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SAN FRANCISCO NIGHTLIFE BY NEIGHBORHOOD

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There's so much to see and do in San Francisco that visitors and residents alike could spend weeks exploring and still not see or do it all. But what about activities when the sun goes down? San Francisco has the [nightlife](#)

<https://www.sftravel.com/article/best-streets-bar-hopping-san-francisco> to match its variety of daytime [attractions](#)

<https://www.sftravel.com/article/top-20-attractions-san-francisco>. If you're looking to explore the City by the Bay [after](#)

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[hours \(https://www.sftravel.com/article/nightlife-san-francisco-bay-area-museums\)](https://www.sftravel.com/article/nightlife-san-francisco-bay-area-museums), head to one or all of these [San Francisco neighborhoods \(https://www.sftravel.com/article/best-neighborhood-stay-san-francisco\)](https://www.sftravel.com/article/best-neighborhood-stay-san-francisco).

The Best Neighborhood for Cocktails: Union Square

Union Square is the neighborhood for those amazing, delicious cocktails made by "experts." Look no further than **Hawthorn** (<https://www.hawthornsf.com>), which offers a full craft cocktail menu as well as signature favorites, lovingly prepared by some of the city's finest mixologists. Your first glance at the **Pacific Cocktail Haven** (<https://www.pacificcocktailsf.com>) drink menu will tell you that you're in for something extraordinary at this award-winning bar. Recognized as one of The World's 50 Best Bars, P.C.H.'s Oh Snap! features gin, absinthe, sherry, citrus, tonic, and sugar snap peas—not your usual combination. For jaw-dropping 360° city views and great cocktails, **Cityscape in the Hilton San Francisco Union Square** (<https://www.cityscapesf.com>) is the place to be. Watch the sunset from 40+ stories up!

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The Best Neighborhood for Dive Bars: Mission

You're bound to rub elbows with locals at these unpretentious dive bars in the Mission neighborhood. **The 500 Club** beckons with a vintage neon sign, keeps you with cheap drinks and a jukebox, and comes by dive bar status naturally with graffiti-laden bathroom walls. Likely the home of one of the few phone booths left in the city, this dive bar boasts cheap beer—both bottled and on tap—and a well-worn pool table. **Bender's Bar and Grill** (<https://www.bendersbar.com>) slings bar food as well as drinks, and has two pool tables and a photo booth. Its outside patio is nothing to write home about, allowing it to keep its dive bar cred.

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The Best Neighborhood to Dance the Night Away: SoMa

SoMa has so many dance clubs, you'll want to hit them all. Start at **DNA Lounge** (<https://www.dnalounge.com>), where the music's a mix of DJ beats and live bands, ranging from punk to rockabilly to pop and more. **Cat Club's** (<https://www.sfcatsclub.com>) got two dance floors and a go-go cage, and a versatile menu of '80s music including goth, new wave, pop and electro. Nightclub **Oasis** (<https://www.sfoasis.com>) offers guest appearances by cabaret artists and drag queens, as well as amazing DJs and dance parties. **Audio** (<https://www.audiosf.com/>) was designed to give you an otherworldly sound experience, and its spring-loaded dance floor will keep you moving all night.

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The Best Neighborhood for a Performance and a Nightcap – Civic Center / Hayes Valley

A majority of San Francisco's performance halls are located in this neighborhood. Go to Davies Symphony Hall to hear the **San Francisco Symphony** (<https://www.sfsymphony.org>), as well as guest orchestras and a classic film series accompanied by music. If you like arias with your instruments, try the **San Francisco Opera** (<https://www.sfopera.com>), located in the historic War Memorial Opera House. Jazz lovers will delight in the **SFJAZZ Center** (<https://www.sfjazz.org>), where an ever-changing calendar of performances runs the gamut from Grammy winners to rising stars. The **San Francisco Ballet** (<https://www.sfballet.org>) season runs January through May, with performances of "The Nutcracker" in December. Theatre fans can take in a show at either **BroadwaySF's** (<https://www.broadwaysf.com/Online/default.asp>) Orpheum or Golden Gate theaters, or, for a unique, mind-bending sound-space experience, try out **Audium** (<https://www.audium.org>).

End a night of arts and culture with a nightcap at a classy place like **Charmaine's Rooftop Bar & Lounge** (https://www.properhotel.com/san-francisco/restaurants-bars/charmaines/?utm_source=GMB&utm_medium=organic) or White Chapel. Charmaine's has a European feel, great city views, and the fire pits will keep you cozy. Gin—and only gin—is on the drink menu at **White Chapel**

(<https://www.whitechapelsf.com>), which offers the largest gin selection in North America. Step inside and be transported to an underground Tube station somewhere in East London.

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The Best Neighborhood to Grab a Microbrew – Richmond / Presidio

San Francisco has its fair share of bars serving microbrews, and the Richmond and Presidio neighborhoods—home of the **Fort Point Beer Company** (<https://www.fortpointbeer.com>)—feature two of the best. **Sessions at the Presidio** (<http://www.sessionssf.com>) is a great place for some early nightlife, since closing is at 8 p.m. daily. It's worth the visit for a menu of around 25 microbrews that change daily, as well as its daily beer flight of three five-ounce pours. Sessions also has a standing menu of nearly 90 craft beers and ciders available by the bottle. The **Richmond Republic Draught House** (<https://www.richmondrepublicsf.com>) is a neighborhood sports bar with more than 20 craft beers on tap, and each pour priced between \$7 and \$12. If you'll be visiting often, become a member of the Mug Club and always get happy hour prices on all beers, with one free \$7 beer on Tuesdays.

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The Best Neighborhood to Savor a Glass of Wine – Embarcadero / Financial District

If you prefer to sip your nightlife slowly, this neighborhood has some distinctive places to enjoy regional wines. **The Barrel Room**

(<http://www.barrelroomsf.com>) offers more than 50 wines by the glass and flight, with a speakeasy lounge open late. The wines at **The San Francisco Wine**

Society (<https://www.sanfranciscowinesociety.com>) span the globe and encompass an 18-page menu. Enjoy them in a comfortable, exposed-brick setting or consider booking the outside bocce court if you prefer some activity with your vino. **The Barbarossa Lounge**

(<https://www.barbarossalounge.com>) pays homage to the former Bubble Lounge that it replaced with a generous champagne menu. If you prefer your wine effervescent, pull your chair up here. Enjoy the architecture, as well as the bathroom wallpaper.

Serious wine drinkers, or wine drinkers on serious business or a date, should head to **Press Club**

(<https://www.pressclubsf.com>). This retro modern wine bar is one of the only bars in the U.S. to offer rare magnums by the glass, using the patented Coravin (<http://www.coravin.com/>) system. You have to see, and taste, it for yourself.

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Photo by [Louis Raphael](#)

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