

California! Sun, sea, trees, wine and TRAINS!

15 to 30 June 2019

Combine fabulous scenery with transport interest, and it's an ideal holiday for individuals and couples

Tour highlights

- The world-famous Tehachapi Loop, the only mainline rail spiral in the USA
- BIG trees in the Sequoia National Park – trunks 25 feet in diameter
- Drive the incredible 'Route 1' up the California coast
- Watch the whales jumping in their Pacific breeding grounds
- Ride the Niles Canyon railway
- Visit the wonderful California Railroad Museum at Sacramento - plus the rest of this fascinating city
- A great evening out on the famous Napa Valley Wine Train
- Visit a Napa Valley winery to see how their wines are made. Tasting? Of course!
- San Francisco's eclectic mix of cable cars, historic trams, modern trams, 'heavy' rail and trolleybuses
- Plenty of shopping opportunities!



Please note all times are based on current timetables at June 2018, and are subject to change.

Saturday 15 June

We'll meet at Heathrow and check in for the flights to Los Angeles, where we'll be met and taken on a two-hour drive to the hills of Tehachapi. Given the eight-hour time difference, it will be a long day, so we will certainly be ready for bed soon after arrival.

Sunday 16 June



About five miles from our hotel is the world-famous Tehachapi Loop, where one of the main lines out of Los Angeles climbs from the coastal plains through the mountains to the Mojave Desert, gaining height by means of a Darjeeling-style spiral loop. The scenery is wonderful, and usually there are plenty of trains to watch. From seeing a headlight in the distance to feeling the power of up to seven locomotives pulling 15,000 tonnes up the gradient, usually at about ten miles an hour, it can take fifteen minutes until the train passes immediately below your viewpoint, making the earth shudder!

Monday 17 June

We'll take a full day out driving the immensely scenic stretch of country between Bakersfield and Mojave – most of the time we will parallel the Tehachapi main line and discover this line has very much more to offer than just the Loop itself. Our movements for the day will be dictated by how and when the trains are running, we will of course try to find the trains that are running in the most scenic locations – usually there is a good parade of trains. Lunch will be at the traditional American diner at The Keene Café, between Tehachapi and Bakersfield. Good food and plenty of it!



Tuesday 18 June



In the morning, we'll have a good look round the town of Tehachapi and have a look at what small-town America used to be like: they have a superb town museum, and it is possible to visit Errea House, the oldest structure in Tehachapi: America does this well, with their 'docents' (keen volunteers there just to explain things and answer questions). In the afternoon, we'll head north to the village of Three Rivers, a three-hour journey. Three Rivers has a couple of good restaurants, and is close to the gates of the Sequoia National Park

Wednesday 19 June

If big trees fascinate you, this is your day! The Sequoia National park has some of the largest trees in the world. We're up in the mountains and the forests are beautiful, with giant trees everywhere (including the largest in the world), up to 3,000 years old, weighing 1,000 tons, and seventy feet circumference. You'll need long arms to be a tree-hugger here! We'll leave at about 3pm for a steady drive of four hours down towards California's coast.



Thursday 20 June

A day of wonderful scenery as we drive up the Pacific Coast Highway, famed throughout America for its fabulous views. We'll stop off at a village or two for coffee, and, of course, at the best of the viewpoints. At Big Sur, we'll pay a visit to the Henry Miller Library. We'll spend the night at Monterey, a very fashionable seaside resort



Friday 21 June

In the bay north of Monterey are the whale breeding grounds, and (subject to the weather being suitable), we'll take a morning cruise out into the bay – June is one of the best times of year to see blue and humpback whales. With luck, we'll see their 'spouts' and be able to watch them jump clear out of the water and splash back in! The afternoon is free to explore the town: there is plenty to do, including a visit to the world-famous aquarium.

