

## Five places for photography buffs

Jennifer Kelley

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Henri Cartier-Bresson's observation that, "your first 10,000 photographs are your worst" are encouraging words for photographers with dreams of a National Geographic feature spread. But sustaining that level of persistence

requires inspiration - whether you're an experienced shooter (who understands that an "f-stop" refers to something other than where you catch the bus), or a newbie who prefers the simplicity of a point-and-shoot camera. Here are a few places where all shutterbugs can enjoy more exposure to the photographic arts.

### 1. Rayko Photo Center, San Francisco

Remember the days when you would cram into the mall photo booth with three of your best friends and mug for the camera? Now you can re-create those memories with a trip to Rayko's 1947 vintage booth. Strike a pose and wait two minutes for your goofy black-and-white portrait shots to appear on RC paper. A \$3 token buys you four images. 428 Third St., (415) 495-3773, raykophoto.com.

### 2. Museum of Photographic Arts (MoPA), San Diego

This museum, one of the few in the United States devoted to photographic arts, contains more than 9,000 photos representing the history of the medium, from 19th century daguerreotypes to contemporary photojournalism. With prints from greats such as Alfred Stieglitz, Bernice Abbott and Margaret Bourke-White adorning the walls, it's easy for photo buffs to find inspiration. 1649 El Prado, (619) 238-7559, mopa.org.

### 3. Camera Obscura, San Francisco

Ironically, one of the best locations for spectacular panoramic views of the Seal Rock area of Ocean Beach is in a darkened room. The giant Camera Obscura (Latin for dark room), located just below the famed Cliff House Restaurant, displays 360-degree scenes of the surrounding area. How does the magic work? Light enters a revolving hood on top of the building, passes through a lens via an angled mirror, and voila! - an image is projected onto a horizontal viewing table. Admission is \$3. 1096 Point Lobos Ave., (415) 750-0415, giantcamera.com.

### 4. Ansel Adams Gallery photography tour

Take a shot at re-creating some of Ansel Adams' classic images during a half-day photo tour through Yosemite National Park. A professional photographer will offer tips and guide you to the locations where Adams snapped Half Dome, El Capitan and Bridalveil Falls. For a more in-depth Yosemite photography experience, sign up for one of the gallery's multiday workshops. Price for half-day class: \$95. Village Mall in Yosemite Valley, (209) 372-4413, anseladams.com (click on photography education).

### 5. Hotel Max, Seattle

There's more to this chic downtown Seattle hotel than high thread counts and comfy modern decor. Hotel Max showcases 350 original photographs and paintings from local artists that give the lobby, corridors and rooms a gallery-like vibe. Rates for "Queen of Art" or "Artist King" rooms start at \$129 per night. 620 Stewart St., (866) 833-6299, hotelmaxseattle.com.