



## San Francisco Walking Tour SoMa (South of Market Street) to Union Square

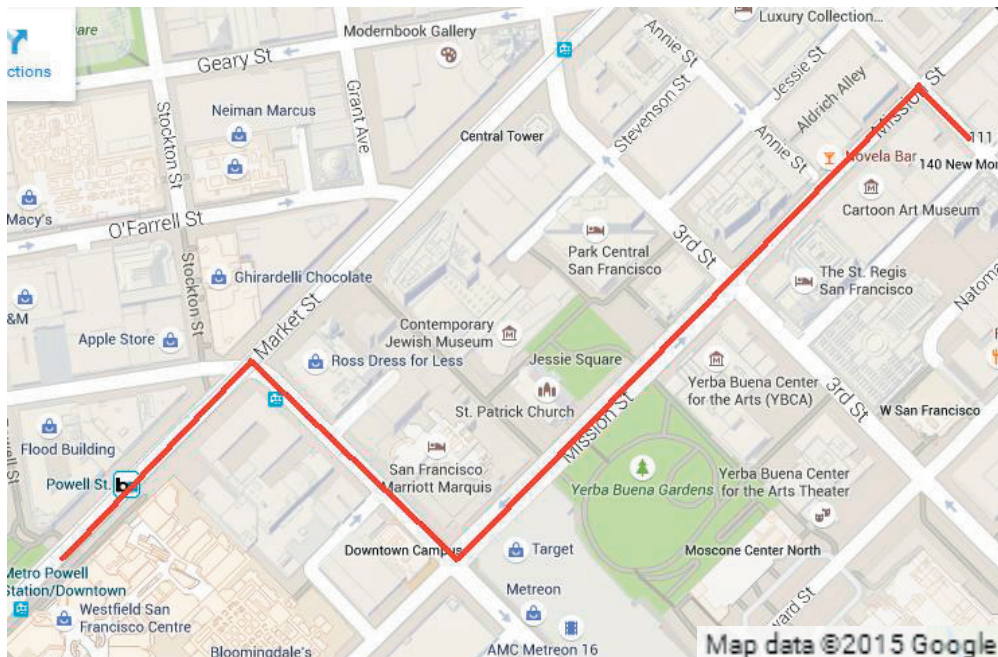
by Jacqueline Ernst  
[www.PigWingsAndPromises.com](http://www.PigWingsAndPromises.com)

### 1. 101 2nd Street Parking Garage



Between Minna and Mission Streets. Head south on 1st St. Turn right into 1-way alley at Minna just after Mission St. Skip first driveway into parking at 555 Mission and take the NEXT driveway into 101 2nd St. garage.  
Rates: 1 hr - \$2.25; 1-4 hr - \$9.00; All day - \$22.50

### 2. San Francisco Center -- Westfield Shopping Mall, 845 Market Street

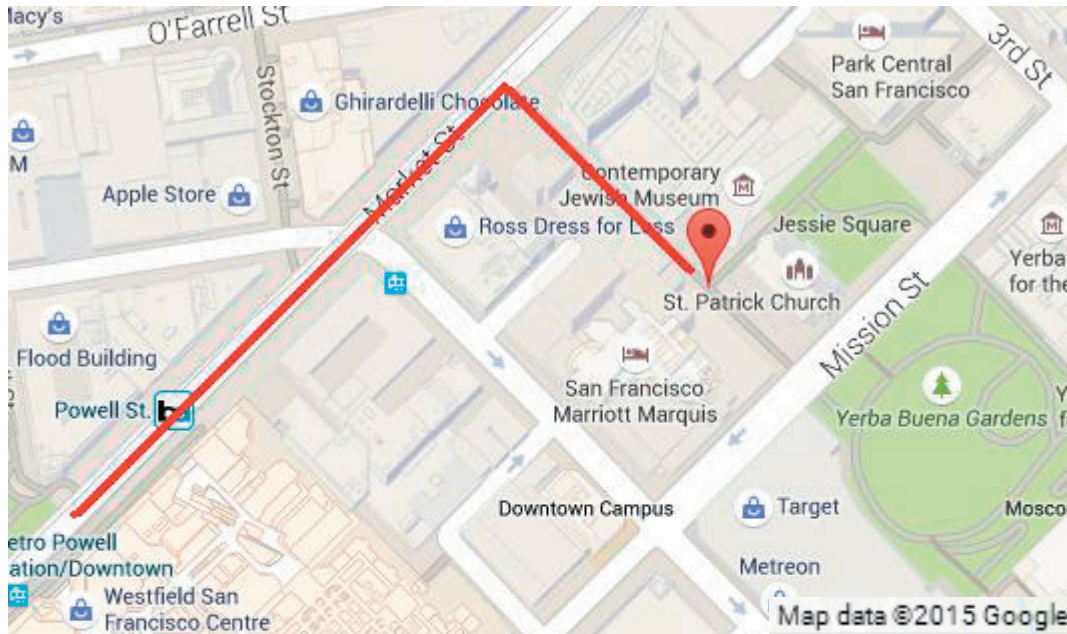


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**A. Glass Dome** over 100 years old from the original Emporium retail store. Take elevator up to see the light show inside of the dome.

