

# USA - SPIRIT OF THE WEST

## LA, Grand Canyon, Las Vegas, Yosemite, San Francisco & more



*Experience the plucky frontier spirit of America's west coast on our 12 day adventure through inspiring landscapes, untamed sandstone backyards and cities with distinct personalities. Wander the star-studded Hollywood Walk of Fame, peer at the bottom of the world within Grand Canyon National Park, experience the magic of Frisco' bay from the Golden Gate Bridge, explore glacial gouged Yosemite National Park and be dazzled by illuminated charms of the Mojave mirage, Las Vegas.*

**This document aims to give you all the information that you require for a smooth and comfortable trip to Western USA. Please take the time to familiarise yourself with all the aspects of our tour. It includes important information such as flight details, visa requirements and travel insurance.**

Your included meal guide:

B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner

**Day 1: UK to Los Angeles.** Depart London on your scheduled flight to Los Angeles where you will be met by a representative and transferred to your hotel.

**Day 2: Los Angeles B.** Situated upon California's idyllic coastline, the 'City of Angels' represents a microcosm of America; from vast suburban sprawls to towering skyscrapers, bohemian beaches to snow-capped peaks, Los Angeles is a definitive landscape of extremes. Your full day tour begins in Hollywood, a neighbourhood imbued with cinematic legend from its glamorous 'golden age'. Wander along the star embedded Walk of Fame to a viewpoint of the iconic Hollywood sign upon the Santa Monica Mountains, then continue to Beverly Hills, a sophisticated haven of manicured mansions, star estates and Rodeo Drive's opulent boutiques. Later in the afternoon, stop at the ocean enclave of Santa Monica city to wander along its century-old pier crowned by an illuminated Ferris wheel.

**Day 3: Los Angeles to Scottsdale B.** Following breakfast, travel through expansive desert biomes, passing San Geronio's 3000 turbines and the city of Palm Springs - once a swinging getaway for the likes of Elvis Presley and the Rat Pack. Cross state lines into Arizona, arriving at the affluent city of Scottsdale early in the evening to sample a melting pot of cuisines, particularly those from across the nearby Mexican border.

**Day 4: Scottsdale to Williams B.** This morning, undertake an optional balloon ride (at an additional fee) and witness the magnificent spectacle of the Sonoran Desert illuminated by daybreak. Later that morning, travel to the mystical town of Sedona to experience alleged energy vortexes, which attract a wealth of new-age visitors; continue along Oak Creek Canyon to marvel at spectacular red sandstone formations that

protrude through the verdant Coconino National Forest. Arrive in Williams, brimming with small-town character and quaint diners that line the famous Route 66 for an evening at leisure.

**Day 5: The Grand Canyon B.** Begin today with a short drive to a tour highlight and one of The Seven Natural Wonders of the World, Grand Canyon National Park. Having absorbed its sheer immensity, peer down the 6,000ft drop to witness the snaking Colorado River, carving its way through two billion year old basement rock. Wander along the south rim to admire jagged plateaus, rugged spires and crumbling ridges or take a walk along the Bright Angel Trail to spot inquisitive Albert squirrels, precarious bighorn sheep and the illusive Californian Condor. Later this afternoon, head back to Williams for an evening at leisure.

**Day 6: Williams to Las Vegas B.** En route to the 'Silver State' of Nevada, stop at Seligman to embrace old town ambience birthed by the 'Mother Road'. Cross the arched O'Callaghan-Tillman Memorial Bridge, which overlooks the mighty Colorado River and passes the nearby Hoover Dam's gigantic curvature nestled within the Black Canyon. Arrive late afternoon to your hotel for an evening to unwind or experience the neon vibrancy of the Vegas 'strip'.

**Day 7: Las Vegas B.** Today is at leisure to explore the west's dazzling rhinestone, unescorted at your own pace. Begin at the 1,100ft summit of Stratosphere Tower for a unique observation of Las Vegas; pass the Bellagio's soaring fountain plumes before trying your hand at poker in Caesars Palace or travelling the world in one day as you visit the city's replica landmarks. Whether you stroll beneath Fremont Street's captivating canopy lightshow or take in a spectacular performance at MGM Grand, this lavish city of multiple personalities spellbinds all who visit its bustling boulevard.

