

the OKAYEST moms

TRAVEL

24 HOURS IN SAN FRANCISCO WITH KIDS

BY BRITTANY | JANUARY 7, 2020

This trip was made possible in partnership by a variety of local partners. We were hosted by The Marker, Tratto, Jasper's, and the Exploratorium in exchange for including them in this post. As always, all opinions are my own.

What do we do in San Francisco with kids? This was the exact question we asked ourselves when the opportunity arose to visit the city just before Christmas. It's not that there wasn't anything to do, it's that there was so much to choose from, how the heck do we choose?!

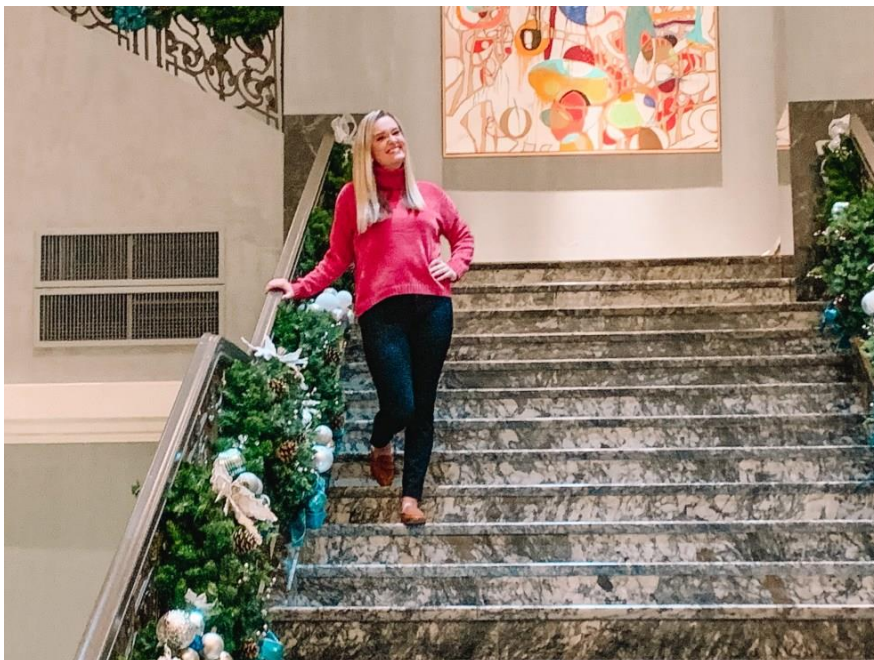
Our goal was to leave Sacramento to make the 1.5 hour drive to San Francisco by 8am. We were on the road by 8:45am and I call that a win! You never know what traffic is going to do but we wanted to maximize the short time we had. The early start paid off though because it was an easy drive all the way to the Bay Bridge!



WHERE TO STAY IN SAN FRANCISCO

THE MARKER

We stayed at **The Marker** near Union Square, a boutique hotel on the corner of Geary and Taylor streets. I'm not exaggerating when I say this hotel is packed with personality. The decor is eclectic and modern, the public spaces are Instagram-worthy, and the customer service is top-notch.







We stayed in a junior suite which was perfect for us. The room was spacious, there was a King bed, comfy pull out sofa, and a door to separate us from the kids! Oh, not to mention this gigantic bathroom. The boys quite enjoyed the huge bathtub.



I want to put a note about parking here. As you probably know, parking in San Francisco is often a challenge. The Marker contracts with a valet company that makes it super easy to park. We paid \$80 per day for our oversized car and could get our car whenever we needed it (we didn't need it at all but if we were there for a longer period of time, I'm glad there was "in and out" privileges included). The rate is less for smaller vehicles.

In order to use this service, you park right in front of the hotel, and give them your keys at check in. Super easy!

THE MARKER: EXTRAS THAT BRING JOY

As a part of our stay we enjoyed a selection from their Levity Menu. Their Levity Menu was created as a cure for the depressing news cycle we are all living in.

From their website:

*Why does it feel like we're engulfed in only bad news these days? The good news is that a pick-me-up is easier than you think. Created as a cure for our news-cycle woes, the new à la carte Levity Menu at The Marker offers feel-good experiences that help to refocus and restore us in the midst of what can feel like doom and gloom. **The Levity Menu takes a tongue-in-cheek approach to the transformative power of pure joy and the importance of finding it in our everyday life.***



I really, really love this concept, and there is something for everyone. We were gifted the Nostalgia package which included a selection of nostalgic candy, a mad lib book, silly putty, slinky, and more. It was such a fun surprise and the boys loved it!

There are tons of options including a relaxation package that includes everything you need for an in-room spa day. There's the Catharsis Package that is in partnership with a local animal rescue and includes cuddling puppies and a selfie stick to capture the cuteness! You can check out their other Levity Menu offerings [here](#).



Every evening, The Marker hosts a Wine Hour from 5-6pm in the space they call The Library. We took full advantage of this and showed up right at 5. As anyone with kids knows, this is a risky move right before dinnertime after a busy day. We ended up handing over our phones to the kids so we could enjoy the glass and have a real conversation. Pretty sure we even said next time we visit The Maker it will be an adults only trip, ha!



*If you want to see more from our trip including a room tour, check out our highlights on **Instagram**.*

WHAT TO DO IN SAN FRANCISCO WITH KIDS

THE EXPLORATORIUM



This hands on museum was such a great choice for my curious boys. **The Exploratorium** is located on Embarcadero at Pier 15.

