



written by:  
**PETER CROOKS**  
**LEEANNE JONES**  
**MORGAN MITCHELL**  
**VIRGINIA SHANNON**

illustrated by:  
**SHAW NIELSEN**

# eat play love

## **The ultimate guide to family fun in the East Bay.**

How lucky are East Bay kids? Children here have so many amazing opportunities to pursue, with miles of parks and hiking trails to explore, dozens of world-class educational institutions to inspire, and a wide array of amusement centers for all ages.

And it's not just kids who have all the fun. Parents and caregivers can find family-friendly activities that suit their interests, too. Who doesn't love going to the movies (two local theaters even welcome shrieking babies), enjoying a delicious meal out (especially if there's a play area to occupy the little ones), or taking a scenic train trip through our region's forests and canyons?

From the wildest slide rides to the best creative family-bonding experiences, *Diablo* rounds up the most exciting, enchanting, exhilarating, thought-provoking, hunger-abating, energy-burning, tantrum-averting, and just plain fun things to do with kids in the East Bay.

# food for thought

Dining out with kids is stress-free and fun at these East Bay restaurants, with family-friendly fare, entertainment, and discounts. **By LeeAnne Jones**

## food and fun

**Denica's Real Food Kitchen** Cookie samples keep kids' hunger in check, and train tables help them burn off excess energy. Sure to delight: a piggy pancake with a face of fruit and whipped cream. *Dublin, Livermore, and Walnut Creek; denicascafe.com.*

**Skipolini's Pizza** Skip's has encouraged the arrival of countless infants, thanks to its famously labor-inducing Prego pizza. For children, it offers build-your-own pizzas at the table and play structures at most locations. *Clayton, Concord, and Walnut Creek; skipolinispizza.com.*

**Miyozen Sushi and Roll** If conveyor belts of sushi don't thrill, the well-stocked playroom and screens playing anime surely will. Plus, servers load up kids' miso soup with ice cubes and extra tofu. *Emeryville, gotsushiandsake.com.*

**Westbrae Biergarten** While grown-ups sip cider, beer, and sangria on the patio, youngsters can nosh on mini rice bowls and play with sand and chalk in a giant play area. Bonus: The whole place is fenced in, affording some peace of mind. *Berkeley, westbraebiergarten.com.*

**Plank** By day, this massive bar welcomes families to play at its arcade, bocce courts, and bowling lanes. The kids' menu is typical but also offers celery and carrot sticks with peanut butter. *Oakland, plankoakland.com.*

## parent-approved menus

**Homeroom** Mac and cheese has ageless appeal. Here, it's gourmet with myriad creative toppings, so you just might be able to sneak some peas or sautéed mushrooms into your children's order. Bonus: sidewalk chalk for play. *Oakland, homeroom510.com.*



Kids—and adults—go wild for Homeroom's mac and cheese.

**Sauced BBQ and Spirits** The kids' food is as good as the adults': ribs, pulled-pork sliders, honeyed corn bread. Plus, it's loud, so baby cries and toddler tantrums go blissfully unnoticed. *Livermore and Walnut Creek, saucedbbqandspirits.com.*

**Chow** Seasonal and farm-fresh aren't just for grown-ups. Child options include organic burgers and chicken fingers with veggie sides, as well as juice cocktails from the "kids' bar." *Danville, Lafayette, and Oakland; chowfoodbar.com.*

## (nearly) a week of freebies

To draw in customers on less-trafficked days, many restaurants offer buy-one-get-one deals for families. The following local spots provide one free kids' entrée with the purchase of one adult entrée.

