

FUN AND INTERESTING FACTS

About Golden Gate Park

There are a wide range of dedicated athletic courses, fields, and courts including soccer, baseball, tennis, football, running, horseshoe pitching, golf, lawn bowling, petanque, archery, and disc golf.

With its rectangular shape, the park can be traversed in the north-south direction fairly quickly. In the east-west mode, it's tempting to lose oneself among the groves, glades and glens of the park's lush landscape.

The park's landscape is home to 680 forested acres, 130 acres of meadows, 15 miles of drives, and 33 acres of lakes. Additionally there are numerous fields and many open spaces.

The park was originally created on 1013 acres of windswept sand dunes in an unincorporated area of the Peninsula, known as the Outside Lands, starting in 1870 by surveyor, designer, and first Superintendent William Hammond Hall. Today, with an addition, the acreage stands at 1017 acres.

The very first Tweet was actually done in Golden Gate Park in front a herd of bison. Learn more about this

Commemorative trees groves include the National AIDS Memorial Grove, Heroes Grove, Redwood Memorial Grove, and Phil Arnold Oak Woodlands Trail.

The park played the role of sanctuary after the cataclysmic 1906 Earthquake and Fire, when 200,000 homeless residents were forced to camp in the park, first in crude shelters, and later in temporary wood barracks.

The Conservatory of Flowers, opened in 1879 was the park's first formal structure. Its 12,000 square feet, all covered in glass, contains mostly tropical plants. A gigantic specimen of philodendron, known as Phil, thought to be more than 100 years old, continues to climb into the center dome.

The park is host to several free annual events including Hardly Strictly Bluegrass, Opera in the Park, and Comedy Day.

The California Midwinter International Exposition of 1894, the first world's fair held in the U.S. west of the Mississippi, offered 2 million visitors a glimpse of things to come in its 180 structures set on 160 acres. The footprint of the fair was the genesis of today's Music Concourse.

The San Francisco Botanical Garden at Strybing Arboretum consists of 55 acres with 9000 different kinds of plants from around the world. All this is laid out in geographic, groupings of similar plants, or thematic settings.

The park is home to several unique gardens including the Shakespeare Garden, Rose Garden, Japanese Tea Garden, Queen Wilhelmina Garden, and Conservatory Valley with its graphic floral plaques.

Originally called the Sharon Quarters for Children, today's Koret Playground, was the first public playground in the United States. The park contains five playgrounds spread across the length of the park.

In 1870, the value of the 1,017 acres of land that established Golden Gate Park was appraised at \$801,593, the medium value of the average home in San Francisco in 2019 is \$988,000.

Cultural institutions ring the Music Concourse including the de Young Museum, established in 1895 and the California Academy of Sciences, first opened in 1923. Numerous statues and monuments also reside here.

With the threat of extinction, bison have resided in the park since 1891. Today the animal's names reflect those of Native American origin.

Golden Gate Park is 20% larger than New York's Central Park (1,017 acres vs. 840) and one of the most visited parks in America with 25 million visits each year. In fact, Central Park designer Frederick Law Olmsted was briefly considered as a Golden Gate Park architect, but he disliked the desolate location and felt the massive sand dunes made it impossible to build. San Francisco proved him wrong!