

Talking point 13 *Let's go to San Francisco!*



History

San Francisco is located in the state of California on the West Coast of the U.S. The area was established by Spanish settlers in 1776 and named after the Italian monk Saint Francis of Assisi. In the mid-1800s, San Francisco's population grew when thousands of people came to the area from all over to look for gold. In 1848, the United States took control of San Francisco and officially made it a city in 1850. On the morning of April 18, 1906, a huge earthquake struck San Francisco. The earthquake and the fires that followed almost destroyed the city completely. The city was rebuilt and continued to grow over the years. Today it has a population of over 700,000 people, and it is one of the most popular places for tourists to visit in the U.S.

Festivals

San Francisco has a rich cultural heritage. Its population includes many people of Asian and Hispanic descent, among others. Because of this multicultural population, San Francisco has many wonderful festivals throughout the year. San Franciscans celebrate Chinese New Year in March, and the Mexican holiday *Cinco de mayo* in May. Like all American cities, San Francisco celebrates Independence Day on the 4th of July with fireworks. For chocolate lovers, there's a chocolate festival in September, and in October, the San Francisco Jazz Festival offers live musical performances by some of the world's best jazz musicians.

Sightseeing

San Francisco has many interesting sightseeing attractions. The ethnic neighborhoods, such as Chinatown and the Italian section called North Beach, offer interesting shops and excellent restaurants. Fisherman's Wharf is a waterfront neighborhood that includes a variety of attractions such as the shopping center at Pier 39. From the pier, visitors can take a ferry ride to Alcatraz Island and go to the aquarium at the Marine Mammal Center. The pier also offers a great view of the Golden Gate Bridge, the second longest suspension bridge in the U.S. And just getting around San Francisco can be an attraction on its own, especially for visitors who choose to ride the famous electric cable cars.



Questions:

1. How did San Francisco get its name? _____
2. What happened in San Francisco on April 18, 1906? _____
3. Why does San Francisco have so many wonderful festivals? _____
4. What festivals does San Francisco celebrate in these months?
March: _____ September: _____
May: _____ October: _____
July: _____
5. What are two of San Francisco's ethnic neighborhoods? _____
6. What can tourists do at Pier 39? _____