**Sunday** Freebirds World Burrito. *Dublin and Walnut Creek, freebirds.com.*  
Dickey's Barbecue Pit. *Concord, Livermore, and Pleasanton; dickeys.com.*  
Simply Fondue. *Livermore, simplyfonduelivermore.com.*

**Monday** El Nido. *Danville, elnidodanville.com.*  
Casa Orozco. *Dublin and Livermore, casaorozco.com.*

**Tuesday** Amici's East Coast Pizzeria. *Danville and Dublin, amicis.com.*

**Wednesday** Firehouse Subs. *Fremont, firehousesubs.com.*

**Thursday** Tomatina. *Alameda, Union City, and Walnut Creek; tomatina.com.*  
Cattlemens. (Kids eat free if they wear a Cattlemens T-shirt.) *Livermore, cattlemens.com.*

**“It's fun to play with the trains while I'm waiting for my food. And I like that they have different kinds of cookies that I can taste—and I taste all of them.”**

—Holt, age four, on Denica's Real Food Kitchen

COURTESY OF HOMEROOM



## YAHSHIMABET SELLISSIE KID BAKER

By Virginia Shannon

**Two years ago**, when she was just 12 years old, Oakland's Yahshimabet Sellassie rose to national stardom when she competed on—and almost won—Food Network's *Kids Baking Championship*. Now 14, the young baker runs her own business, Yahshi Bakes, where she creates strikingly beautiful, special-order cakes and cupcakes featuring grown-up flavor combinations such as mocha-chai and orange-cardamom. She also sells her homemade granola at Red Bay Coffee outposts. “Normally, I do orders on the weekends, but I prioritize my school-work during the week,” she says.

Ironically, Sellassie insists she doesn't really like sweets. The artistic teen—who wants to pursue other creative endeavors, including interior design, architecture, or fashion—says her interest in baking stems from her love of “making everything look really pretty.”

“I'm a more health-conscious person,” she notes—and offers a message to picky kids: “Eating healthy doesn't have to taste bad. In fact, everything I eat that's healthy tastes really good! It's not a struggle to eat it.”

Sellassie suggests children try making their own smoothies to incorporate more fruits and vegetables into their diets—or watch YouTube videos, like she did, to teach themselves how to bake or cook. After all, an early culinary education can ignite a lifelong interest in food. *yahshibakes.com.*

FROM TOP: TSADAE NEWAY; COURTESY OF KINDERMUSIK INTERNATIONAL

## BABY STEPS

DITCH THE STROLLER, AND BRING YOUR INFANTS, CRAWLERS, AND EARLY WALKERS TO THESE ENGAGING ACTIVITIES.

By Virginia Shannon

### > Baby Brigade Movies

Once a week, Oakland's New Parkway Theater hosts special screenings of grown-up—or kid-friendly—films for parents who don't want to leave the little one at home. Lights are dim (not dark), stroller parking is ample, and no one complains when a hungry tot starts screaming. *thenewparkway.com.*

### > Kindermusik

Music stimulates infants' brain activity. That's why Lindsay Levin—aka Miss Lindsay—leads music classes for newborns to 18-month-olds in Dublin, San Ramon, and Walnut Creek, where babies can groove to the beat and, when they're old enough, sing along. *eastbaykindermusik.com.*

### > Mommy and Me Fitness

To help new moms get in shape, some East Bay trainers let the wee ones join the workouts. Try the Mom + Baby yoga classes at Namaste's Berkeley and Oakland locations, or Sandy Mourad's Baby Boot Camp sessions held in Walnut Creek parks. *ilovenamaste.com, babybootcamp.com.*

### > Aqua Baby

Introduce infants as young as eight weeks old to water movement at AquaTech Swim School, which offers weekly drop-in pool time for babies and their caregivers at its Alameda and Concord locations. *aquatechswim.com.*

### > Hikes for Tykes

Want to explore nature but don't want to lug a stroller down a trail? Strap the bambino into a sling or Baby Björn for a prenap, one-mile hike led by an East Bay Regional Parks naturalist. *apm.activecommunities.com/ebparks.*



Kindermusik's songs (and scarves) make babies smile.

