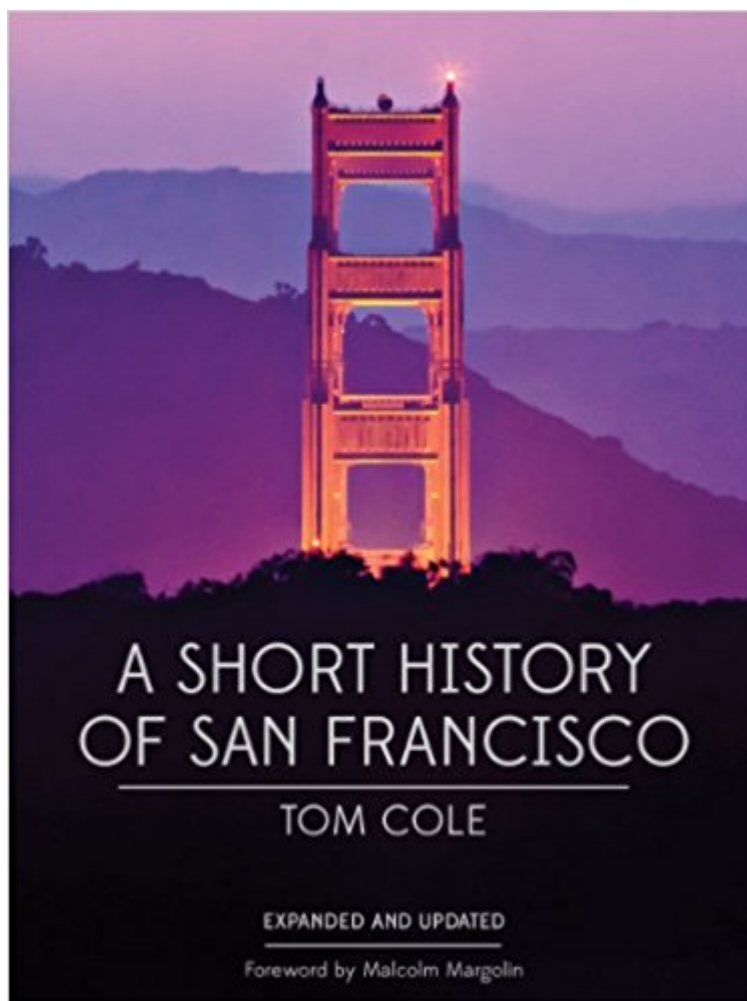


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# A Short History Of San Francisco



## Synopsis

This is the story of San Francisco, a unique and rowdy tale with a legendary cast of characters. It tells of the Indians and the Spanish missions, the arrival of thousands of gold seekers and gamblers, crackbrains and dreamers, the building of the transcontinental railroad and the cable car, labor strife and political shenanigans, the 1906 earthquake and fire, two World Wars, two World's Fairs, two great bridges, the beatniks and hippies and New Left--a story that is so marvelous and wild that it must be true. A new afterword from the author brings The City into the twenty-first century: a time just as hectic, experimental, and opportunistic as its rambunctious past.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Wonderfulâauthoritativeâa comprehensive story told with literary grace. --Kevin Starr, State Librarian Emeritus, author of *Americans and the California Dream* Colorful, well-toldâa memorable souvenir. --Los Angeles Times

Tom Cole has visited the planet's near- and far-flung corners for many years, climbing and leading treks in the Himalaya, Andes, and Africa, creating exotic tours, and writing for an adventure travel company. He currently consults and writes for one of the world's great safari companies. He lives in the Northern California Wine Country with his wife, Mary Marenka Poxon.

Written with love and insight. A captivating joyride and a gift to a deserving city. Told well enough to make every writer envious.

Short burst of stories full of delight and rich in character. San Francisco is an iconic city. A Short History unfolds its layers beautifully, leaving me asking more questions than I thought to ask.

Short..but informative.

