



Where the Past Is a “Blast”

Benicia's rich history – as a former state capitol, a busy seaport, the first Army ordnance supply depot on the Pacific Coast and an inspiration for some of Jack London's literary works – is a treasure trove for history buffs and families wanting to learn more about national and California history.

Benicia boasts three museums where you can discover artifacts and hear stories from Benicia's colorful past:

Benicia Capitol State Historic Park

115 West G Street • (707) 745-3385

Benicia was the site of California's third seat of government and served as the state capitol for 13 months during 1853 and 1854.

Fischer-Hanlon House

137 West G Street • (707) 745-3385

Part of the Benicia Capitol State Historic Park, the house was originally a hotel on another site in town. After extensive fire damage, Joseph and Catherine Fischer moved and remodeled the building for their home in 1856.

Benicia Historical Museum at the Camel Barns

2060 Camel Road • (707) 745-5435

The museum houses a variety of exhibits and displays recounting the history of both the city of Benicia and the U.S. Army Arsenal.

Benicia Fire Museum

900 East Second Street • (707) 745-1688

The museum contains many treasures of fire service equipment, including the “Phoenix,” an 1820s double decker hand-pumper requiring 45 men to operate.



Other Historical Sites

Downtown Landmarks

A “Historic Downtown Benicia Walking Tour” brochure available at the offices of Benicia Main Street, the Benicia Historical Museum, or the Benicia Chamber of Commerce, points out 25 different historical points of interest within a few blocks of each other in downtown Benicia.

The Arsenal

Military operations played a significant role in Benicia's history, from 1849 to 1964 and many reminders of its martial history remain. Most prominent is the Benicia Arsenal, east of East Military and south of Oak Road, the first ordnance supply depot on the West Coast.

From Historic B&Bs to Hotels with Wi-Fi

Whether you prefer an old-world ambiance or the latest in high-tech amenities, you'll find a great place to stay in Benicia.

Historic Hotels/B&Bs

Inn at Benicia Bay (B&B)

145 East D Street

Benicia, CA 94510

(707) 746-1055

Union Hotel

401 First Street

Benicia, CA 94510

(707) 746-0110

Contemporary Lodgings

Best Western Heritage Inn

1955 East Second Street

Benicia, CA 94510

(707) 746-0401

Holiday Inn Express

1375 East Fifth Street

Benicia, CA 94510

(707) 297-6873



Driving Directions to Benicia

From San Francisco: Take I-80 going toward Sacramento. After crossing the Carquinez Bridge near Vallejo, take the I-780 turnoff to Benicia.

From Oakland: Take CA-24 East through the Caldecott Tunnel. Take I-680 North toward Sacramento. Cross the Benicia-Martinez Bridge. Stay to the far left as you approach the toll booth. Take I-780 to Benicia/Vallejo.

From Concord/Walnut Creek/San Jose: Take I-680 North toward Sacramento. Cross the Benicia-Martinez Bridge. Stay to the far left as you approach the toll booth. Take I-780 to Benicia/Vallejo.

From Napa: Take CA-121 South to CA-221 South. Turn right. Take a left onto CA-12 East/CA-29 South. Merge onto CA-37 East toward I-80 West toward San Francisco. Take the I-780 East exit.

From Marin County: Cross the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge. After one mile, go north on the Richmond Parkway. Take I-80 North over the Carquinez Bridge. After crossing the Carquinez Bridge near Vallejo, take the I-780 exit to Benicia.

To Get Downtown

From I-780, take the East Second Street exit. Go left on East Second, right on Military and then left on First Street. Watch for the brown tourism directional signs once on city streets!



For More Information

Visitor Centers

Benicia has four facilities that serve as visitor centers to assist you with questions about specific things to do or see. At the visitor centers listed below, you'll find guides, maps and literature to enhance your visit. (Please note that each center has varying days and hours of operation.)

Benicia Main Street

90 First Street

Benicia, CA 94510

(707) 745-9791

Benicia Chamber of Commerce

601 First Street

Benicia, CA 94510

(707) 745-2120

Benicia Historical Museum

2060 Camel Road

Benicia, CA 94510

(707) 745-5435

Arts Benicia

991 Tyler Street, Suite 114

Benicia, CA 94510

(707) 747-0131

Visitor Phone Line

More information about Benicia's attractions is available by calling the Benicia Visitor Information line at **(877) 345-1921**, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Online Information

To find more information about Benicia online, go to www.visitbenicia.org or our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/visitbenicia.



Benicia

A GREAT DAY BY THE BAY



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www.visitbenicia.org

www.facebook.com/visitbenicia



Benicia:

A Tempting and Magical Destination

A few miles northeast of San Francisco lies the scenic city of Benicia, nestled in a beautiful waterfront setting alongside the Carquinez Strait. But Benicia is much more than a pretty face. The city has many personalities born of its roles as a center of commercial, military, and creative endeavors.

In fact, people say a magical combination of elements came together in just the right way to make Benicia an irresistible and unforgettable destination. Benicia has been inspiring authors, sculptors, painters and other visionaries for more than 160 years with an unbeatable array of cultural, historical and artistic attractions, and continues to enchant visitors to this day.

You're warmly invited to enjoy an inspiring, delightful "Great Day by the Bay," in multi-faceted, always memorable, Benicia.