# the great outdoors

Take the family to get some fresh air—and exercise—in these scenic, wide-open spaces. **By Peter Crooks and LeeAnne Jones**

## a day at the park

**Tilden Regional Park** The 2,000-plus acres of Tilden Park offer countless adventures, from hiking trails with spectacular views of the San Francisco Bay to the Lake Anza swimming area. Families love the park's trifecta of kids' attractions: the Little Farm petting zoo, a century-old carousel, and scaled-down steam trains. *Berkeley, ebparks.org/parks/tilden.*

**Mount Diablo State Park** Every East Bay kid needs to trek to the top of Mount Diablo—the mountain so nice they named a magazine after it! Organized activities include interpretive hikes, stargazing summits, and tarantula talks, but there are endless opportunities for picnics, nature walks, and best-of-the-East Bay sightseeing, too. Don't miss the sandstone formations of Rock City, which invite youngsters to explore their holes and tunnels. *parks.ca.gov/MountDiablo.*

**Sunol Regional Wilderness** Nearly 7,000 acres of open space allow visitors to experience nature without distraction. Check the park's website to learn about its camping and backcountry offerings, or to sign up for a multitude of guided activities. *Sunol, ebparks.org/parks/sunol.*

## perfect playgrounds

**Adventure Playground** *National Geographic* named this fantastic creative experience—ideal for kids ages seven and up—one of the country's 10 best playgrounds. Participants are encouraged to hammer, saw, and paint the work-in-progress play structures, which jut out of the sand at the Berkeley Marina. Make sure to ride the zip line. *Berkeley, cityofberkeley.info/adventureplayground.*

**Emerald Glen Park** This enormous expanse features bocce courts, a skate park, and an extensive playground known for its water features and slides that snake down rock formations. *Dublin, ci.dublin.ca.us.*



Meet the goats—plus sheep, pigs, and cows—at Tilden Park's Little Farm.

**Hap Magee Ranch Park** Big wooden play structures, with separate areas for older and younger children, are the stars of this park—as well as an elaborate splash pad that creates a spray tunnel. Whee! *Danville, danville.ca.gov/things-to-do/parks.*

**Heather Farm Park** This ultracolorful, all-abilities playground is constantly buzzing, as kids build, climb, scoop, and slide. A skate park and fish pond are nearby. *Walnut Creek, walnut-creek.org.*

**Matteo's Dream** Named for a child confined to a wheelchair who dreamed of an accessible play space, this sprawling all-abilities playground in Hillcrest Park is perfect for younger kids. *Concord, ci.concord.ca.us/recreation/parks/matteo.*

## a hiking (and a biking) we will go

**Lafayette Reservoir** Stroller-pushing hikers love the paved 2.7-mile Lakeside Nature Trail that loops around this picturesque reservoir. A playground on the east side provides fun for bigger kids. *Lafayette, ebmud.com/recreation.*

**George Miller Regional Trail** This former roadway between Crockett and Martinez is paved and flat, and great for young cyclists. Plus, the views of the Carquinez Strait can't be beat. *ebparks.org/parks/carquinez.*

**Bishop Ranch Regional Preserve** Sitting on a ridge above San Ramon, this small park works well for short hikes. Afterward, kids can splash around in streams or rest in grassy fields. *San Ramon, ebparks.org/parks/bishop.*

**Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve** On guided weekend tours from March through November, kids ages seven and up—and their caregivers—don hard hats and follow tracks into the Hazel-Atlas silica mine. *Antioch, ebparks.org/parks/black\_diamond.*

“Make sure your mom or dad brings lots of celery and lettuce to feed the animals at Little Farm. My daddy only brought a little bit, and one cow ate it all.”

—Alexandra, age six, on Tilden Park's petting zoo

LUANA ESPAÑA



## KIT STEVEN AND TRACEY LYDON PLAYGROUND EXPERTS

By Virginia Shannon

**What makes a great play environment?** That's a question Kit Steven and Tracey Lydon think about every day, in painstaking detail. As the president and director of operations, respectively, of Alamo-based Miracle PlaySystems, Steven and Lydon helped design and build playgrounds at such parks as Danville's Osage Station and Walnut Creek's Heather Farm, and for dozens of communities and school districts across the Bay Area. Whether using towers, ramps, swings, or spinners, their play structures ignite the imagination and encourage kids to build confidence through play.

“In a lot of ways, it's providing activities for all different types of kids, of all ages and abilities, and giving them challenges so they can grow with the playground as they develop new skills,” explains Lydon. That includes creating a safe space for children to “push the boundaries of their own level of fear or risk,” adds Steven, calling out tall climbing walls and steep slides as devices that can unnerve and excite kids at the same time. As Lydon puts it: “Fun comes from a perception of risk.”