**B. Food Court** serves variety at reasonable value and little waste of time. Avoid the noon hour rush.

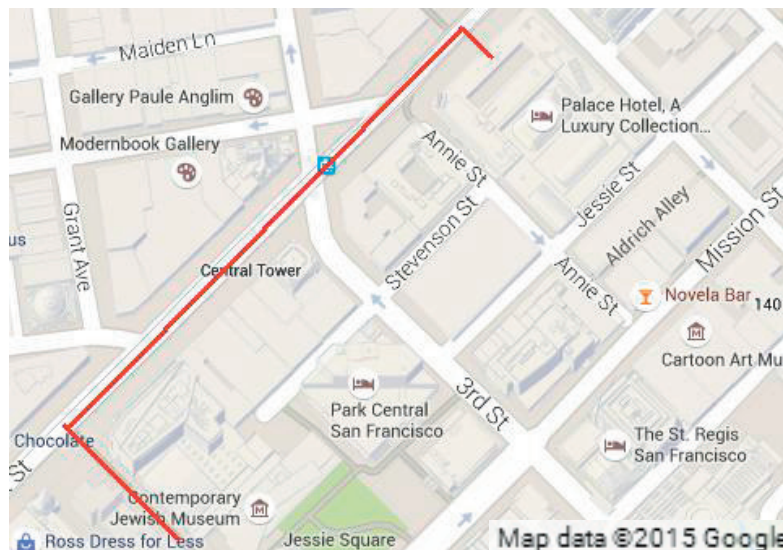
3. Museum of Crafts and Folk Art, 51 Yerba Buena Lane  
Contemporary Jewish Museum, 736 Mission Street  
St. Patrick's Catholic Church, 756 Mission Street



Both museums and back of red brick church share the same Yerba Buena Lane courtyard with other retailers.

Check museums for current exhibitions. The Jewish Museum, completed in 2008, has notable modern architecture designed by Daniel Libeskind.

4. Palace Hotel, 2 New Montgomery Street





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**A. The Original Hotel.** This historic hotel is an official city Landmark. The Palace was originally built in 1875 but demolished after being gutted by fire caused by the 1906 earthquake. A new building was erected on the same site as the old structure. Over a century old, the new Palace covers most of a city block with nine stories.

The original hotel was built by banker and entrepreneur William Chapman Ralston, who financed the \$5 million project with his shaky banking empire. Ralston's partner, Senator William Sharon, was a man of dubious character. He secretly sold his stock in the Comstock Lode, one of the richest gold mines in California history. The stock loss caused Ralston's Bank of California to fail. The same day his bank failed (in August 1875), Ralston mysteriously drowned in San Francisco Bay. Did Senator Sharon deliberately aggravate his partner's money problems and cause his death? Nobody knows for sure.

Senator Sharon neatly gained control of the hotel, the bank, AND all of Ralston's debts which he paid off for pennies on the dollar (far less money than was actually owed)! The hotel opened on schedule 2 months after Ralston's death. It was the largest hotel in the Western United States. It had an open center topped by a skylight and featured a totally new concept -- hydraulic elevators known as "rising rooms." All the guest rooms had their own bathrooms and call buttons to summon hotel staff at a moment's notice any hour of the day or night. Most hotels of the era had one bathroom per floor which was shared by every guest on the floor. Private bathrooms and call buttons were concepts adopted from expensive European hotels that catered to royalty! While Americans don't recognize royal lineage, American hotel owners knew their guests would pay lots of extra money to be treated as if they were kings and queens! So even today, the Palace Hotel gives every guest special courtesy and treats everyone like nobility.

The hotel survived the initial 1906 earthquake. However, water mains throughout the city had been broken. Fire fighters were helpless to stop flames that began along the waterfront and moved into the city. By afternoon, the Palace, the St. Francis, and many other downtown structures were being gutted by fires that raged for three days before finally burning themselves out.

**B. The Garden Court.** Temporary hotels were quickly erected to serve guests. A brand new Palace Hotel opened in December 1909. Its lavish decorations included the famous mural of the Pied Piper by noted illustrator and commercial artist, Maxfield Parrish. Mirrored walls, a glass ceiling, and crystal chandeliers in The Garden Court still make it one of San Francisco's most prestigious dining rooms. Sunday brunch can set you back \$150 per person, while tea for two can cost over \$48. Lower priced options are offered.

The hotel has hosted many famous people including Woodrow Wilson whose speeches in the Garden Court supported the League of Nations and Treaty of Versailles. Warren G. Harding's presidential term was cut short when he unexpectedly died in room 8064. Hawaiian King Kalakaua also died in the hotel in 1891. Several movies were shot here including a scene in *The Game* where computer graphics and special effects make you believe Michael Douglas really does fall through the glass ceiling of the Garden Court!

