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Scenic Drives in the Bay Area: 13 Great Roads to Try

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6-8 minutes

Summer has come which means it is time to get out and enjoy the Bay Area. If you love driving, you already know that we have some of the best scenic drives in the country. It doesn't matter if you are visiting, new to the area, or have lived here for decades. There has never been a better time than now to get out and explore. Travel new roads or rediscover old favorites. Check out these scenic drives in the Bay Area.

One great perk of the Bay Area is the wide variety of drives. Enjoy the thrill maneuvering your car along mountain backroads. Soak up the sun and breathtaking ocean views from coastal highways. Drive through the region's great cities or towering forests. The choice is yours and the possibilities are endless. Here are a few of our favorites from Response Motors.



Pacific Coast Highway

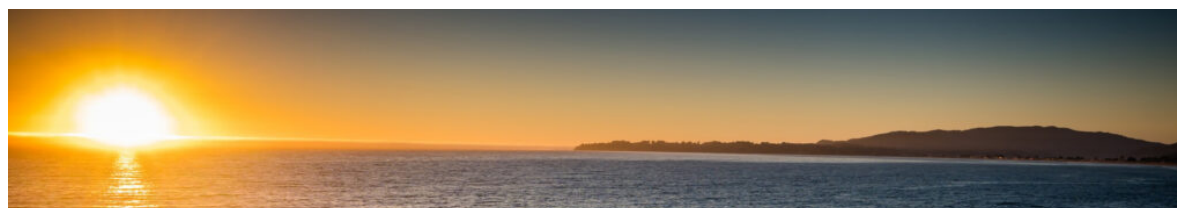
It's California's bread and butter drive. Perhaps you have driven the Pacific Coast Highway a thousand times. While it may feel like a basic recommendation, Highway 1 is world-famous for a reason. It runs along the ocean the length of California and gives drivers great views of the Pacific. The PCH, should be on any list of most scenic drives in America, let alone the Bay Area. Don't take that for granted.

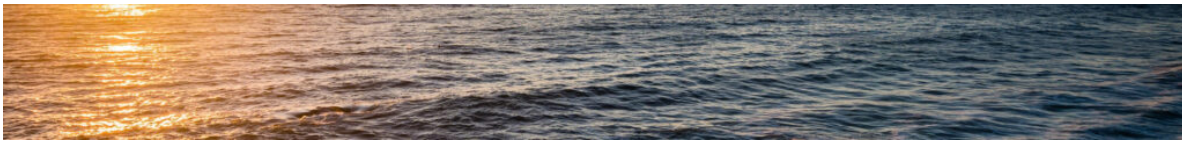
Half Moon Bay

If you want a taste of the PCH but also some more in-land driving, try a lap around Half Moon Bay's signature drive. This is a 65-mile route that includes parts of Highway 1, 92, 84, and 35. This great drive will include parts of many other routes included on this list. Half Moon Bay will give you a taste of everything the Bay Area has to offer. It is perfect for a leisurely Sunday afternoon.

Panoramic Highway

This road is for experienced drivers who want a challenge and great scenery. The Panoramic highway runs from the Tamalpais Valley to Stinson Beach. It slithers through the Muir Woods where you can find plenty of great campgrounds and hiking spots. Just make sure you make the journey in a capable car as you will find plenty of hairpin turns. The views, however, are well worth the challenge.





Silverado Trail

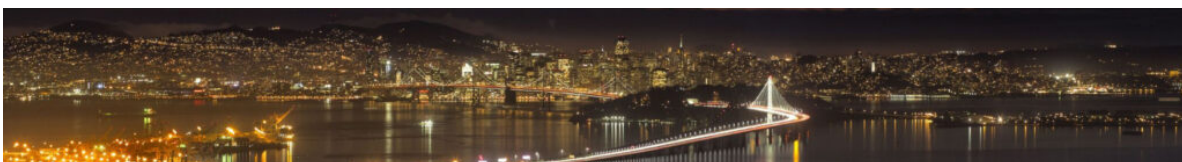
Running from Napa to Calistoga, the Silverado trail is the best way to experience Napa Valley. Head north of the Bay and take in the rolling hills and sun-drenched vineyards. This road is dotted with world-class wineries, giving drivers several fantastic options. If you are showing a wine-lover around Napa, this is the spot to take them. The scenery isn't half bad either.

