

2020

A Guide to 30 Northern California Venues: Excerpts

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Nicole Wasnock (2020) is majoring in Music Industry Studies.

This article was written as part of the curriculum for the Bachelor of Music in Music Management and the Bachelor of Science in Music Industry Studies at University of the Pacific. Each student conducted research based on his or her own areas of interest and study.

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Bottom of the Hill



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City: San Francisco

Address: 1233 17th St, San Francisco, CA 94107

Capacity: 350

Opened In: 1991

Types of Shows

The venue features music from all over the spectrum such as alternative, punk, rock, hard rock, folk, funk, and pop.

Personal Experience

Although the space is a little small, there is a backroom where they typically sell merch that you can go to take a break from the crowd, although you cannot see the band from there. So get there early to secure a spot near the stage if it's a sold out show! There is plenty of residential street parking, but as is typical in San Francisco the area is very hill-y.

Parking

There is plenty of street parking nearby at night but make sure to pay attention to signs. Do not leave any belongings at all in your car, as there are sometimes break-ins in the neighborhood.

History

Awarded "the best place to hear live music in San Francisco," by Rolling Stones magazine, Bottom of the Hill offers great events seven nights a week.

Amenities

- The kitchen serves bar food (burgers, hummus, salads, tacos, quesadillas, homemade mac & cheese) from when they open until about 10 minutes after the headliner starts
- ATM at the front of the club
- Patio area where guests can escape the crowd and have a smoke

Venue Rules

- They do not take credit cards
- Camera policy: The venue has no camera restrictions but sometimes a band will have specific restrictions. If you bring a camera that ends up being restricted you can check it at the bar. No tripods and keep flashes to a minimum (1-2 per set max)

Contacts

- **Bar phone:** 415-626-4455
- **Fax number:** 415-861-1615
- **Email:** email@bottomofthehill.com
- **Email for tickets:** tickets@bottomofthehill.com
- **Booking:** booking@bottomofthehill.com, but check out the [booking web page](#) first
- **Rentals:** email@bottomofthehill.com
- **Lost and Found:** email@bottomofthehill.com
 - Items are held for up to a month after they've been found but you need to arrange for a pickup.

Ace of Spades



[Facebook](#)



[Instagram](#)



[Twitter](#)

City: Sacramento

Address: 1417 R St, Sacramento, CA 95811

Capacity: 1000

Opened In: 2011

Personal Experience

There is tape on the ground indicating where you are allowed to stand in order to create pathways that allow others to easily move around in the GA space. This is enforced by security. To get seats you can upgrade to premium seats or there are some booths in the bar/lounge, but it is difficult to see the stage from there. Sold out shows tend to be very crowded, and can push the crowds towards the entrance, where it is hard to see the stage due to the layout of the venue. If your show is sold out, the best bet is to arrive early. The bar to the right of the stage has a self-serve water dispenser that is a life-saver during high energy shows. There are also some great restaurants and bars in walking distance if you have time before or after the show!

History

The venue is located in the heart of the hip and historic R Street Corridor in Downtown Sacramento and is surrounded by nationally recognized bars and restaurants. Ace of Spades provides concertgoers of all ages memorable concert experiences where you are never further than 100 feet from the stage.

Types of Shows

Top acts such as Snoop Dogg, Papa Roach, Tyler the Creator, Frank Turner, Wu-Tang Clan, and Against Me! have all taken the stage here, making Ace of Spades a top destination for national touring acts.

Amenities

- Bars: 3-4, all offer earplugs, the main bar near the entrance has a seating area and serves food such as pizza, fries, and more
- Premium seating is available on the house left and in the balcony
- Other: Coat check and ATM's

Parking

Nearby street parking is available, and there is parking available for \$5/space at the SEIU parking lot on R Street between 13th & 14th Streets after 5:00pm seven days a week.