**C. Pied Piper Mural.** Enter Maxfield's Pied Piper Bar and Grill from Montgomery Street or from the lobby of the Palace Hotel. The 7' x 16' mural of the Pied Piper of Hamelin was painted by Maxfield Parrish, a noted commercial artist during the Golden Age of Book Illustration. Painted in oil on canvas at a cost \$6,000 in 1909, it is now valued at between \$2 million and \$5 million. It was transported across the country by train and horse drawn wagon from the artist's studio in Connecticut. The hotel owners had seen Maxfield Parrish's mural of the children's nursery rhyme, Old King Cole, completed for the gentlemen's Mask and Wig club at the University of Pennsylvania. They liked the idea of showcasing a fairy tale in an adult setting. The artist suggested the Pied Piper as his subject. For models, he used two of his 3 sons. Dillwyn, age 6 - 7 is shown climbing over a rock, and 4 - 5 year old Stephen marches next to the piper. The rest of the figures were modeled by people from the towns surrounding the artist's home in the country. The prominent female figure in the red vest is his mistress.

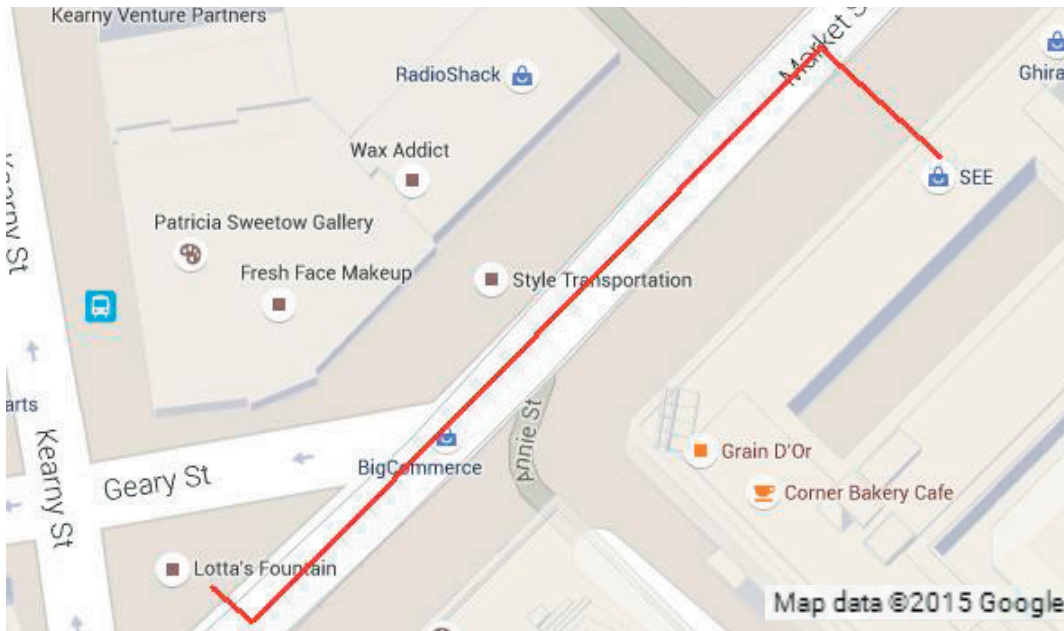
Parrish included many influential people among his friends -- U.S. presidents and actors of the early silver screen like Ethel Barrymore. He enjoyed entertaining at his home and reminisced about the many parties hosted there. He died in 1971 after a long and distinguished career.

In 2013 the painting was removed and slated to be sold through auction at Christie's because hotel owners considered it too valuable to be on public display in a drinking establishment. However, local outcry over the loss of such a quintessential part of San Francisco's heritage resulted in the Piper's return -- cleaned, restored, and hung back in its rightful position behind the bar.

Two other paintings of smaller scale hang in the bar's adjoining room. These both depict famous San Francisco characters. In the left painting you'll find Emperor Norton and Mark Twain among the mix. The right painting features entertainer Lotta Crabtree seated in the carriage.

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### 5. Lotta's Fountain, Kearny at intersection of Geary and Market Streets