**Day 8: Las Vegas to Visalia B.** After breakfast, make your way across the dry expanse of the Mojave Desert, back to the 'Golden State' of California. En route, witness the peculiar spectacle of the 'boneyard', home to hundreds of obsolete commercial airliners preserved by torrid desert conditions. Your day concludes in Visalia, a quaint farming community brimming with old-town charm to a backdrop of the Sierra Nevada mountain range.

**Day 9: Visalia to Sonora B.** Spend today in one of the world's most dramatic geological marvels, the UNESCO recognised Yosemite National Park. With varicoloured wild meadows, thunderous glacial rivers cascading from dizzying granite peaks and crumbling pinnacles, pines, cedars and oaks forming jagged silhouettes against the open sky, this display of the west's natural majesty is unparalleled. Well-maintained trails are available for those wanting a short hike, passing mammoth monoliths, grazing mule deer, specular pools and endangered bald eagles before arriving at the breathtaking tiers of Yosemite Falls, the parks highest waterfall. Later this afternoon, journey to the town of Sonora for an evening at leisure.

**Day 10: Sonora to San Francisco B.** In the morning, depart Sonora for your final stop on America's west coast, San Francisco. Amid a rolling veil of mist, this slender peninsular occupies 47 elevated square miles populated by the clatter of old-fashioned cable cars, diverse neighbourhoods and an unmistakable collection of landmarks to discover on your afternoon tour. Continue to the Presidio, a serene park inviting visitors to panoramic vistas across the bay, out towards Alcatraz Island and San Francisco's calling card - the iconic Golden Gate Bridge.

**Day 11: San Francisco B.** Today, experience the sights of the city at leisure unescorted. Perhaps visit the vibrant boardwalk of Pier 39, lined with delicious seafood eateries and a herd of resident seals who mysteriously appeared after the 1989 earthquake. For unique views of the city, stroll across the Golden Gate Bridge to the 19th Battery Spencer fort or perhaps take a cruise of the bay and get up close to the infamous Alcatraz Prison. Stroll alongside technicolour houses set against a Frisco skyline known as the 'Painted Ladies'; alternatively, take advantage of California's idyllic climate by visiting the vineyards of Napa Valley to sample renowned wines including Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon.

**Day 12: San Francisco to UK or Extension B.** Following a morning at leisure, transfer to San Francisco International Airport for your flight back to the UK, or continue on to your chosen extension.

**Hotel Information**

**Long Beach (2 nights):** 3★ Hotel Maya - 700 Queensway Drive, Long Beach CA.

Telephone Number: +1 (562) 435-7676

**Scottsdale (1 night):** 3★ Hilton Garden Inn Hotel - 7324 E Indian School Road, Scottsdale, AZ 85251. Telephone Number: +1 (480) 481-0400

**Williams (2 nights):** 3★ Grand Canyon Railway Hotel - 223 N Grand Canyon Blvd, Williams, AZ 86046. Telephone Number: +1 (800) 843 8724

**Las Vegas (2 nights):** 3★ Harrah's - 3475 Las Vegas Blvd S, Las Vegas, NV 89109. Telephone Number: +1 (702) 369 5000

**Visalia (1 night):** 3★ Wyndham - 9000 W Airport Drive, Visalia, CA 9327. Telephone Number: +1 (559) 651 5000

**Sonora Oaks (1 night):** 3★ Best Western Sonora Oaks - 19551 Hess Avenue, Sonora, CA 95370. Telephone Number: +1 (209) 533 4400

**San Francisco (2 night):** 3★ Holiday Inn Civic Centre - 50 8th Street, San Francisco, CA 94103. Telephone Number: +1 (415) 626 6103



All accommodation is 3★ and features an en suite bathroom, heating/air-conditioning, TV and tea/coffee making facilities. Mercury Holidays have visited and inspected all of the hotels to ensure that they meet the high standards of service which we require for our clients.

Should any of the hotels listed become unavailable you will be placed in alternative accommodation of the exact same standard. Final confirmation of your hotels will be sent in a document approximately 10 days before you travel.

**Meals**

Breakfast is always served in your hotel each morning and will be western style.