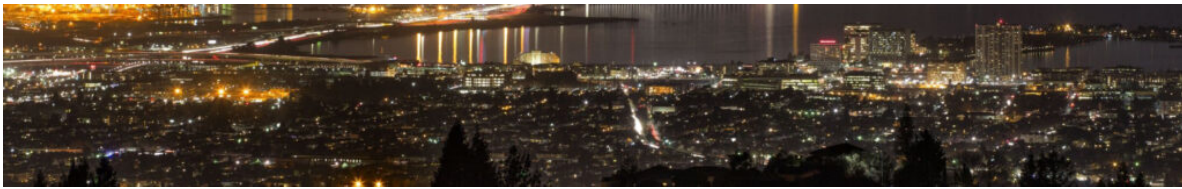
Highway 130

Bridging the gap between the West Side Freeway and San Jose, Highway 130 is a desert mountain road. Along the way, you will come across several parks and landmarks like the San Antonio Valley and Mt. Hamilton. This quiet road is well known among enthusiasts for its twists and turns which make it so much fun to drive.

Skyline Blvd

Highway 35, known as Skyline Boulevard, will take drivers through many forest preserves and parks up into San Francisco. Along the way, you can find stunning valley vistas. If you follow this road its entire length, you will leave the wilderness behind and find yourself at the San Francisco Zoo. Forests, mountains, coasts, and urban environments, Skyline Blvd has a bit of everything.





Grizzly Peak and Surrounding Area

One of the most famous views in California. Grizzly Peak in Berkeley overlooks the Bay and the cities of Oakland and San Francisco. Thousands flock here each year to take pictures and enjoy the breathtaking view. However, there are many great drives in the area as well. These include Wildcat Canyon Road, Bear Creek Road, and Alhambra Valley Road to name a few.

Palomares Road

Another one of the premier scenic drives in the Bay Area, Palomares Road is just East of Hayward and Union City. It connects Interstate 580 to the north to CA-84. Compared to some others on this list, Palomares Road does not have as many blind corners. This means less white-knuckle driving, but the scenery is just as pretty, making Palomares Road worth the trip.

49-Mile Scenic Drive

Have a friend visiting from out of town who wants to see San Francisco? This is the go-to. [Established in 1939, 49-Mile Scenic drive hits all of the city's famous landmarks](#). Just follow the light blue signs featuring the seagull. They will guide you to the Palace of Fine Arts, Golden Gate Park, City Hall, and much more.





State Route 128

Instead of heading into the heart of the city, maybe you want to get away from it entirely. If that sounds like you, consider State Route 128. This route begins in the town of Winters just off the 505. Then, it winds its way through the forests, eventually linking with the 101 briefly. Reach Route 128's northwest portion and it will take you through the vast Redwood forests of Northern California. At its end, it meets up with the PCH at the Navarro River.

Highway 9

Next time you drive from San Jose to Santa Cruz, take the extra time to try the scenic route of Highway 9. Like the Panoramic Highway, this road has many hairpins turns as it weaves through the woods. Drivers who like the thrills of tight corners will love this road.

La Honda Road and Pescadero Creek

A couple of great options to reach the Pacific Ocean Beaches. La Honda Road runs along Highway 84 and leads to San Gregorio State Beach. Alternatively, take the path less traveled just south of La Honda and turn onto Pescadero Creek Road. This will head through Loma Mar and out to Pescadero State Beach.





Highway 17 and Santa Cruz Mountains

Lastly, we have CA-17, the more direct highway between San Jose and Santa Cruz. Though it has more traffic, its views still put most other highways to shame. Plus, it offers plenty of opportunities to branch off and explore the Santa Cruz mountains. This summer, find a road that looks interesting and try something new.

Get the Right Car for you Summer Driving at Response Motors

Driving is better on a great scenic road. It is also better in a great car. At response motors, our [inventory of performance cars](#) can help you make these scenic drives as trilling as possible. We have cars that can handle open roads and winding mountain highways with ease. Furthermore, our service department can get your car ready for any drive. Come into Response Motors in Mountain View to find a quality pre-owned sports car. Get ready for a summer full of great scenic drives in the Bay Area.