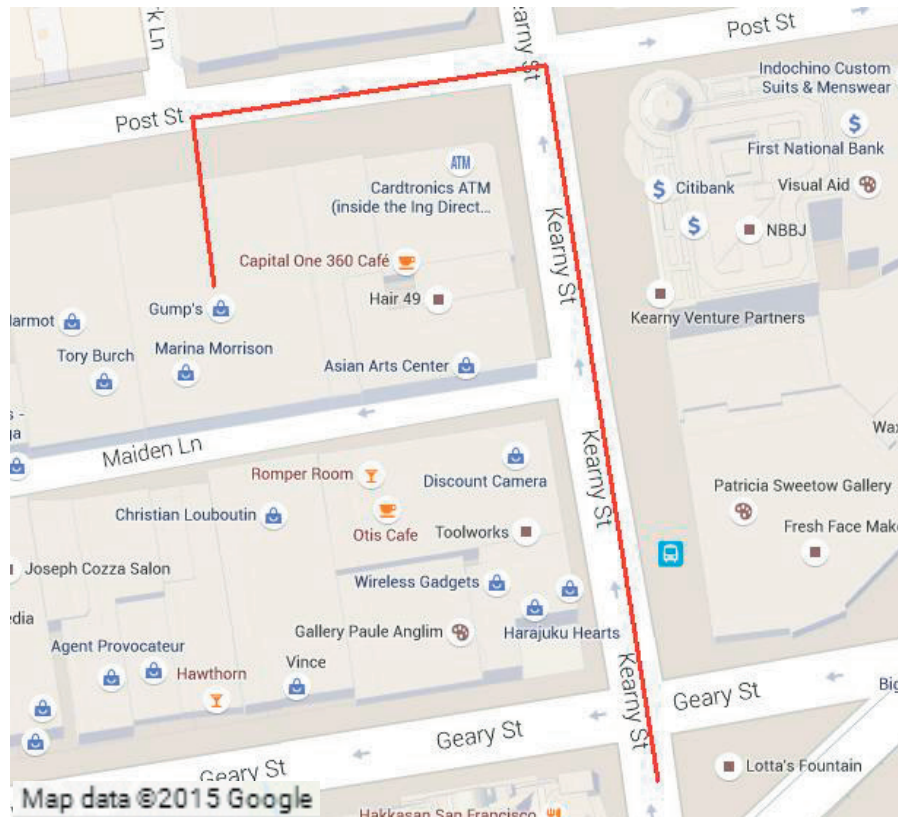
The oldest surviving monument in San Francisco was donated by opera singer and dancer, Lotta Crabtree in 1875 and dedicated in 1916. In the aftermath of the '06 earthquake and fires, the fountain served as a meeting point. Relocated in 1974 to its current precarious location on an island between busy traffic lanes of Market Street, the fountain was restored in 1999. The lion's head spouts flow only during daytime hours. Commemorations of the earthquake and a dwindling pool of survivors are held every year at 5:12 a.m. on April 18.

As a 6-year old child, red-haired Lotta Crabtree performed jigs and sang ballads for lonely miners during the gold rush. She went on to become one of America's most popular performers.

When her father headed for the California gold fields in 1851, Lotta and her mother followed him to San Francisco from their home on the east coast. He neglected to meet them at the docks, so Lotta's mother took up with popular actors of the 19th century and enrolled Lotta in dancing classes. Her father never struck it rich but opened a boarding house near the gold fields and catered to miners. Lotta's entertainment education paid off, and by age 12 she was playing a banjo and singing on stage as "Miss Lotta, the San Francisco Favorite." Her mother was a quintessential stage mother and a shrewd business woman. She never trusted banks or paper money and carried all Lotta's earnings (gold nuggets and coins) in a steamer trunk! Luckily they were never robbed though Lotta toured all over the country acting in many stage performances where, throughout her career, she often played children and young parts as well as singing and dancing. She took to smoking cigars, an unladylike activity which became her trademark. When the steamer trunk became too heavy, Mother invested Lotta's earnings in local real estate, bonds, and other endeavors, while staving off suitors. Lotta never married. She retired to New Jersey at age 45 and died at age 77, leaving her \$4 million estate to veterans, aging actors, and animals.

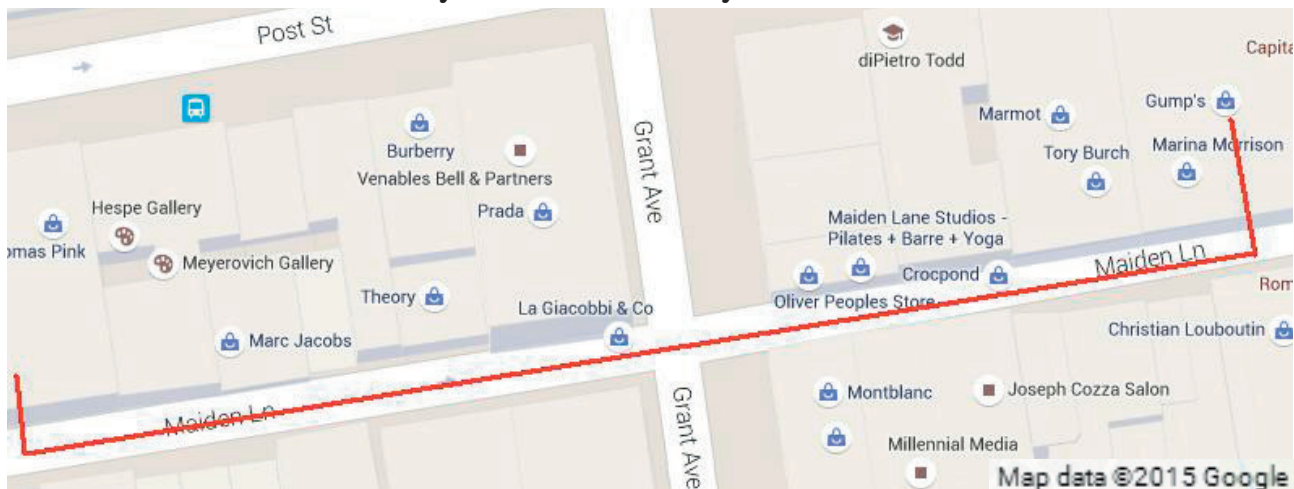
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6. Gump's Department Store, 135 Post Street



