing](#) in advance guarantees Pride goodies for \$10; those proceeds benefit [San Francisco's Transgender District](#).

On the PG side of things, take to the Presidio on Saturday, June 10. Flock to [Presidio Tunnel Tops](#) for family-friendly activities including queer history hikes, book giveaways with the [San Francisco Public Library](#), storytelling with [Drag Story Hour](#), and a tea dance celebration with [Music Connects Foundation](#).



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