Local Community

Santa Cruz

Whose face doesn’t light up when you mention Santa Cruz, California? At the top of the Monterey Bay crescent, Santa Cruz shines like an emerald between warm beaches and cool redwood forests. With a population that barely tops 54,000, Santa Cruz belies her small town size with big personality and endless possibilities for recreation and entertainment. Home to the University of California (UCSC) and Cabrillo College, Santa Cruz has a vibrant youth culture that keeps the community unique and up to date while still retaining a warm neighborhood feel.

Outdoors

If you love fresh sea air, surf and the great outdoors, you have come to the right place. Blessed with mild weather and a gorgeous coastline, Santa Cruz has lured surfers, boaters, hikers and bikers for decades. Bursting at the seams with parks, beaches and open spaces, Santa Cruz County is one of the most beautiful places to find yourself outside.

Food and Local Agriculture

One of the five branches of Chinese medicine is nutrition, and Santa Cruz makes it easy for you to find fresh, wholesome, local food at many restaurants, cafes and health food markets. Nearby farms are represented at several farmers’ markets located throughout the city, featuring fresh organic fruits and vegetables, locally caught seafood, artisan cheeses, fresh flowers and more.

Arts and Entertainment

The creative denizens of Santa Cruz have made sure your experience here is steeped in art of every persuasion. Museums, art galleries, theater and dance troupes will keep your cultural calendar overflowing with options. Look forward to music every night of the week, thanks to a thriving local music scene. Downtown hosts a lively shopping district with bookstores, boutiques, restaurants and movie theaters catering to locals and visitors alike. The historic Santa Cruz beach boardwalk, home of the world famous Big Dipper roller coaster, is a seaside amusement park that has been a family destination for over 100 years.
San Jose

In the heart of Silicon Valley, the mecca of high tech, San Jose is the largest city in Northern California. Attracted by mild Mediterranean weather and high wages, people from around the world have made their home in San Jose, creating the most ethnically diverse city in the nation. Add a low crime rate and a spacious, wide open feeling and you have one of the most livable, family-friendly locations in the west. The San Jose International Airport makes travel easy and proximity to San Francisco, Santa Cruz, and the wine country provide day trip destination getaways.

Arts and Culture

Thanks to a special city ordinance, public art is on the rise in San Jose and many pieces can be seen throughout the city in parks and downtown areas. The celebration of art and culture continues with many community events, performance companies, galleries and museums, including the renowned contemporary San Jose Museum of Art. One of the busiest venues in the world, the HP Pavilion hosts major musical acts, sporting events and conferences. The cosmopolitan Santana Row district combines shopping, dining, living and relaxing all in a beautiful tree-lined atmosphere.

Outdoors and Athletics

With 300 days of sunshine per year, you can imagine San Joseans take good advantage of their parks and open spaces. Many walking and biking trails within the city limits provide glimpses of nature during your green commute. Local sport fans are proud of their NHL hockey team the San Jose Sharks, as well as the major soccer league team the San Jose Earthquakes. These pro games are events you won’t want to miss.

Food and Local Agriculture

Once known more for apricots, plums and grapes than silicon, the fertile Santa Clara valley supplies a rich harvest of produce that can be seen on display at many area farmers’ markets. As one of the oldest wine producing regions in California, Santa Clara valley has many wineries offering tours and tastings daily. Replete with international cuisine and fine restaurants, the quality and variety of dining experiences in San Jose are something to savor.