Synonymous with elegance, worldly style, and maverick spirit, Gump's began in 1861 as a mirror and frame shop operated by two brothers. Gold rush millionaires were attracted to the brothers' collection of old world art and new world designs. The Gump brothers expanded their merchandise to include exotic rugs, porcelain, silks, bronzes and jade imported from European markets and offered to the newly rich San Franciscans. A huge, gilded wood Buddha still has a special place in the store and remains the largest of its kind outside a museum. It is from the last imperial Chinese family, the Ch'ing Dynasty, which lasted from 1644 - 1911/12.

7. Maiden Lane, a 2-block alley between Kearny and Stockton Streets.



**A. Shopping Mall.** Now an exclusive pedestrian mall featuring high end boutiques and art galleries, the street was originally named Morton and served as part of San Francisco's red light district. Here government corruption, gambling, drinking, smoking opium, criminals, prostitutes, and brothels turned the early port town into a lawless den of sin. In its early days, San Francisco was sometimes called Sydney Town because it was inhabited by so many freed criminals from the British penal colonies in Australia,



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New South Wales, and Tasmania. However, the title *Barbary Coast* soon became a better description of the character of San Francisco. The name derived from the coast of North Africa where Arab pirates attacked and robbed merchant ships. Early San Francisco was a rough and tumble, wild west sea port that sailors feared because just about anything could (and did!) happen on the unpaved streets.

Word of the 1849 discovery of gold in California caused people from all over the world to eagerly hurry to San Francisco, the closest gateway to all the “free” wealth. Among the influx of ‘49ers were many shrewd tricksters who told lies and took advantage of inexperienced, hopeful young men who came west intending to make their fortunes panning for gold in the California hills. Fantastic stories circulated all over the world and suggested anyone could become an instant millionaire simply by plucking gold nuggets off the ground or out of California’s many creeks! In truth, mining was a lonely, hard, and dangerous job where a man could lose his life savings or be killed for his pick and shovel! Some men were *shanghaied*. Knocked out by thieves who stole their valuables (including their boots), victims were sold to captains of ships who wanted cheap labor to help sail their vessels to foreign ports. These men woke up with headaches and discovered they had no money and were already miles out to sea, heading for dangerous places! There are still tunnels beneath San Francisco’s streets where unconscious men were secretly carried to the waterfront, dumped aboard waiting ships, and lost forever in the underground white slave trade!

The 1906 earthquake and fire leveled all the brothels and shut down the shanghai operations. When San Francisco was being rebuilt, the city planners wanted the notorious “red light district” to never again tarnish the beauty of the “City By The Bay.” An enterprising jeweler gave Morton Street a new name that reflected the exclusive and sophisticated diamond districts known as “Maiden Lanes” in London and New York. Iron gates now block out traffic between 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. so pedestrians can stroll, window shop, and sit under umbrellas at the tables on the street in front of expensive restaurants.

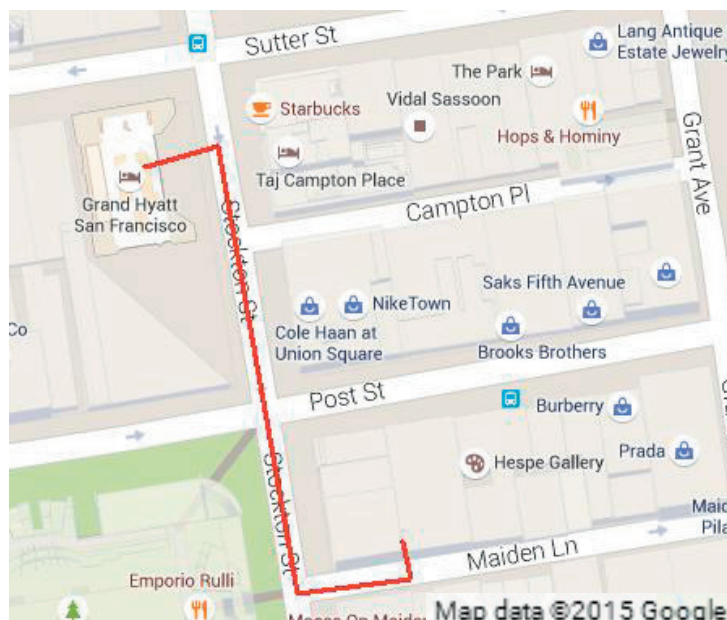
**B. 140 Maiden Lane.** The most remarkable structure now on the lane is the only one in the city designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, noted 20th century architect. The building was originally constructed in 1948 as a design test for the spiral staircase and unusual circular gallery envisioned for the famous Guggenheim Art Museum that Wright created in New York City. His San Francisco structure first housed a gift store, and later an exclusive pet store. The current occupant, Xanadu Gallery, has enjoyed the space since 1978. They feature museum-quality Asian artifacts and antiques from China, Thailand, Indonesia, and many Pacific Islands.

