

Enjoying Crissy Field Kiteboarding



Welcome to Crissy Field: Thank you for familiarizing yourself with Crissy kiting protocol so we can all be safe and have a great time. At Crissy we count on each other to be responsible and support one-another.

About Crissy: Crissy Field is a world-class sailing, windsurfing and kitesurfing area for experienced riders. Gusty winds and strong currents can make kiting here both challenging and dangerous. The wind is side-offshore and the launch can be tricky, with winds often fluky/light on the inside.

Kiters should excel... in upwind and jibing ability, be knowledgeable of ebb, flood and counter currents, and be strong swimmers. A full wetsuit year-round is a must! Because the wind can be light on the beach but nuking on the outside, rig the right size kite for the outside. If unsure of something, ask for assistance or advice from other riders; your actions are important to everyone, especially if they have to put themselves at risk to rescue you or help retrieve your gear!

Shared Beach

- **Beach Goers** – We share the parking, promenade and beach with families, tourists and dog walkers. They always have the right of way. Please ensure you set-up/launch away from crowds and children.
- **Windsurfers** – Are well established at Crissy. Kiters generally launch upwind of the windsurfers and head toward the north tower.
- **Kites on the Beach** – Remember to put sand on your kite to avoid a runaway, and quickly roll up lines to avoid crossing someone else. Once launched, move to the water quickly; please don't stand on the beach with your kite in the air.

While On the Bay

- **The Inside** – From Anita Rock to the beach... it's generally lighter in here and not great kiting unless it's a strong NW day. You can usually swim in from here.
- **Anita Rock to the Channel** – The span where the wind picks up and fills in. You are closer to the swimmable zone yet not in the channel.
- **Fort Point/South Tower** – The topography and the Fort there make for a wind shadow that moves around the tower base, which can drop your kite. Give the South Tower a wide berth.
- **Presidio Shoal** – On the inside upwind of Crissy. Holey and light, kites often drop here.
- **North Tower** – Smooth butter just outside.
- **Shipping Channel** – You probably want to spend the least time here, and be very alert!
- **Last Chance Beach** – Or the stairs before the St Francis Yacht Club, both downwind of Crissy, are usually an easy shot if you miss Anita or even swim from inside Anita.

Commercial Ship Traffic

- **Right-of-Way** - Always give commercial traffic the right-of-way. This means not crossing their bow, or kiting between a tug and its barge under tow. USCG Rule 9 places the obligation on us, the small vessel operator, to avoid impeding the large vessel.. see (<http://www.uscg.mil/d11/vtssf/rule9.asp>)
- **Be Alert and Anticipate** - Allow more than enough time and space for a large vessel to see that you are moving out of their path. Make early and clear movements for them to confidently note your intentions.
- **Monitor** - VHF Ch 14, which commercial vessels use to communicate with Vessel Traffic Service (VTS). If you are in the water with broken gear and a ship is bearing down, contact the ship's Master on the bridge of the vessel via Ch 14 as early as possible.

Self Rescue Tips

- **Buddy System** - Use the buddy system and stay within in sight of the pack.
- **Taco Pronto** - Know how to taco/self rescue; never jettison your gear and swim for it.
- **Be Visible** - Always keep your kite inflated until you are rescued by a boat.
- **Swimming with Kite** - If the wind shifts offshore, flip your kite on its back and clip your leash to the pump attachment point, so you can swim parallel to the wind and current.
- **Inside Anita** - If you drop your kite inside the Anita Rock marker, swim for it.
- **Light wind on the Inside** - If it's light on the inside, take a few tacks out and recon the wind line to find a way back home.
- **Returning** - On good days, coming in high (upwind of Anita) is fine, on most days ripping across the wind may be best, but sometimes going low is the only (and counter-intuitive) option.
- **Flood Tide** - If you miss Last Chance Beach, stay out away from the piers downwind.
- **Fort Point** – Fort Point (South Tower) is not a rescue option, unless you're familiar with it and the tide is low with the small clearing visible between the rocks.

Coast Guard Etiquette

- **Personal Safety Equipment** - Consider carrying a VHF radio and a strobe light. Use Channel 16 to report an incident to the Coast Guard or to request on-water assistance.
- **Mark Your Gear** - With your name and phone number. If you lose anything, report it to Coast Guard Station Golden Gate at (415) 331-8247 to avoid a search and rescue operation. We don't want the Coast Guard searching for you if you are safely on land. To contact the Coast Guard Sector San Francisco Command Center, which manages on-water emergencies Area-Wide, call (415) 399-3451.

San Francisco Boardsailing Association (SFBA)

- **SFBA** - Was originally formed to protect access to Crissy Field. Since its founding in 1986, SFBA has focused on protecting and enhancing access to windsurfing and kiteboarding areas, and promoting safety for our members. These two missions are inextricably linked, because public perception of hazards from unsafe sailing behaviors represents one of the greatest threats to maintaining public access.
- **To Contribute** – Help SFBA help you! Go to "SFBA.org" to join or contribute!