Originally published in 1981 "A Short History Of San Francisco" authored by Tom Cole is a captivating narrative with b/w photographs, that has been greatly expanded/updated to reflect current times. SF is 46.9 square miles, has a "troubling geological reality" of being located on the largest notorious San Andreas Fault, in addition there are several other faults which threaten the Bay Area. The earthquake in 1906 nearly destroyed SF, when fires ignited as lanterns and candles crashed to the ground, creating a "firestorm" that burned for 3 days and nights. Nearly 500 people perished, 250,000 people were left homeless, 300-500 million dollars in damages. Rebuilding this grand city began almost immediately with crews working around the clock to clean/clear areas. The History of SF is fascinating: \* The original people/tribes were the peaceful resourceful Olone, Yurok, Hoppa. They lived according to simple ancient ways/customs. \* The Spanish missionaries arrived in Northern CA in 1769, settling and civilizing, until 1776; establishing posts, churches, missions to govern the rich fertile beautiful land and enjoyable climate. \* 1849 sparked a population explosion with the discovery of gold. SF would represent the land of milk and honey as the "Forty-Niner's" and American pioneers headed west. \* 1859-1872 silver ore, was discovered, with the gold rush, the Comstock. Mark Twain released his book "Roughing It" that chronicled the entire area, and frontier justice, that attracted people from the miners, desperados, to the refined Mormon missionaries. \* 1864 Billy Ralston opened the Bank of California with 3 million dollars. This would represent SF as rich affluent area with many millionaires. \* The SF Examiner was a gift to William Randolph Hurst (1863-1951) from his father George. The Hurst Corporation would become the largest chain of newspapers and influence of journalism in the US. \* Irish immigrant Christopher Buckley (1845-1922) aka "the White Devil" never held public office, was linked to organized crime that operated "China Town". The gambling halls, opium dens (26 were counted in 1885), brothels and seedy taverns were a huge source of revenue/ income, as tourists flocked to this historic area. \* 1892 The Sierra Club was founded representing the most wealthy and prominent citizens. One in four Californians lived in SF at the turn of the century. SF has always represented an extreme population from the poorest to the wealthiest. The Golden Gate Bridge was built during the 1930's depression, and served as a reminder of hope and better times ahead. As I read this book, and

recalled the stories from my own friends who lived in SF at one time or another, I look forward to joining the multitudes of tourists who make SF their vacation destination! Many thanks/appreciation to Heyday Publications for sponsoring the Goodread's Giveaways where I won this nice book.

San Francisco is like no other city. Up until 1849 it was a remote " and mostly decrepit " outpost that lived by its own rules. Then, the gold rush came in 1849, and the quiet missionary outpost quickly grew into one of the largest and rowdiest cities in North America: fortunes were made and lost, and accompanying debauchery ruled the land. From there, the natural and man made disasters, the discovery of the silver ore and the economic ups and downs, the associated politics, and much more, have shaped the city into what it is today " still a recognized outpost for its unique values and culture, but now on a global scale. A short but highly rewarding read, both for residents and curious tourists. My only regret is that it took me so long to discover this book!

Tom Cole has a way with words, and that is an understatement. This short but intensely informative work is at the same time lyrical, scholarly, exuberant and charming. No mere paean to a city with more distinction per capita than one can imagine, *A Short History of San Francisco* digs deeply into the past to uncover what makes this city so lovable. San Francisco has been written about by many writers of distinction, but Cole pulls off a hat-trick of solidly researched history and joyous celebration that is unrivaled. I just finished the book, and I will be heading soon to my favorite city to capture once again its unparalleled beauty.

In its forward, *Short History of San Francisco* is called a "spirited gift". That is indeed what it is. It's gift to the lovers of the city. It's gift to lovers of travel writing and it's gift to lovers of writing, period. Tom Cole's enthusiasm is palpable, his knowledge of the town is profound and his writing is concise yet original. It is a pleasure to read Cole's full bodied history of this unique city.

I am a passionate fan of *A Short History of San Francisco*. Over the decades I have lived in several of the city's fabled neighborhoods. If I ever become even a little bit SF blase, this book's great stories remind me that the place and its people are a bottomless well of entertainment and profundity. Whether or not you actually live in San Francisco (as I do not right now) this book is always ready to inspire you with magic. A hundred years from now *A Short History* will seem like a priceless gift to those lucky souls who read it.

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