#### NOTE:

**Xanadu is now holding their Retirement Sale. Doors close August 8, 2015.**

**If you wish to enjoy the intriguing interior, store hours are:  
10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday - Saturday.**

### 8. Grand Hyatt Hotel, 345 Stockton at Sutter Street.



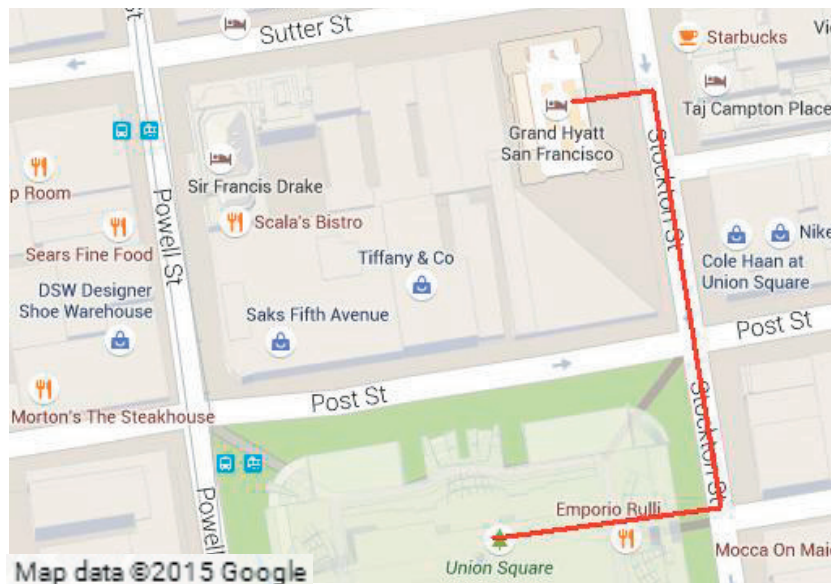
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**A. San Francisco Fountain.** Outside, off the sidewalk and set into steps leading up to the Hyatt Hotel, is the San Francisco Fountain by Ruth Asawa. Known as “the fountain lady,” Asawa created both the Mermaid Fountain at Ghirardelli Square near the wharf, and the San Francisco Fountain, located at Union Square. The fountain named after the city portrays many scenes. Look closely to discover all the famous landmarks in the city as well as Superman, Snoopy on his dog house, and many other iconic characters! School children helped the artist by sculpting many of the figures on the fountain!

**B. Dedicated Elevator To The Top.** Inside the Grand Hyatt Hotel, a special elevator ascends directly to the top floor bar for views of San Francisco Bay, Alcatraz and Angel Islands, the Fairmont Hotel, Coit Tower and San Francisco’s financial district (you can pick out the red brick of Old St. Mary’s Church where your tour began).

### 9. Union Square bordered by Post, Stockton, Powell, and Geary Streets.



**A. Union Square Plaza** is 2.6 acres and got its name because it was once used for rallies in support of the Union Army during the Civil War. Today it is one of the largest collections of department stores, upscale boutiques, tourist shops, art galleries, and salons in the U.S. and one of the world’s premier shopping districts. The square is part of the Barbary Coast Trail which links many San Francisco landmarks. The cable car turn around is two blocks south at the end of Powell St.

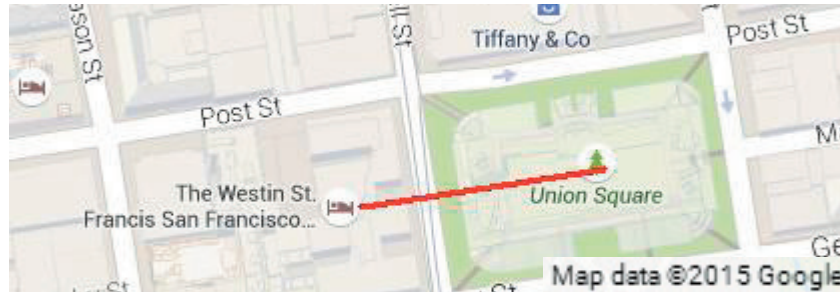
John Geary, San Francisco’s first mayor, built and dedicated the square in 1850. The world’s first underground parking garage turned the square’s lawns and shrubbery into a roof garden in 1941. More parking levels and the current paved surface were added in 1998 and 2002, and a WiFi Network was installed in 2004. Every year, painted heart sculptures, “Hearts in San Francisco,” are created by noted artists and personalities and installed at the four corners of the square to be auctioned and earn support for the San Francisco General Hospital Foundation.

Many movie scenes were filmed in Union Square including *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, and Alfred Hitchcock’s 1950’s thrillers *Vertigo* and *The Birds*.