Venue Rules

- No re-entry
- No food/beverages, sharpies, GoPros, iPads/tablets, selfie sticks, or professional cameras (anything with a removable lens)
- No backpacks allowed and other bags must be smaller than 10"x10"x2"

Contacts

- **Phone:** (916) 930-0220
- **Email:** AceofSpades@LiveNation.com

The Fillmore



[Facebook](#)



[Instagram](#)



[Twitter](#)

City: San Francisco

Address: 1805 Geary Blvd, San Francisco, CA 94115

Capacity: 1,315

Opened In: 1912

Types of Shows

Noteworthy musical talent of the day such as Jimi Hendrix, Otis Redding, Cream, Howlin' Wolf, Captain Beefheart, Muddy Waters, and The Who have all appeared on the stage. Big modern acts to perform at The Fillmore include Lorde, The Struts, Kacey Musgraves, Anderson .Paak and more!

Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers hold the record for most times playing at The Fillmore with a total of 27 times.

Personal Experience

My favorite unique aspect of this venue is that after the show there are bowls of free apples put out, and free custom posters for the show you just attended handed out at the door. Past posters can be viewed [here](#).

Contacts

- **Phone:** 415-346-3000
- **Email:** thefillmore@livenation.com

History

The Fillmore was a dance hall through the 1930s, and a roller rink through the 1940s. In 1952, local entrepreneur Charles Sullivan began to book some of the biggest names in black music into The Fillmore.

Bill Graham (a famous promoter for The Fillmore and other venues) was a veteran of the artistic community, but his greatest talents were his keen business acumen and his ability to organize events, creating comfortable and safe atmospheres without stifling the creative energies around him.

The Fillmore represented the pinnacle of creative music making in the late 1960s. The Fillmore became a private neighborhood club for a time in the 1970s. It reopened April 27, 1994 with The Smashing Pumpkins, Ry Cooder & David Lindley, and American Music Club. Tickets for the show sold out in less than one minute.

Amenities

- Full restaurant (menu changes daily) with food such as burgers (including the impossible burger), sandwiches, salads, pasta, tacos, and more
- Wine and cocktails

Parking

There is street parking available and several public parking facilities are located nearby.

Venue Rules

- No re-entry once you have been admitted to the venue
- A fee of \$3 will be added to any day of show box office sales
- Refunds are only available in the event of a cancellation

Bill Graham Civic Auditorium



[Facebook](#)



[Instagram](#)



[Twitter](#)

City: San Francisco

Address: 99 Grove St, San Francisco, CA 94102

Capacity: 8,500

Opened In: March 2, 1915

Personal Experience

Take BART or public transportation if you can! The Civic Center stop is very close to the venue, just make sure you stay safe and preferably walk in a group after the show since the area isn't the nicest. Getting parking may be a bit of a struggle, even if you park in a garage, so try and get there early if you plan on parking. The GA floor is large which makes it perfect for EDM shows. I've found that I usually get a better view of the stage from the balcony seats. Typically at their general admission shows the entire venue is GA which gives the audience the opportunity to choose between sitting in the balcony or staying on the ground floor.

Contacts

- **Phone:** (415) 624-8900
- **Publicity/Press:** Jill DiBartolomeo
jill@anotherplanetent.com
- **Private Rentals:** Danielle Madeira
danielle@anotherplanetent.com
- **Partnerships:** Kate Roberts
kate@anotherplanetent.com
- **General Inquiries:**
contact@anotherplanetent.com
- Contact form [here](#)

History

Built in 1915 as part of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, the [Bill Graham Civic Auditorium](#) is named after the late Bill Graham, who spearheaded the San Francisco rock and roll movement in the 1960s. The historic building has hosted a variety of important cultural events, including the Democratic National Convention in 1920, a speech from Martin Luther King Jr. to the NAACP in 1956, and served as the Golden State Warriors' home court from 1964 to 1966.

Types of Shows

Past concerts include performances by the Grateful Dead, Elton John, Chance the Rapper, Lady Gaga, Bob Dylan, and many more.

Amenities

- Bars on both levels and food available. Plenty of vegetarian and vegan options like a hummus plate, fries, crispy thai rolls. Meat options like hot dogs, tacos, and nachos available. Snacks like fruit cookie candy chips.
- Coat check: \$3 per coat check tag

Parking

Public transportation is encouraged due to limited parking. The Civic Center Garage charges a flat rate during events. Exit at the Civic Center Station when taking BART, Muni, or Metro. For Caltrain, exit at Van Ness and Hayes Street.