**On your arrival**

On your arrival in Los Angeles you will be met by a representative from our local agent, holding a sign displaying: "Mercury Holidays". The Mercury Holidays/Destination America representative will show you to your transfer vehicle. Your national guide will be on hand 24 hours a day should you have any queries. However, if you need to contact your representative during your stay the details are:

**Destination America**

801 E. Katella Avenue,  
Anaheim, CA 92805, USA  
Contact number: 001 714-935-0040

**Emergency contact information**

Please find below the emergency contact details for Destination America  
24 hour Emergency number:  
001 714-935-0040

**Visas**

You will need to obtain an ESTA visa. This must be applied for at least 7 days before you are due to land in the USA. Please advise if you would like us to arrange this for you. All UK passport holders must have a bio-metric epassport and your passport must be valid for at least 6 months from the date you are expected to arrive back in the UK. Important note: if you do not have a bio-metric epassport, you will be refused entry into the USA.

**Insurance**

You must obtain suitable travel insurance prior to departure. Mercury Holidays is partnered with Holiday Extras which offer insurance at the following prices:

Age in years	Up to 64	65-74	75-85
Up to 17 days cover	£51	£96	£166

For all persons 86 years and over, please contact us for insurance prices.

To book your travel insurance with us please contact our reservations department on 01732 775000.

If you have an existing policy with another company, please ensure you provide us with the name of your insurer, policy number and their 24 hour emergency contact number as soon as possible. Mercury Holidays will not be liable for any costs incurred by you due to your failure to take out suitable travel insurance from the date of booking.

**Health and Vaccinations**

It is strongly recommended that you check the latest health recommendations for travel to USA with your GP at least 4-6 weeks before travel. Any medicines you may need during your journey should be packed in your hand luggage. We suggest it is worth taking a few first aid supply such as travel pills, rehydration powder, plasters, stomach settlers, antiseptic

creams, aspirin etc. Because these products can be more expensive abroad and familiar brands are not always available. It is not advisable to drink the tap water.

**Physical Accessibility**

This tour is accessible to most people with a good level of fitness and normal mobility. It involves climbing of steep stairs and getting on and off coaches. This tour is not suitable for anyone with walking difficulties.

**Group Size**

The minimum number of travellers in your group will be 30 and the maximum will be 45. In the unlikely event there are fewer than 30 passengers booked on your tour date, you may be asked to change to a different date. A full refund will be made available to you should this alternative not be suitable.

**Tour Guides**

This is a fully escorted tour meaning that you will be met on arrival and will have a guide with you throughout your stay until you depart San Francisco, ensuring that you have first-hand knowledge at all times.

**Tipping**

Tipping is common practice in America. It is customary to tip your guides and driver, please allow approx. \$3-\$5 per person for the guide and \$3-\$4 per person per day for the driver. All tips will be collected by your tour director on the last day. Tipping at restaurants, hotel staff etc is discretionary.

**Currency Exchange - IMPORTANT**

The currency in America is the United States Dollar (USD). You will be able to change currency both before you travel and whilst you are away. You will also have access to ATMs during your tour where you can withdraw money in the local currency.

**Personal Expenses**

You will need to take money with you to cover any personal purchases such as souvenirs, laundry and extra drinks and snacks. Approximately £500-£700 per person will be sufficient for the duration of the tour.

**Credit Card Information**

As normal practice you will be asked for your credit card details on check-in at the hotel in order to cover any extras incurred during your stay. If you do not have a credit card you may be asked for a cash deposit. American Express, Diners Club, MasterCard and Visa are widely accepted in hotels but please note there is often a handling fee surcharge of around 3% for credit card payments.

**Itinerary changes**

The order of events and sightseeing may vary according to local conditions or for operational purposes. For this reason, we have indicated approximate times only. Your local guide will inform you of any schedule changes as they are informed of them. Some road construction and/or weather conditions may lengthen the driving times. Our intention is to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however order of events and sightseeing may vary according to the local conditions.

**What to Pack**

- Insect repellent
- Suncream and a hat with a big brim for sunny days
- Comfortable walking shoes such as trainers
- Sunglasses
- Ruck sack or light bag per person
- Personal toiletries and first aid kit
- A plug adaptor - The official voltage for the USA is 120 and operates on a 2 pronged North American outlet

**Flight and Airport Information**

Your flight is to Los Angeles International Airport with British Airways (BA) departing from London Heathrow Terminal 5.

