



Travel Stories by Amaru & Suzanne



A short rainy visit to San Francisco

by Amaru & Suzanne, January 23rd 2009

Our last stop before the long trip back home.... San Francisco!

Suz and I have both been here before, but this was actually the first time that we were here together. On arrival we met the nicest person we've ever run into in immigration. We had applied for the new ESTA online to be able to enter the USA but apparently you still need to fill in the normal visa waiver (what's the point with the new system then!?). We didn't have the correct paper work and normally they just send you back to the end of the line to fill them in.

We were told by the woman behind the counter to just grab some and fill them in at her desk... We had a bit of a chat with her while we were doing it and we were through right after that. So, no interrogation about how long we were staying, what we were doing there, why we were visiting their "great" country or anything similar to that as you always get when you land in Los Angeles or New York. Our stay in San Francisco couldn't have started better...



To get to the city from the airport you only need to catch the local train (BART) and unlike the train in Sydney where you pay \$15 for a 5min ride, here you only pay around \$5 for 30-40min. Once in the city centre we of course had to catch the cable car to our destination.

Unfortunately we weren't paying attention when we boarded the cable car and ended up on the wrong one. Not a big deal though, it just meant that we had to walk an additional 5 blocks to our hotel (all of them downhill), the San Remo.

Last time I was in San Francisco I stayed at the San Remo and liked it so much that I decided we should do it again... it was just as good this time and Suz loved the place as well. It's just a very cute little hotel with a lot of character which we needed after our "All Inclusive" stay.

We only had one night in the city as our plane was leaving the next day, the flight didn't leave until 23.00 though so we had the whole following day in the city. We could have arranged a longer stay, but when we were planing the trip we wanted to spend as much time in Mexico as possible (after experiencing Puerto Vallarta we wished we had stayed in San Francisco all of those days instead).

So, we only had one day to spend in the city, what should we do?

Since it's winter time and it was cold and raining we decided to just stroll around the city during the day, maybe check some stores to see if they had any good sales and just enjoy the vibe of the city. And since the city centre is quite compact you can cover a lot of ground in one day, specially since we got ourselves a day-pass on the cable car and could ride them up and down the streets as much as we wanted =)



These Sea Lions
are always here...



Toffee anyone?
We found a store full of it!

So that's what we did, we revisited some sights such as Pier 39 to see the Sea Lions, we walked around the Fishermans Wharf area, we walked down Lombard Street (the crookedest street in the world), visited Chinatown for some dumplings and walked around downtown along some of the city's shops.

By the time we had finished, we were both a bit tired and cold. I ate a great Clam Chowder, we picked up our bags from the hotel and then headed to the airport. We were a bit early, but we passed the time by watching some episodes on our laptop while having the best airport pizza we've ever had.

We boarded eventually and 14 hours later.... we were home!

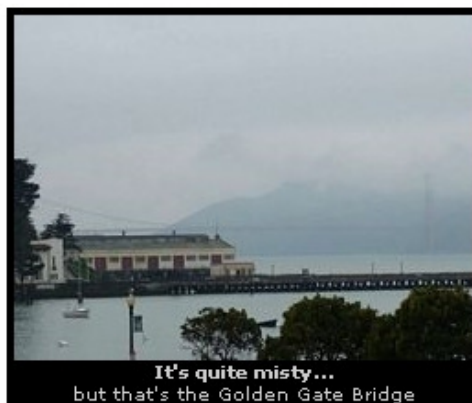
We've had a great 5 weeks holiday that included a white Christmas, some great Caribbean feeling and great diving in Belize, awesome beaches in Isla Mujeres and Tulum and some great Tequila and street food in Guadalajara... Sure, Puerto Vallarta might not have been a highlight, but we still had a good time.... I mean, not even getting Bells Palsy ruined our holiday for us =)



My kind of sign...
I'll own a wetsuit before any other suits



There you go....
They know where thongs go



It's quite misty...
but that's the Golden Gate Bridge



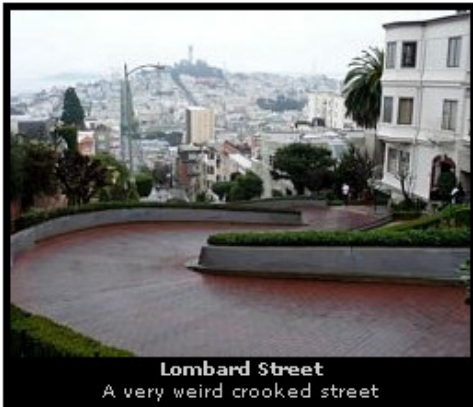
Waiting
for the cable car



We got ourself a day-pass
and rode the cable cars all day...



Climbing Hyde Street
With Alcatraz in the background



Lombard Street
A very weird crooked street



Every single car driving down this street
is driven by a tourist



Chinatown
Can you tell?



Even the street signs
are in two languages



Lunch!
Of course we had Chinese for lunch...



Aboard the packed cable car
Suz and I and 50 Koreans...



The cable car has stopped
We decided to continue on foot



Looking down California Street
Where all the car chases occur in movies



Clam Chowder
in a sourdough bread



It's awesome...
Especially on a cold and rainy day!

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