Venue Rules

- Items allowed: Factory sealed water bottles, empty refillable water bottles or Camelbaks, personal cameras, personal food items, personal sized bags, purses, backpacks, and totems
- Items NOT allowed: Posters or signs larger than 8.5" x11" , GoPros, professional cameras (anything with a detachable lens), selfie sticks, iPads/tablets, umbrellas, and stickers

SAP Center



[Facebook](#)



[Instagram](#)



[Twitter](#)

City: San Jose

Address: 525 W Santa Clara St, San Jose, CA 95113

Capacity: 17,496

Opened In: September 7, 1993

Types of Shows

Primarily concerts featuring different mid-level to top artists on arena tours.

Personal Experience

In a lot of venues, being up in the 300's section will give me vertigo, but fortunately that's not the case here. The 300's section is a decent view, especially on the sides of the arena, and is built in a way that makes the seating feel like more of a gradual incline than a sudden shift.

Contacts

- SAP Center Main Line: 408-287-7070
- SAP Center Fax: 408-999-5797
- The Grill at SAP Center: 408-999-6800
- Sharks Store at SAP Center: 408-999-6810
- Employment Information: 408-999-5898
- Online form [here](#)

History

Plans for a [San Jose arena](#) began in the mid-1980s, when a group of local citizens formed Fund Arena Now (FAN). The group contacted city officials and pursued potential sponsors and partners from the NHL and NBA. In the late 1980s, mayor Tom McEnergy met with FAN, and subsequently a measure to allocate local taxes for arena construction came up for a public vote on June 7, 1988, passing by a narrow margin.

Amenities

- [Jack Daniels Concert Experience](#): Purchase a ticket for this experience in addition to your regular event ticket. Open 30 minutes before doors until the headliner is scheduled to take the stage. Includes: private VIP entry into the BMW Lounge, food, draft beer, wine, and Jack Daniel's inspired cocktails while waiting for the show to begin.
- [Launch Test Kitchen](#)
- [Food & Beverage](#)
- [Alternative food options list](#)
- [Text assist](#)

Parking

- Parking lot opens 2.5 hours before show

Venue Rules

- [Clear Bag Policy](#)
- General "no re-entry" policy but if need be you can obtain proper authorization and have their ticket scanned out

Golden 1 Center



[Facebook](#)



[Instagram](#)



[Twitter](#)

City: Sacramento

Address: 500 David J Stern Walk, Sacramento, CA 95814

Capacity: 17,608

Opened In: September 30, 2016

Personal Experience

This is a very modern venue in a great location. The Downtown Commons has a lot of great restaurants and bars plus unique entertainment like Punch Bowl Social, a mini golf speakeasy, shopping, and a movie theater. Inside the venue they have more great local food options, though the prices are steep for certain items like drinks or a slice of pizza, but that's typical in arenas. You can find some slightly cheaper canned drink options (alcoholic and non-alcoholic) in the cashier-less store: Zippin.

Types of Shows

Concerts from top-tier artists, Kings games, family events like Disney on Ice, and more!

History

With 87 sold out shows in its first 15 months and ranked #14 for US ticket sales in Pollstar 2017, Golden 1 Arena is Sacramento's premiere concert venue. Sustainability is very important to the farm-to-fork venue, so the chef and restaurant partners source 90% of their ingredients from a 150-mile radius.

Amenities

- Tons of food and drink options from local vendors with vegan/vegetarian and gluten-free options including burgers, pizza, tacos, gyros, snacks, wine, beer, and cocktails
- Recipes for the food served in the arena
- ATM's
- Bike valet
- Free WiFi
- Cashierless store

Parking

There are a few garages nearby but the closest is the Downtown Commons West Garage. You can try for street parking or use public transportation like light rail.

Venue Rules

- Items not allowed: backpacks, bags larger than 16"x16"x8", signs larger than 11"x17", professional cameras, food, drinks, or permanent markers

Contacts

- **Phone:** 888-91-KINGS
- **Group Tickets:** 916-840-5754
- **Venue Rentals:**
PrivateEvents@Golden1Center.com
- **Box Office:**
 - Email: boxoffice@kings.com
 - Phone: (916) 701-5401