Route	Depart	Arrive	Flight Duration	Flight Number
Heathrow - Los Angeles	16:15	19:20	11 hours 05 minutes	BA269
San Francisco - Heathrow	19:00	13:15	10 hours 15 minutes	BA286

**IMPORTANT: Please note that all flight times and numbers listed above are provided for guidance only and are subject to change. Final flight details will be confirmed on your e-ticket and final documentation which will be sent to you approximately 10 days before departure.**

**Baggage Allowance**

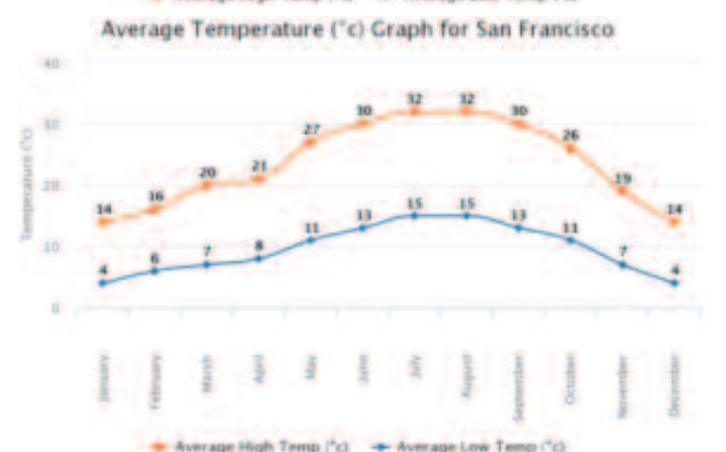
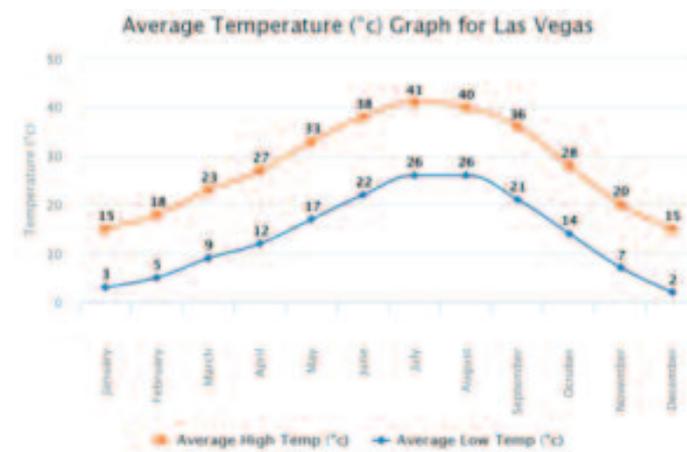
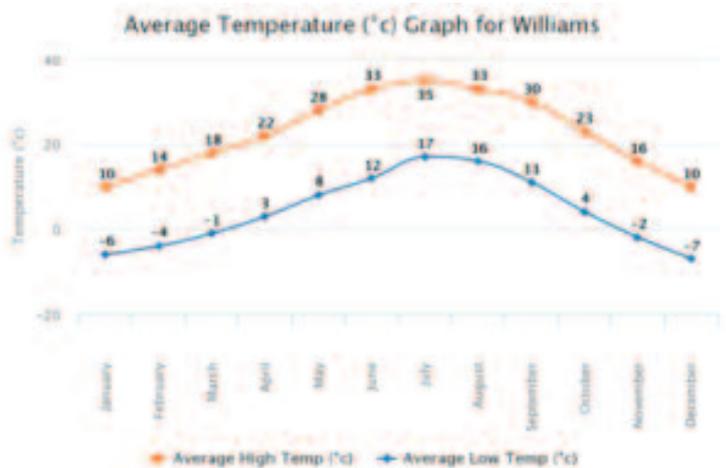
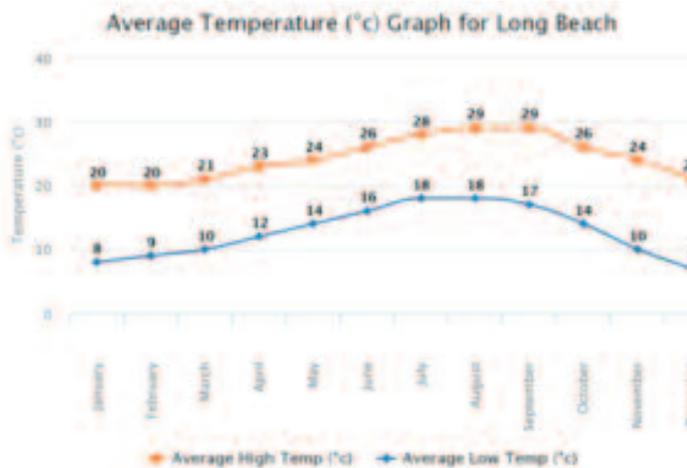
Each passenger is entitled to 23kg of hold luggage. There is also an allowance of one cabin bag not exceeding 25cm x 45cm x 56cm in size and one personal bag not exceeding 45 cm x 36 cm x 20 cm that you can take on the aircraft as hand luggage. Weight restrictions will be finalized on your e-ticket receipt. Should you wish to take additional luggage you will need to pay an additional fee for this at check-in. Heathrow Airport advises that you should arrive at the airport at least three hours prior to your flight time for international departures.

