

# San Francisco's Upgrade: Forward-Thinking Airport

Since 2008, a new development has been taking shape at San Francisco Airport that has transformed the once dated Terminal 2 into an artistic, functional building for the modern age of air travel. The designers have reclaimed materials from the old, 1950s terminal, and built a unique area of approximately 640,000 square feet that hopes to cater for 5.5 million enplaned passengers a year on domestic services from American Airlines and Virgin America. This is more than just a 14-gate terminal, this is an innovative airport with a difference and a heart – where else can you find an aptly named "recomposure zone" after security?



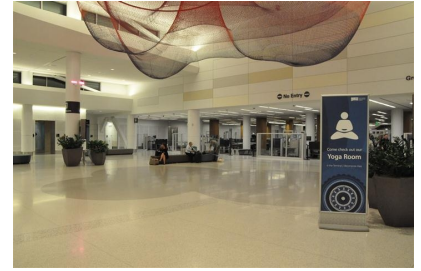
**Extensive, modern facilities make SFO's Terminal 2 ideal for passengers.**

The creativity of the facilities is an important factor in the success of the design. A passenger's experience of an airport can shape their desire and likelihood of using the services again so it is important that they feel secure, relaxed and happy during the time between check in and departure rather than frustrated, stressed or bored. Terminal 2 aims to provide this by offering 30,793 square feet of shops, food halls, relaxation areas and play zones all blended together to form the most appealing and functional departure area possible. If passengers want to eat before their flight there are a number of restaurants to choose from, including some from top celebrity chefs, and if they would prefer to relax there is the choice of a spa and even a yoga room.

**Terminal 2 is a cultural experience as a well as an airport.**

It is not uncommon for airports to add a little artwork to brighten up the departure lounges and occupy their passengers but the San Francisco's Terminal 2 has taken a massive step further than everyone else by including experimental exhibits and becoming the first airport to be named as an accredited museum. Passengers waiting for their flight will never be bored with so much art to enjoy and even the kids can appreciate the work thanks to interactive play areas, for example a musical exhibit where they can play the wings of birds like a marimba. The art work is impressive and expansive – even the glass panels that greet people outside change color – but perhaps the highlight is Janet Echelman's "Every Beating Second", a sculpture made of netting that hangs from the ceiling and sways in a computer

generated breeze.



**SFO have shown that they are an airport that cares about more than just their passengers.**

Away from all the art and the stylish facilities there is another aspect of this stunning redevelopment that its developers and owners are rightfully proud of – a sustainability program that aims to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 1,667 tons per year. So much thought and detail has been put into the design and function of the terminal that environmental measures are in place before passengers have even stepped through the doors – when they park, preferential treatment is given to hybrids and electric vehicles. Once inside customers can then enjoy paperless ticketing at check-in, a departures area with food vendors offering locally sourced produce and toilets with reclaimed water and then once they pass through security they can refill their empty water bottles.



**Underneath all the glamour and passenger-pleasing measures, this is a functional airport with ambitions.**

In creating this new terminal SFO could have been in danger of neglecting the basic functions and user-friendly nature of the airport but instead they are making departures simple – with gate information available from all areas – and they are looking to make the terminal the start of something even bigger. The point of all the art, facilities and sustainability is not just to make SFO stand out as a forward-thinking airport it is to help improve its status and passenger numbers. Creating a customer friendly terminal helps to improve passenger numbers and there are hopes that services will also increase as a result of the new found success.

San Francisco is on its way towards becoming a contender as a major west coast gateway as a result of the work and innovation that has gone into creating the new Terminal 2 and the proposition of increased domestic flights from Virgin America. This is certainly not a traditional airport, nor one that many passengers will have ever seen the like of, but this transformation could change the fortunes of SFO significantly.

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