Engaging different senses is also important, from musical elements that invite kids to play with sound, to the rippling mounds on a playground's surface that stimulate their sense of touch. “And then, just something that wows the kids when they get there,” says Lydon. “Something that's bright and vibrant . . . and creates a whole different kind of world.” *miracleplaygroup.com.*

## THE SLIDE GUIDE

IT'S ALL DOWNHILL FROM THESE EAST BAY SUPERSLIDES.

By Peter Crooks

### > Codornices Park

Grab a piece of cardboard, and rocket down this curved cement slide in a popular park located across from the Berkeley Rose Garden. *cityofberkeley.info.*

### > Dragon Slide

Kids slip down the dragon's long silver tongue, then repeat ad infinitum, at this favorite attraction at Children's Fairyland in Oakland. *fairyland.org.*

### > Rankin Park

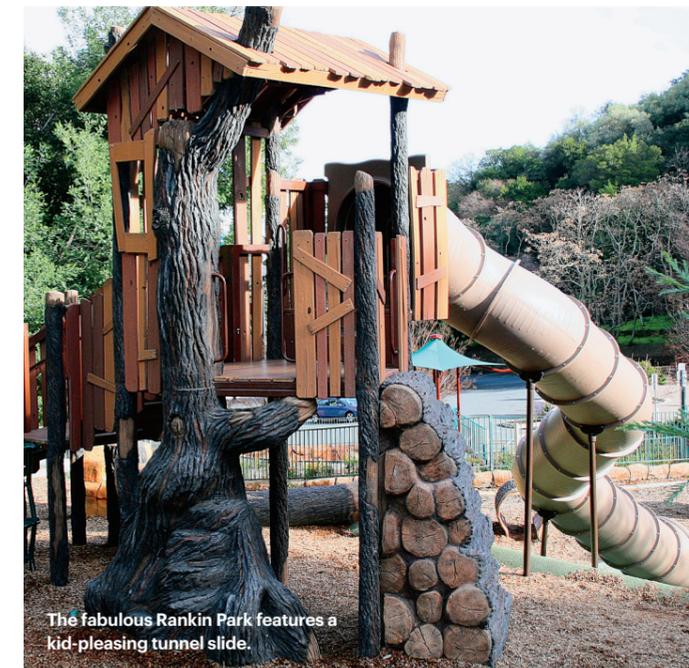
The long, enclosed chute in this charming Martinez park spills out onto a playground covered with wondrous climbing structures. *cityofmartinez.org.*

### > Mission Hills Park

Head to 600 Junipero Street in Pleasanton to find this 50-foot steel slide (the city's longest) nestled between two sets of wooden steps—perfect for kiddie cardio. *ptownlife.org/parks.*

### > Break Point Plunge

Opening this summer at Six Flags Hurricane Harbor Concord (formerly known as Waterworld California), this six-story waterslide sends riders free-falling into a 270-foot-long “looping adventure.” Cowabunga! *waterworldcalifornia.com.*



The fabulous Rankin Park features a kid-pleasing tunnel slide.

# big days out

When you're in the mood for an exhilarating escape, head to these sure-shot family favorites. **By Peter Crooks and LeeAnne Jones**

## amusement parks

**Children's Fairyland** This Lake Merritt landmark—which inspired Walt Disney to build his own theme park—has delighted East Bay tots since 1950. After exploring the many storybook sets, make sure to catch one of Fairyland's legendary puppet shows. (Fun fact: Frank Oz, who brought Yoda and many a Muppet to life, got his puppeteering start here.) *Oakland, fairyland.org.*

**Oakland Zoo** Established in 1922, this sprawling zoo has plenty of new attractions, including an aerial gondola ride with stunning views. In June, the California Trail exhibit will debut, allowing visitors to discover our state's natural treasures—and watch three precious black bears frolicking in a new, 1.5-acre habitat. *Oakland, oaklandzoo.org.*

**Pixieland Amusement Park** Perfect for kids younger than age eight, this adorable amusement park has seven rides, including Red Baron planes, spinning teacups, and a zippy roller coaster. Admission is free, and all attractions cost \$5 or less. *Concord, pixieland.com.*