Saturday 22 June

After breakfast, we'll drive north for a short ride on the Niles Canyon Railway. It does what it says on the tin – provides a good ride through the dramatic canyon between Sunol and Niles. We'll then continue to Napa for one of the real highlights - the Napa Valley Wine train, where we'll have an evening train ride and a very fine dinner on the train. It will come as no surprise to discover that local high quality wines will be available



Sunday 23 June

We'll start the day gently with a look round Napa's interesting town centre. The Napa Valley is famous for its quality wines, and there's a whole host of wineries who are keen to showcase their products. We'll start with a short drive up the Valley, with a stop for a quick lunch at Calistoga. In the afternoon, we will visit the Bennett Lane Winery, where we'll go behind the scenes and learn what it takes to produce quality wines.

Monday 24 June

We'll take the scenic back roads over to Sacramento. The afternoon brings a visit to the California State Railway Museum, an extremely well laid out museum. There is plenty to see here, not just the locomotives, but a sleeping car and a dining car, each with its own docent to explain how life used to be before the age of aircraft when railways were the prime means of getting round the USA. The content may be a touch light compared with York, but that is well compensated by the quality of the displays. Outside the museum is the 'Old Town' and its river frontage with a stern-wheeler riverboat and plenty of shops in Sacramento's historic buildings, dating back a century or so.

Tuesday 25 June

In the morning, we'll visit Sutter Fort which will take you back to the 1850's when it was the first white settlement amongst the Native American Indians, and there is a fascinating museum covering the history and crafts of the Native Americans too. The afternoon is free in the city – there's a lot more to it than the Railway Museum and Sutter Fort. In the late afternoon, we'll take the two-hour drive down to San Mateo, our base for visiting San Francisco. San Mateo has some excellent restaurants, too.

Wednesday 26 June



Our first day in San Francisco. We'll take the CalTrain suburban service from Hayward Park, 700 yards from our motel, into the city, and we will have "Muni passports" giving free travel on the cable-cars, modern and vintage trams, trolley buses and buses until Friday night. We'll make the city centre, ride the tram to Embarcadero, then take the cable car up the hill to the Cable Car Barn, now a museum, where you can see how the cables running beneath the city streets are managed. We'll make our way back down to the bayside to have a look round Pier 39, now very much a resort area. We'll return to San Mateo for the evening.

Thursday 27 June

A free day. We'll get your rail tickets into San Francisco, and you will have your Muni passport for local journeys. There are any number of options in the city itself, including shopping, the Golden Gate Bridge, the Yerba Buena Gardens and plenty of museums and art galleries. Ghirardelli's is Chicago's famous chocolatier, and a hot chocolate at Grirardelli Square is not be missed. You'll have to be strong-willed to avoid buying a bar or two of their solid stuff! Alcatraz is one of the more popular excursions, and they book out months in advance. We will be happy to book this excursion for you, but we do need to know by 28 February if we are to be sure they are available.

Friday 28 June

Another foray into San Francisco will give us a nice relaxed final day. There is a ferry from the old Wharf in San Francisco across the bay to Sausalito, which gives great views of San Francisco city on its hills, the Golden Gate Bridge and Alcatraz. Sausalito itself is a nice resort, and a great place to sit outside a café for an hour with a coffee and maybe a slice of pizza. We'll



return by ferry and suburban train and have a farewell steak dinner before an early night.

Saturday 29 June

Given the time difference and the long distance, we'll need an early start for our flights...

Sunday 30 June

...back to the UK, arriving in the morning.

What's included?

Economy class flights from the UK to Los Angeles and back from San Francisco. Continental breakfasts are included at most of our accommodation, but otherwise meals are NOT included, except where noted. Appetites vary, and all America is full of dining options, from fast food upwards. Our experience is that allowing everyone to make a choice on the day, we all eat where we want, when we want. Your tour manager will be pleased to discuss all the options available at meal times, and we have found that this 'individually cooked' approach works much better, and allows for individual preferences, than a continuing procession of hotel buffets. Accommodation is generally in reasonable motels, either a national chain, or individual motels we know well. We include all transport, train rides and excursions as set out in the itinerary and the services of a Darjeeling Tours Limited Tour Manager. (Personal and incidental expenses are not included).

Prices

Full tour

Fully inclusive price from London:	£ 3,975 based on two people sharing
Ground only price (international flights excluded)	£ 3,245
Single supplement:	£ 595



Please note that carriers, flights times and train times are subject to change.

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