It was our first stop when we got in to town. We easily found parking at a Pier 19 garage and it was a short walk to the museum.

PIERS 15/17

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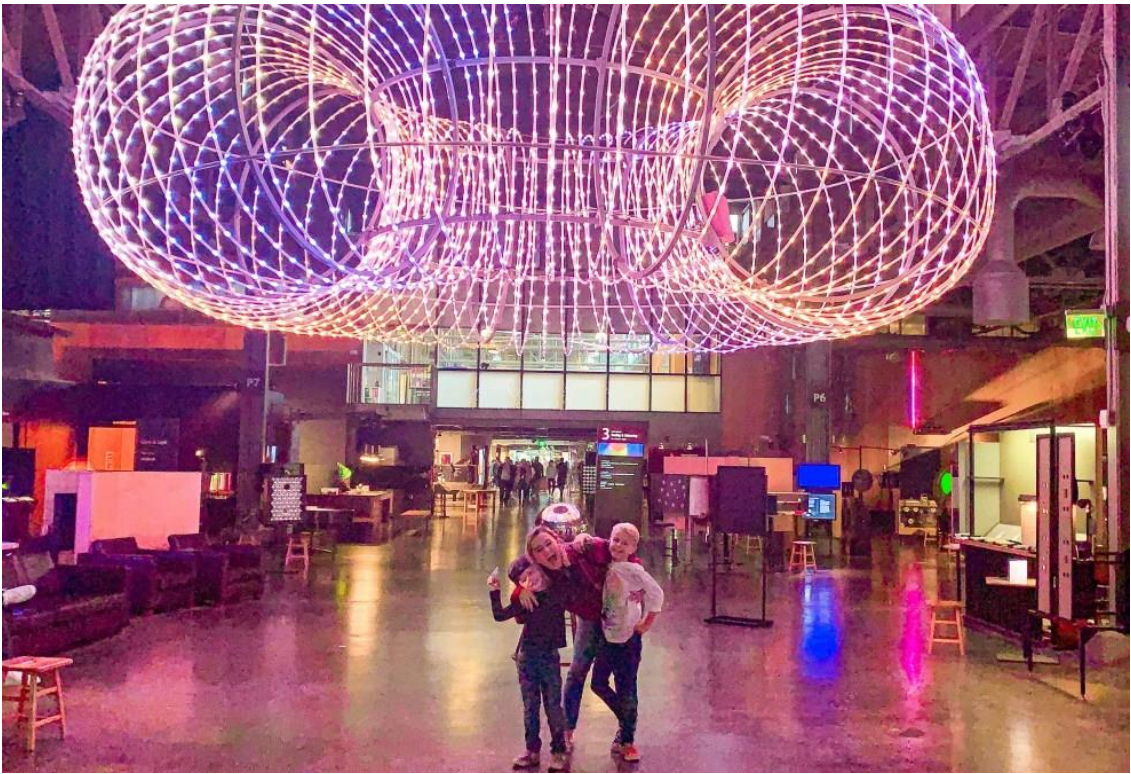


We had a lot of fun wandering through all of the various exhibits. The favorites were the light/color exhibit and the Cells to Self exhibit. There was so much to see!





At one point, Harrison was experiencing a little sensory overload so we found a quiet reprieve in the Observing Landscapes Terrace. There were less people and a view of the Bay Bridge and ocean. Apparently, the kid has a huge interest in earthquakes and ended up asking this sweet employee about 400 questions which she answered with such patience and kindness. (Thank you, Connie!)



UNION SQUARE



We visited San Francisco a few days before Christmas so a photo in front of the Union Square tree was a must. I have to be honest that in the past I've avoided the city during the holidays because all I imagined were crowds and stress. I was so wrong, it truly was magical to see all the Christmas decor and everything lit up with Christmas spirit. We had such a great time.

ICE SKATING AT EMBARCADERO CENTER



We met up with our friends (and Harrison's godparents), Laura and Spencer, who live in the city and decided to walk to go ice skating. It was sold out at Union Square so we decided to walk the one mile to the Embarcadero Center. It really wasn't a bad walk and the boys had *so* much fun! Like, a surprising amount of fun.



Obviously, this activity is seasonal but if you ever get a chance to visit San Francisco during the holidays, definitely do it!

WHAT TO EAT IN SAN FRANCISCO

TRATTO



If there's one thing San Francisco isn't short on, it's restaurants. We are lucky that Tratto is housed inside The Marker! We arrived for an early dinner right after we attended the Wine Hour. Italian food is pretty much the only cuisine we can go to as a family and everyone is happy. The ambiance was perfection and the food was delicious.



JASPER'S

For breakfast, we made the short walk to Jasper's located in Hotel Spero. We got there early (because our kids wake early all the time... even on vacation) and they seated us well before our reservation, which we were thankful for. Breakfast foods are always a hit for both kids and adults. Tyler likes the sweeter selections, while I'm definitely more savory. We all found something on the menu that we loved.

SAN FRANCISCO WITH KIDS: WOULD WE DO IT AGAIN?



In short: yes! And we plan to! We really loved how magical the city felt during Christmastime and the boys are at such a fun age where everything feels *exciting*. We hope to make this a new holiday tradition. If I could change anything, I would have loved to stay longer and do more. But there's always next year!

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