

# FISHERMAN'S WHARF

**F**or the first-time visitor to Fisherman's Wharf, we recommend the scenic approach. Hop a Powell-Hyde cable car downtown. It will carry you over two panoramic hills (Nob and Russian) to its beachside terminus in **Victorian Park [1]**. Downhill to the north is **Hyde Street Pier [2]** with its cache of early California coastal vessels reigned over by the majestic 1886 square-rigger, *Balclutha*. All four museum ships are open to the public. The Pier is the site of such fun-filled annual festivals as Christmas at Sea and San Francisco

Crab Festival. As you ramble through this sea-side sensation, note its bevy of colorful street performers. These creative craftspeople are especially prevalent along Beach, Hyde, Jefferson, Leavenworth and Taylor Streets. From the Pier turn right (west) along the Aquatic Park shoreline. (South End Rowing Club and doughty Dolphin Club swimmers brave the chilly waters year-round). A cement path leads past a patch of Italy, the **bobce ball courts [3]** at

Van Ness and Beach, onto the crescent-shaped **Municipal Pier [4]**. The main bait at the end of this public fishing facility is a splendid view of the city. Returning via Beach, stop in at the ship-shaped **National Maritime Museum [5]** at the foot of Polk and inspect its cargo of nautical treasures (ship's figureheads, models and all manner of memorabilia). Across the street is **Ghirardelli Square [6]**, once a woolen mill, later a chocolate factory and now a popular retail/dining complex. Continue east on Beach to the tree-shaded courtyard of **The Cannery [7]**, a 1906 Del Monte peach cannery transformed into an enticing variety of shops, restaurants and art galleries. The Cannery's neighbor to the east, **The Anchorage [8]**, showcases its shops and cafes in a gleaming white complex with nautical overtones. To hone in on the wharf's working hub, exit The Anchorage on Jefferson. Turn right (north) at Leavenworth into Richard Henry Dana Place. It leads to **"Fish Alley" [9]**. Thousands of tons of crab, sole, shrimp, salmon, sea bass, squid and other deep sea delicacies are processed here annually. Both Genoese pescatori and Chinese shrimp catchers have put out from the San Francisco shore. Today,

Southern Italians dominate the local fishing industry. The boats begin landing their shining catches around dawn. By 11 a.m. many are berthed in the adjacent **Jefferson Street lagoon [10]**. Wooden walkways and seafood restaurants overlook this Mediterranean-like scene. The basins overflow with boats on the first Sunday in October when the fishing fleet is blessed in a centuries-old Sicilian rite honoring *Madonna del Lume*, patroness of seafarers. Continue east on Jefferson and turn left (north) at Taylor into the carnival-like hubbub of the **"seafood grottos" [11]**. The covered sidewalk is lined with vendors purveying fish, walk-away seafood cocktails and the city's incomparable sourdough bread amid steaming crab cauldrons. The pots bubble with fresh Dungeness crab from November through June, the same season sea lions choose to

romp between the piers (although many have taken up permanent residence at PIER 39). At the foot of this festive block is Pier 45. Walk a short distance down the pier to the **U.S.S. Pampanito [12]**, a 1943 submarine that saw World War II action in the Pacific. Climb aboard and inspect this weary warrior. The wharves east of Pier 45 are loaded with sea lures. Boats depart from **Piers 41 and 43<sup>1/2</sup> [13]** on sightseeing tours of the bay and ferry runs to Alcatraz, Sausalito, Tiburon, Angel Island and Six Flags Marine World. **PIER 39 [14]**, one of the three most visited attractions in California, is a village-like retail, restaurant and entertainment

complex extending 1,000 feet into the bay. Numerous special events are held annually in and around PIER 39, and dozens of **sea lions [15]** have taken up permanent residence on its K-dock at the West Marina. Free talks on the habits of these playful pinnipeds are offered each weekend. When you've had your fill of tangy sea air, seafood, sea lore, scenery and sea lions, walk back to Taylor and head south to the Bay and Taylor **cable car turntable [16]**. A Powell-Mason car will sweep you back to the center of the city. Or follow Bay one block west to Columbus and board a southbound Muni 30-Stockton bus to downtown.

**Distance: approximately 35 blocks.**