If you'd like additional information on all the facets that make Benicia special, you can go to www.visitbenicia.org or our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/visitbenicia.



An Artistic Spirit

Benicia boasts one of the most active and influential art communities in the Bay Area. Hundreds of artists live and work in studios throughout the city, creating world-class objets d'art. They share their talents via a cornucopia of media and styles, including glass art, prints, sculpture, ceramics, photographs, paintings and mixed media.

Almost 100 artists locate their studios at "the Arsenal," a former military munitions site that now exudes a bohemian feel. Also within the Arsenal is a non-profit organization called Arts Benicia that maintains a gallery of member artists' work and coordinates the annual Artists' Open Studios events in May and December.

Glass Art

The city is particularly known for its art glass studios, where you can often see nationally acclaimed glass artists at work. Come see first-hand the astonishing process of turning molten glass into exquisite works by masters of the art. Benicia's three glass art studios include Lindsay Art Glass, Nourot Glass Studio and Smyers Glass.



Performing Arts

The Benicia Old Town Theatre Group promotes live theater in Benicia by sponsoring two productions per year at the historic B.D.E.S. Hall at 140 West J Street. Each July, Benicia Main Street hosts the Benicia Fine Art & Jazz Festival, with live performances by top jazz musicians from the Bay Area and around the country. Activities include a juried fine art marketplace, gourmet food, wine and beer, and a kids' art activity area.

A Stunning and Storied Waterfront

Benicia's beautiful waterfront creates an air of mystery and romance as you walk along the First Street Promenade and imagine a time when a robust maritime commerce once filled the harbor with bustling activity and a bit of intrigue.

Downtown Benicia is just a few steps from the scenic waterfront promenade, allowing visitors and residents an up-close glimpse of the impressive Carquinez Strait while strolling or shopping.

The Benicia Marina

The marina, located between East Second and East Fifth streets, is a full-service marina and a great stop for boaters who want to visit for the day or stay overnight on their way to the Sacramento Delta and other waterway destinations.

Outdoor Recreation

The waterfront area is full of fun things to do, from the Benicia State Recreation Area to the Benicia Marina. Of Benicia's more than 20 parks, three are along the waterfront, where visitors can enjoy picnicking and fishing.

Benicia State Recreation Area

Here, hikers can take full advantage of the San Francisco Bay Trail System. The area includes 438 acres of land with two miles of paths set aside for cyclists, runners, walkers, equestrians and roller skaters.



Bay Ridge Trail

A walk along this trail follows the Carquinez Strait waterfront through Benicia and Vallejo.

Matthew Turner Park

Located at West 12th Street, this park is suitable for fishing, picnicking and launching kayaks and canoes.

Benicia Point Pier

This is a great place to drop a line and see what's biting. For more details about where to go fishing, visit Benicia Bait and Tackle at 509 Claverie Way.

West Ninth Street Boat Launch

This is a public launch operated by the City of Benicia at the West Ninth Street Park, located at West Ninth and K streets.

Shopping, Dining, Spas: Casual Chic

Eclectic, trendy and chic all describe Benicia's shopping experience. You'll find the style and grace of upscale, big-city shopping accompanied by the warmth and welcoming spirit of small-town merchants.

The main retail area in Benicia is First Street, where you can browse for hours against the dramatic backdrop of the city's waterfront, but there are many interesting shops scattered throughout the city, including within the Arsenal.



Spas and Beauty Services

You'll find more than 40 spas, hair salons and skin care businesses throughout the city, making looking and feeling good from head to toe a snap. A spa getaway is also a great way for girlfriends to escape for some pampering in a tranquil setting.

Dining

After a fun day of shopping, outdoor activity or checking out the art scene, you can delight in a gourmet meal or grab a quick snack at one of many great restaurants in Benicia. From seafood to Mexican and Chinese cuisine, fine dining to casual food, hearty diner cooking to a multi-course feast with a French flair, you can find the perfect dining experience.

Nightlife

Benicia's wine bars and upscale taverns host all types of music, including jazz, folk, bluegrass and rock and roll. Live local entertainment venues present locally and regionally known musicians on a weekly basis. Check www.visitbenicia.org for the latest venues.



A Community that Knows How to Party

Each year, local organizations and the city sponsor a variety of fun things to do and see - from an artists' open studios event to a Fourth of July community picnic - that bring thousands of visitors to Benicia. Below are a few well-known regional traditions. For a complete list of Benicia events, please go to www.visitbenicia.org.



Art Studios Open House

Artists in Benicia open their studios to the public the weekend before Mother's Day in May and the first weekend in December, along with other selected times of the year.

Benicia Fine Art & Jazz Festival on the Waterfront

In July, listen to Bay Area jazz artists while strolling along the waterfront and viewing world-class art from award-winning artists.

Peddler's Fair

Held each August, the fair is one of Northern California's most popular and prestigious antiques, collectibles and handicrafts show, with customers and vendors coming from throughout the region.

Fine Art & Craft Fair

More than 200 fine artisans and craftspeople line First Street in Benicia's historic downtown in July to offer various handmade art work, crafts, clothing, food and more.

Farmers Market

Benicia's Certified Farmers Market begins in April and runs every Thursday through October, offering fresh fruits and vegetables, gourmet food, arts and crafts, musical entertainment and children's activities.