**Airport Extras**

If you wish to arrange Airport car parking, lounges or accommodation at preferential rates, we recommend you book this in advance with Holiday Extras - Tel. 0871 360 2000, quoting HX313.

**Weather and Climate**

Weather can vary quite considerably throughout the year so please familiarize yourself with the climate charts below for a guideline of what to expect.



# SAN FRANCISCO CITY STAY EXTENSION



*The iconic coastal city of San Francisco is home to culinary experimentation, new-fangled technology and a progressive population. Your 2 night stay will allow you to discover the city further.*

This document aims to give you all the information which you will require during your extension to San Francisco.

Explore the city at leisure to discover a plethora of sights including a tour of Alcatraz prison (advanced booking required, to be booked independently), the cross-cultural Asian Art Museum and sample more maritime eateries within the famous Fisherman's Wharf.

#### Hotel Information (2 nights Bed & Breakfast)

3★ Holiday Inn Civic Centre - 50 8th Street, San Francisco, CA 94103

Telephone Number: + 1 (415) 626 6103

Overlooking the city and situated within South of Market, the Holiday Inn Civic Centre boast a restaurant, outdoor pool, health club and a lounge in which to unwind. Each of the 338 rooms come with free WiFi, a safe and satellite TV.

#### Personal Expenses

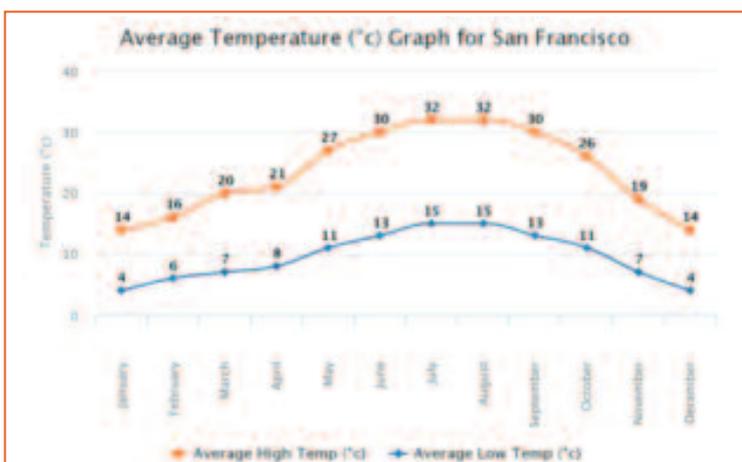
You will need to take money with you to cover any personal purchases such as souvenirs, laundry and any additional snacks + drinks you may wish to have.

#### Tour Guides

Your stay in San Francisco is not escorted by a tour guide. Your time here will be free to do as you wish. Transfers are included.

#### Weather and Climate

Weather can vary throughout the year, so please familiarise yourself with the chart below.



Holiday Inn Civic Centre

#### Return flight Information

Route	Depart	Arrive	Flight Duration	Flight Number
San Francisco - Heathrow	19:00	13:15	10 hours 15 minutes	BA286

Each passenger is entitled to 23kg of hold luggage. There is also an allowance of one cabin bag not exceeding 25cm x 45cm x 56cm in size and one personal bag not exceeding 45 cm x 36 cm x 20 cm that you can take on the aircraft as hand luggage. Weight restrictions will be finalized on your e-ticket receipt. Should you wish to take additional luggage you will need to pay an additional fee for this at check-in.

For any further enquiries or for more information call us on 0843 224 0723