**B. Admiral George Dewey’s Monument** is 97 feet tall and commemorates victory at the Battle of Manila Bay during the Spanish American War. It also commemorates U.S. President William McKinley, who had been recently assassinated. Executed by sculptor Robert Aitken, the pillar was dedicated in 1903. The lady’s figure at the top represents “Victory” and is a copy of Miss Alma de Bretteville, the woman who posed for the artist. Alma was an artists’ model in her spare time but she worked full time as a professional stenographer. In the days before computers and I-phones, women learned Shorthand, a special code, so they could quickly write down anything recited aloud. Afterward they read and translated the code into business letters, contracts, or legal documents they typed. Alma would have used a machine called a typewriter (an antique version of our modern computer keyboards) to punch directly onto a sheet of paper each individual letter of every word that had been spoken. Every multi-paged document had to be manually generated by pressing the letter keys in the same tedious manner as the original master copy. Alma eventually married one of San Francisco’s richest citizens.

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### 10. Hotel St. Francis, 335 Powell Street



The St. Francis is named after one of the earliest gold rush hotels and currently has over 1200 rooms and suites, a 32 story tower, plus glass elevators so guests get a view of the city as they ascend to their rooms. The original hotel was begun by trustees of the Charles Crocker estate (Crocker being one of “The Big Four” railroad magnates who financed the western portion of America’s transcontinental railway). The original portion of the hotel echoes the stately but bare style of Chicago architect, Louis Sullivan, and opened in 1904. The 1906 earthquake and ensuing fire of 1906 caused no major structural damage. However an hour after midnight, fire gutted the hotel and burned for 3 days.

Famous hotel guests include: Helen Keller, an early advocate for physically challenged people who was herself totally blind and deaf from early childhood; William Jennings Bryan, the great speaker and politician; the Ringling Brothers circus promoters; dancer Isadora Duncan; author, Sinclair Lewis; as well as actors and pioneers of the film industry like comedian and movie director, Charlie Chaplin, silent screen actors Douglas Fairbanks, Mary Pickford and Tom Mix, as well as the famous Hollywood director and film producer, Cecil B. DeMille. The always surprising artist, Salvador Dali, posed for newspaper photographers in the bathtub of his hotel room while holding a cabbage in one hand and wearing a pair of emerald-green goggles and a lobster on his head! Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson were guests in the hotel’s early years. Today Republican presidents tend to stay at the St. Francis while Democratic presidents frequent the Fairmont.

The hotel continues to offer traditional services such as keeping an official hotel historian and maintaining the hotel industry’s only remaining coin washing service. The latter outmoded practice once insured rich society ladies never had to worry about coins soiling their white gloves which were important fashion statements of the day. Today any shiny, new-looking coins you receive in change while visiting the city, probably came from the St. Francis Hotel.

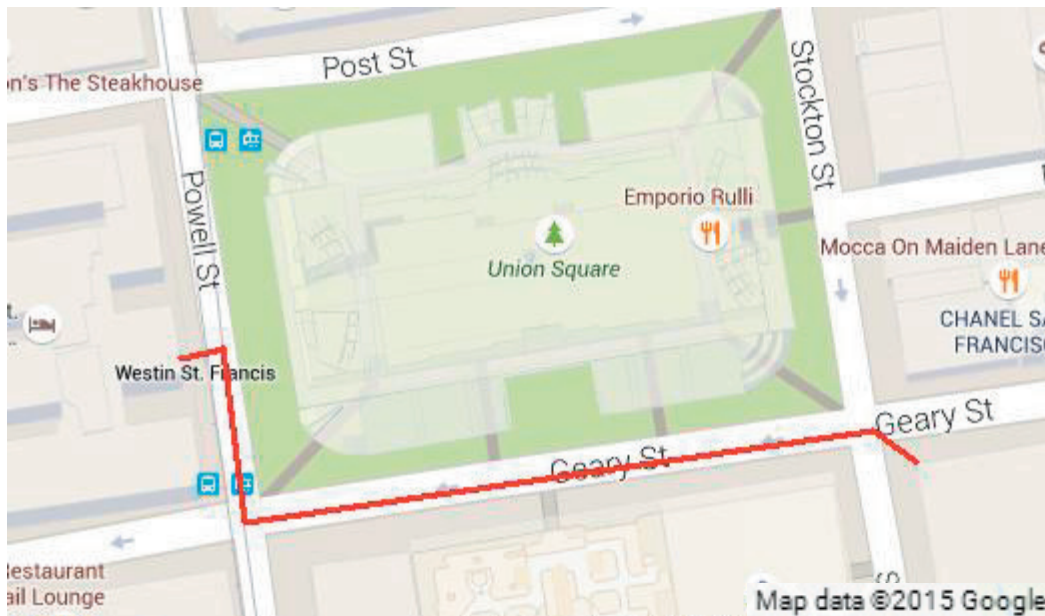
**A. Photographic prints by Ansel Adams,** the man who became famous for his black and white photographs of Yosemite National Park, are featured behind the check-in desk in the lobby. They depict scenes of the former lounge known as the Patent Leather Bar. Display cases also showcase memorabilia from decades of hotel service. You’ll see vintage keys, dinner ware, room service bills, and newspaper clippings as well as a few charred artifacts from the 1906 hotel fire.

