



San Francisco

The city of San Francisco, with an estimated population of 798,680 in 2006 according to The California Department of Finance Demographic Research Unit, is the fourth largest city in the state of California (in terms of population) and the 14th in the United States. As the only consolidated city-county in the state, San Francisco is situated at the northern tip of the San Francisco peninsula that forms the San Francisco Bay. San Francisco also includes several islands in the bay and the Farallon Islands, which are twenty-seven miles offshore in the Pacific Ocean.

Climate

Surrounded on three sides by water, San Francisco's climate is strongly influenced by the cool currents of the Pacific Ocean. The weather is remarkably mild all year round, with a so-called "Mediterranean climate" characterized by cool, foggy summers and relatively warm winters. The average daily high temperatures in the summer typically range from the upper 60's to the mid 70's, while in the winter it virtually never reaches freezing. Though rain in the summer is extremely rare, the winters can be very rainy. The Pacific Ocean off the west coast of the city is particularly cold year round. The combination of the cold ocean water and high heat of the California mainland mean that the city's western half is often cloaked in fog during the months of July and August. The fog is less pronounced during the month of September, which is usually the warmest, most summer-like month of the year.

Geography

San Francisco is often roughly reputed to be a seven by seven mile square, but is in fact a slightly smaller 46.7 square miles. The City is famous for its hill and the streets which run straight up and down them. Three of San Francisco's notable hill neighborhoods are located near downtown, but close to the geographical center of the city, away from the downtown area, are a series of less populated hills. These hills include Mount Sutro, Twin Peaks, and Mount Davidson, which is the highest mountain in San Francisco.