**Six Flags Discovery Kingdom** From butterfly groves to raging roller coasters, Discovery Kingdom is a huge amusement park and wild animal habitat wrapped up in one big package. Sign up for a sleeper in the enormous shark aquarium. *Vallejo, sixflags.com/discoverykingdom.*

## indoor entertainment

**The Jungle** Towering climbing walls and an elaborate arcade highlight this longtime kid-pleaser in the Willows Shopping Center. There's even a separate play area for tots ages three and younger. *Concord, jungleconcord.com.*

**Rockin' Jump** Children jump for joy—and burn off steam—at this trampoline park, which includes a basketball-dunking

station and a balance beam jousting zone, in addition to the open-bounce area. *Dublin, dublin.rockinjump.com.*

**Lost Worlds Adventures** This indoor playground is packed with attractions, from black light mini golf and laser tag courses to climbing structures and an arcade featuring old favorites such as Skee-ball. *Livermore, lostworlds.rocks.*

**Game Day VR** This cutting-edge arcade lets you experience pro football, 3-D painting, space travel, and up to 40 other one-of-a-kind experiences via virtual reality technology. There's also a loyalty program for children and teens ages 16 and younger. *Walnut Creek, gamedayvr.com.*

## thrill-seeking adventures

**Lamorinda Skate Park** Many parks offer bowls and rails for drop-in shredding, but beginners should check out the skate area at Moraga Commons Park, which is small, clean, and perfect for younger kids. *883 Moraga Rd., Moraga.*

**Umigo Indoor Kart Racing** Speed demons go wild at this go-kart track, with fun extras such as monthly layout changes and black light Friday nights. For safety's sake, kids younger than 16 take an on-site training course before driving, and those under 4-foot-10 use junior karts. *Livermore, umigoracing.com.*

**BMX Park** Tackle dirt mounds, berms, and tabletops at Pleasanton's BMX-biking park, which features a track and off-roading area. *Pleasanton, ptownlife.org/parks.*

**iFly Indoor Sky Diving** Float mid-air without jumping out of a plane! At iFly, kids as young as three can take 60-second "flights" in a wind tunnel. Pay \$10 extra to end with an instructor-assisted high-flying spin. *Union City, iflyworld.com.*

**“I love the planes and the cars. I want to fly on the plane again. I want to fly it to the beach in Belize!”**

—Aden, age four, on Pixieland's rides



Willie the Whale is a fan favorite at Children's Fairyland.

COURTESY OF CHILDREN'S FAIRYLAND

FROM TOP: JAMEY THOMAS; COURTESY OF THE FLIPPER ROOM



## REBECCA NILE CHILDREN'S PERFORMER

By Virginia Shannon

**For any kid** who has dreamed of being enveloped in a giant rainbow bubble, Rebecca Nile can make that wish come true. Known as “The Bubble Lady,” Nile wows children across the Bay Area with her incredible performances at libraries, birthday parties, and other events, where she creates intricate sculptures—bubbles spinning around other bubbles stacked on top of each other to form a rocket ship, for example—and gives fans wild hairstyles made entirely of bubbles. The shows are so popular, her July 6 performance at Danville's Village Theatre is already sold out. (At press time, tickets were still available for a second show on that date; visit [villagetheatreshows.com](http://villagetheatreshows.com) to learn more.)

It's not just her dazzling bubble artistry that makes Nile one of the best kids' performers around: She really knows how to connect with children, thanks in part to her training as a professional actor and clown, and in part to her experience as a mom. “I feel very strongly that artists are role models for children, so I want to show up as a positive, loving example for them,” says Nile. “Being able to bring so much joy into the world makes me happy. The hugs I get are awesome, too!” [thebubblelady.com](http://thebubblelady.com).

## OLD-SCHOOL COOL

INTRODUCE THE KIDS TO A BYGONE ERA—OR JUST SOMETHING YOU LIKED AT THEIR AGE—AT THESE NOSTALGIA-INDUCING SPOTS.