**B. The famous Magneta Grandfather Clock** was the first Master Clock in the Western U.S. and controlled all the clocks in the hotel when it was installed in 1907. It still provides a favorite meeting place for San Franciscans who often say, “Meet me at the clock!” It’s understood they mean “...by the domineering grandfather clock in the foyer of the St. Francis Hotel.”



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11. Neiman Marcus, 150 Stockton St.,



Neiman Marcus is the controversial new home of the old City of Paris rotunda and its spectacular leaded and stained glass dome.

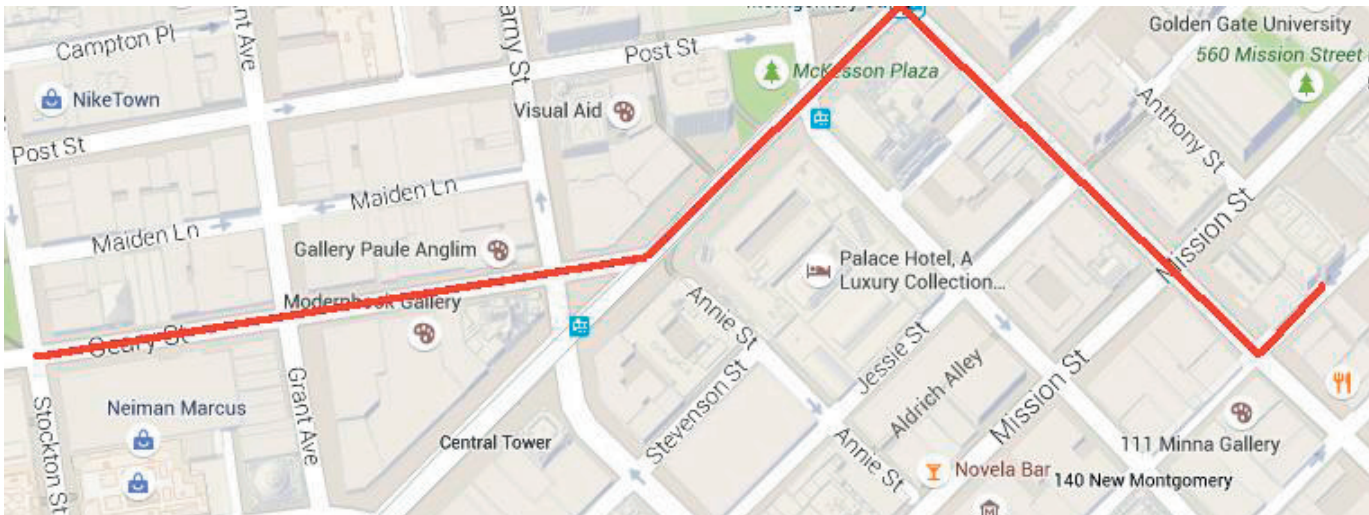
**A. The City of Paris Dome** was an elegant emblem of one of San Francisco's most important department stores in business from 1850 to 1976. Despite being listed on the National Register of Historical Places, being officially designated a California Historical Landmark, pressing various legal challenges, and gathering 66,000 signatures of citizens who wanted the Beaux Art style building called City of Paris on Union Square to be preserved, the structure of the venerable emporium was demolished in 1980. In the end, property owner, Neiman Marcus, preserved only the original rotunda and glass dome which were incorporated into their new store's design and protected inside a modern glass wall. A restaurant on the top floor now encircles the old dome. However, you can get a good view of the dome and the original Beaux Art pillars from just inside the store's ground-level entry facing Union Square.

**B. The original City of Paris Dry Goods Co.** was founded by Frenchman, Felix Verdier, who landed his chartered ship, *Ville de Paris* (City of Paris), at San Francisco harbor in May, 1850. Silks, laces, fine wines, champagne, and Cognac comprised the ship's cargo which Verdier correctly guessed San Franciscans with their newly acquired riches and social status would find irresistible. Verdier never had a chance to download his cargo. The citizens of San Francisco quickly surrounded The City of Paris with their rowboats and purchased all his goods, sometimes paying with bags of gold dust! Verdier had such success, he decided to return the next year with another loaded ship. This time he opened a small waterfront store called City of Paris. The store's Latin motto (*Fluctuat nec mergitur*, "It floats and never sinks") was borrowed from the city seal of Paris, France.

Verdier's store ultimately moved to Union Square and became part of many San Francisco traditions --including displaying the official city Christmas Tree, which was annually staged under the glass dome in the center of the store's rotunda. Luckily when the store was demolished, a small bit of its elegance was salvaged and reassembled inside the new, more modern Neiman Marcus structure. The original rotunda pillars with their gracefully carved female faces and the over-arching glass dome which depicts Verdier's ship and its Latin motto now grace the foyer of Neiman Marcus and face Union Square.

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12. “Home again, home again jiggity-jig.”



Map data ©2015 Google

Oinks and Squeals!

I hope you enjoyed our walk today and look forward to doing another,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Jaki'.