



2024

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



**Lands End
Trail**
California



Lands End Trail

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The name Lands End Trail isn't an exaggeration. This San Francisco trail skirts the edge of North America on rocky cliffs overlooking the Pacific Ocean. The 1.6-mile trail offers spectacular views of the Golden Gate Bridge and old shipwrecks, as well as a full complement of marine mammals and seabirds.

The path meanders through the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, where you can also find the Legion of Honor art museum and the now-closed swank Cliff House restaurant, as well as ruins of a beach resort and public baths. The Lands End Trail is a segment of the developing California Coastal Trail—a network of bicycling and hiking trails that, when complete, will stretch along the coastline for 1,230 miles from Oregon to the Mexican border.

The Lands End Trail, one of several in the park, follows the route of the Park and Cliff House Railway, which carried passengers by steam train and later electric trolley to oceanside tourist destinations beginning in 1888. A landslide wiped out a section of track in 1925, ending rail service.

A convenient starting point is the parking lot at Merrie Way, named after the Sutro Pleasure Grounds at Merrie Way, an amusement park that operated there from 1896 to 1900. The lot now features the Lands End Lookout Visitor Center. Before heading onto the Lands End Trail at the north end of the lot, you might want to take the steps downhill on the left to explore the historic Sutro Baths ruins, where, from 1896 to 1966, visitors soaked in heated seawater and enjoyed shows and sports. A quarter mile west on Point Lobos Avenue is the aptly named Cliff House, a historic restaurant that closed in 2020.

Heading north onto the Lands End Trail, you'll pass through groves of cypress and eucalyptus to views of the coast and the rocky shores that have claimed more than a few unlucky ships. At low tide in clear weather, you might see parts of old ships sticking out of the sand. If the pea-soup fog has rolled in, you won't see the wrecks, but you'll understand why so many ships crashed onto this shoreline.

The overlooks here also feature breathtaking views—weather permitting—of the Golden Gate Bridge and the Marin Headlands across the mouth of the bay, with the best views at sunset. Be sure to stay on the trails, as the cliff faces are treacherous.

About 0.6 mile along the trail, a right fork heads 0.3 mile uphill to the Legion of Honor art museum, which houses several art collections. Built in Beaux Arts style in 1921, the palatial building commands a view of the San Francisco skyline.

Back on the trail—referred to as Coastal Trail in places—the



Lands End Trail

California

States: California

Counties: San Francisco

Length: 1.6miles

Trail end points: Merrie Way & Point Lobos Ave (San Francisco) to El Camino Del Mar, just west of 32nd Ave (San Francisco)

Trail surfaces: Crushed Stone, Dirt

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Mountain Biking, Walking

Parking & Trail Access

There are multiple access points along the Lands End Trail. The western trailhead at Merrie Way parking lot is wheelchair accessible. From downtown San Francisco, take Geary Boulevard west about 5 miles. At 41st Avenue stay right because Geary splits and becomes Point Lobos Avenue. About 500 feet past 48th Avenue, turn right (north) into the Merrie Way parking lot, where there is ample parking.

To reach the USS San Francisco memorial parking lot, follow the directions as above, but at 48th Avenue turn right (north) on El Camino del Mar to the memorial parking lot, from which you follow stairs to the trail.

To reach the El Camino del Mar trailhead, take Geary Boulevard to 33rd Avenue and turn right. Drive several blocks and make a left on El Camino del Mar Street. Park on the street.

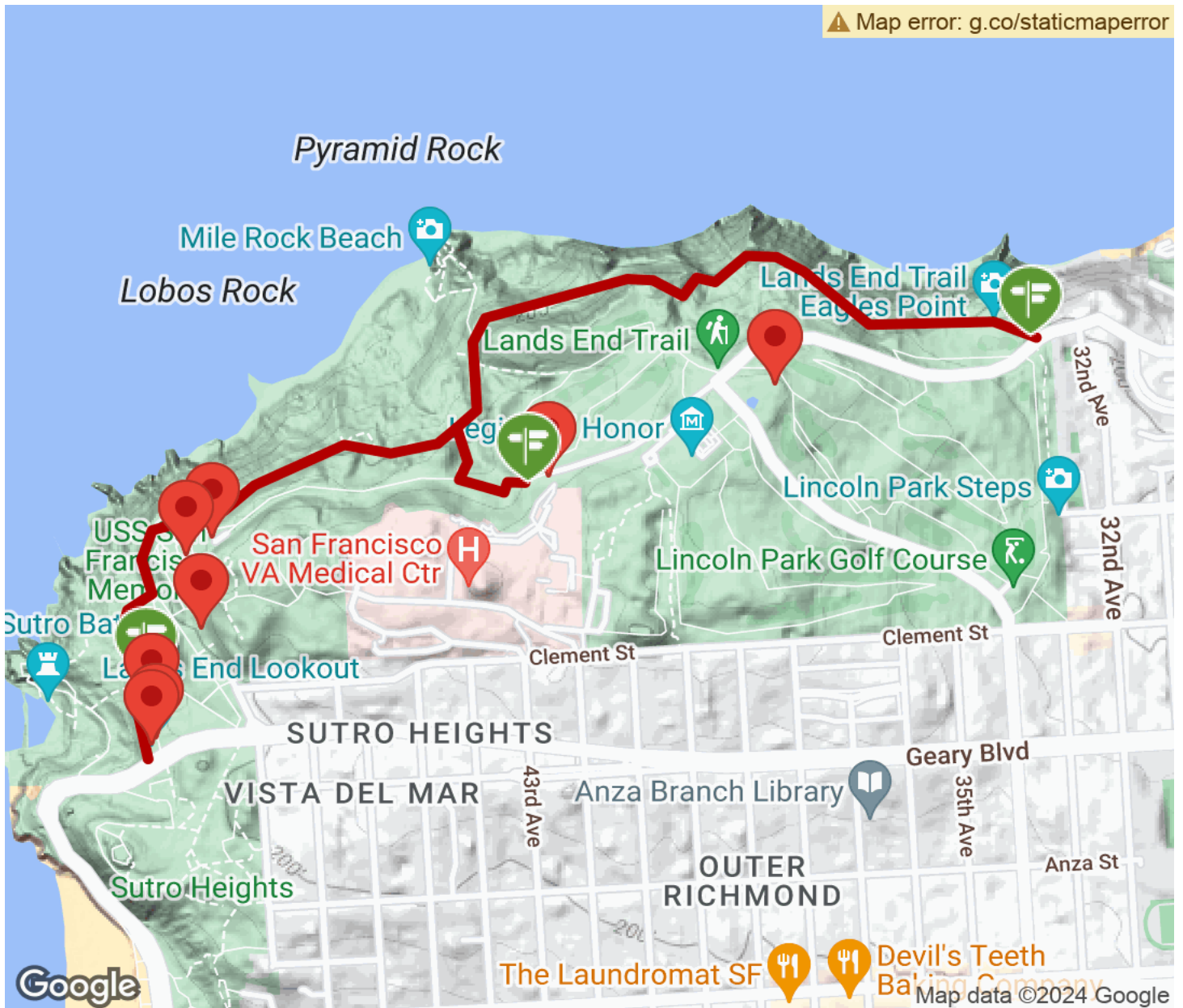
Visit the [TrailLink map](#) for all options and detailed directions.



Lands End Trail

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Map error: g.co/staticmaperror



Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink

by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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