By Virginia Shannon

### > Pinball Wizards

The East Bay is home to not one but two havens for vintage pinball machines. Pay the entrance fee at Alameda's Pacific Pinball Museum, then play all the machines for no additional cost, or drop quarters into the slots at Concord's The Flipper Room—a hidden haunt inside the APF framing shop. [pacificpinball.org](http://pacificpinball.org), [theflipperroom.com](http://theflipperroom.com).

### > Solano Drive-In

Take the family for a night out without ever leaving your car. Located in Concord, the Bay Area's only drive-in theater shows first-run films for a fraction of the price—and a lot more fun—than an indoor cinema. [westwinddi.com](http://westwinddi.com).

### > The Golden Skate

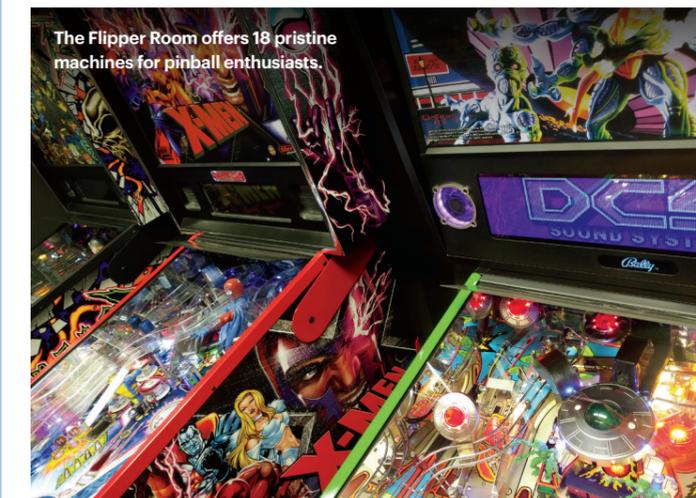
Children of the '80s have the opportunity to relive their youth at this San Ramon roller rink. Today's kids, meanwhile, can burn energy by racing (or dancing) around on classic or in-line skates. [thegoldenskate.com](http://thegoldenskate.com).

### > Meadowlark Dairy

Pleasanton's drive-through ice-cream parlor embodies the wholesome charm of classic Americana. Indulge in a soft-serve cone, and pick up some milk and eggs while you're rolling through. [meadowlarkdairy.com](http://meadowlarkdairy.com).

### > Playland Not at the Beach

This intriguing El Cerrito “museum of fun” features an eclectic collection of boardwalk games and memorabilia from San Francisco's long-shuttered Playland amusement park. [playland-not-at-the-beach.org](http://playland-not-at-the-beach.org).



The Flipper Room offers 18 pristine machines for pinball enthusiasts.

# discovery zone

Whether your kid is a STEM star, an arts aficionado, or a word wizard, inspire his or her mind by visiting these educational spots. **By Virginia Shannon**

## for budding scientists

**Lindsay Wildlife Experience** Has your child ever dreamed of touching a porcupine? Fulfill his or her wish at this haven for animals (and animal lovers), which lets visitors meet and greet birds, snakes, and other critters. *Walnut Creek, lindsaywildlife.org.*

**Chabot Space and Science Center** One of the West Coast's largest public observatories lets guests view the planets and stars—including the sun—through three ultrapowerful telescopes. Kids can also simulate astronaut life, sit in a Mercury space capsule, build and take apart machines, and stay overnight during special sleepover weekends. *Oakland, chabotspace.org.*

**Lawrence Hall of Science** Children participate in experiments—from testing gravity using wind tubes, to creating (and launching) their own rockets, to controlling the weather via augmented reality—at this educational facility. *Berkeley, lawrencehallofscience.org.*

## for creative types

**Twirl** Designed for young artists and makers, this drop-in play space lets kids paint on the walls, build elaborate forts, or sing and dance with designated play leaders. Want to delve deeper into the arts? Twirl also offers kids' classes and workshops, including theater, dance, cooking, and pottery. *Alameda, twirlalameda.com.*

**Museum of Children's Arts (MOCHA)** Collaborate with your child on a colorful keepsake at MOCHA, which hosts special family art-making days one Saturday each month. Or stop by its open studios on Wednesdays, Thursdays, or

Fridays, when an artist in residence will help your little ones unleash their creative instincts. *Oakland, mocha.org.*

**Café Art** Feeling crafty? Bring the kids to this paint-your-own ceramics studio. Select a mug, dish, figurine, or other object, and glaze away—using a palette of 90 colors. Your family's unique creation will be ready for pickup a week later. *Dublin, ceramic-cafeart.com; Livermore, cafeart-livermore.com.*

## for bookworms

**Contra Costa County Libraries** While most libraries offer weekly story times for young kids, some take the program up a notch. The Lafayette Library and Learning Center does readings in various languages, including Spanish, French, Portuguese, and Mandarin. Some branches—including ones in Danville and Walnut Creek—bring in cuddly dogs for kids as reading companions. And San Ramon's Dougherty Station Library offers a book club discussion group for third-, fourth-, and fifth-graders. *ccclib.org.*

**Bel and Bunna's Books** Pick out a book, pull up a beanbag, and get lost in a story at this bookshop catering to kids and young adults. Special events range from create-your-own-story workshops and craft sessions to coding classes and magic shows. *Lafayette, belandbunnasbooks.com.*

## for little ones

**Habitot Children's Museum** With play-based exhibits for children ages six and younger, this learning center sparks toddlers' imaginations. *Berkeley, habitot.org.*

**“I like the Wiggle Wall. It's like a maze where you climb up and down and through tunnels. My baby brother loves the supermarket. He just puts everything in the shopping cart and pushes it around.”**

—Iris, age six, on Habitot's exhibits



Brighten a child's day at MOCHA's open studios.

COURTESY OF MOCHA

FROM TOP: MICHAELA RISTAINO; COURTESY OF BAY AREA RAPID TRANSIT



## JENNIFER PERRY THEATER PRODUCER

By Morgan Mitchell

**The magic of live theater** can captivate audiences of all ages—even the little ones. Jennifer Perry knows this well. She produces the Leshner Center for the Arts' Fantasy Forum Actors Ensemble, one of the East Bay's most revered children's theater companies, which stages four to five fantastic productions a year. Designed “for the young and young at heart,” the shows reinvent classic fairy tales such as *Sleeping Beauty* and *Robin Hood*, and everything about the performances caters to a family audience.

“Children are invited to sit up on the stage and fully participate,” explains Perry. “We encourage them to shout out the answers, help us save the hero, and capture the villain. As a parent, it really eases your experience, because you're not worried the whole time about your children's behavior.”

With productions clocking in around 50 minutes, Fantasy Forum shows last just long enough to thrill younger audiences without letting them get too fidgety. “Exposing kids to theater at an early age helps them expand their imagination, too,” says Perry. Even more importantly, she adds, “At Fantasy Forum, you're creating memories together with your kids. It's so nice to have that experience as a family.” *fantasyforum.org.*

## ALL ABOARD!

CHOO-CHOO-CHOOSE THESE TRAIN RIDES AND RAILROAD EXPERIENCES FOR A DELIGHTFUL FAMILY OUTING.

By Peter Crooks

### > Tilden Steam Trains

The Redwood Valley Railway is an absolute gem—a mini locomotive that takes kids, grown-ups, and well-behaved dogs for a ride through redwood forests with panoramic views of the Bay. *ebparks.org/parks/tilden.*

### > Niles Canyon Railway

Enjoy a Sunday train ride between Sunol and Fremont, featuring stunning vistas of a steep canyon and babbling creek the entire way. *ncry.org.*

### > Model Railroad Museums

Marvel at the elaborate trains chugging through detailed landscapes at the Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society's shows—or at the larger Golden State Model Railroad Museum in Point Richmond, which opens to the public three days a week from April through December. Want to build your own at home? Concord's Just Trains offers an impressive selection for sale. *wcmrs.org, gsmrm.org, just-trains.com.*

### > Museum of the San Ramon Valley

This restored 1891 train depot houses a charming local-history museum offering quaint exhibitions, archives, and a gift shop with toys and mementos. *museumsrv.org.*

### > BART

Those new silver railcars seem like futuristic spaceships to kids four and younger, who get to ride for free. (And kids ages five to 18 get 50 percent off.) Take your tykes to exciting new worlds around—or across—the Bay. *bart.gov.*



Kids love the adventure of riding BART.