



Explore Los Angeles

Beach & Valley Communities Guide



Welcome to Los Angeles!

Once a humble western farming town, Los Angeles is now a remarkable metropolis that attracts American and international residents of all walks of life. Today, the greater L.A. area covers over 4,000 square miles, is home to more than 10 million people, and encompasses close to 90 independent cities. L.A. is associated with a desirable climate, sandy beaches, international trade history, glamorous neighborhoods, and of course, the star-studded streets of Hollywood. The areas along the Pacific Ocean are renowned for their popular beachfronts and offer a sense of “West Coast” American living.

The most important factor when deciding on somewhere to live in greater L.A. is proximity to the workplace. Living as close to that location as possible is vital to managing the area’s infamous traffic congestion. Nothing affects the quality of life in L.A. more than the length of your commute. It’s a worthwhile exercise to test-drive the length of your commute before signing off on a lease to get a real idea of what your time in the car will be like.



Los Angeles Housing

Unfurnished Apartment	Studio	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3 Bedroom	4 Bedroom
El Segundo	N/A	\$1700-2400	\$2200-3500	\$2600-5000	\$5000+
Redondo Beach/Manhattan Beach	N/A	\$1800-3100	\$2300-3800	\$3200-5000	N/A
Torrance	N/A	\$1600-2500	\$1800-3000	\$2800-5000	N/A
Santa Monica/Marina Del Rey	N/A	\$2400-4800	\$2800-7000	\$3900-8500	\$5500-10,000
Glendale/Burbank/San Fernando	N/A	\$2300-2700	\$2400-3800	\$3300-4350	N/A
Calabasas/Agoura Hills/Hidden Hills	N/A	\$1900-3200	\$2300-3900	\$3600-4000	N/A



Unfurnished House	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3 Bedroom	4 Bedroom	5 Bedroom
El Segundo	N/A	\$2800-4200	\$3500-4600	\$4500-5000+	\$5000+
Redondo Beach/Manhattan Beach	N/A	\$2500-5000	\$3500-7000	\$4000-10,000	\$6000+
Torrance	N/A	\$2500-3000	\$2800-4000	\$3800-5500	\$4500+
Santa Monica/Marina Del Rey	N/A	\$3800-4500	\$4200-7000	\$7500-10,000+	\$8000-11,000+
Glendale/Burbank/San Fernando	N/A	\$2400-3250	\$3200-4500	\$4000-7500	N/A
Calabasas/Agoura Hills/Hidden Hills	N/A	\$2500+	\$3500-6000	\$4000-11,000	N/A



South Bay

El Segundo

Location and Culture

El Segundo has more of a small-town feel than any other city along the L.A. coastal area. Although there are no main roads or highways that go through the area, residents are never far from direct routes into the city with Highway 105 and the LAX airport to the north. The neighborhoods to the north of El Segundo are Westchester and Playa Del Ray, to the south is Manhattan Beach, and to the west is Hawthorne.

Housing

Houses in El Segundo are mixed in architectural style, ranging from traditional Colonial homes, to California Ranch, to single-story bungalows. Fairly new apartment complexes are in the neighborhood and allow for a wide range of housing options.

Schooling

El Segundo has its own unified school district that serves the community by providing education for grades PreK-12. El Segundo has great school programs and is well-rated for its academic performance.

Activities and Landmarks

The city is transitioning into a corporate town, but its many outdoor resources make it perfect for both professionals and nature lovers alike. Main Street, including the heritage walk, is the main landmark in El Segundo; it illustrates the history of the city.

Although El Segundo has one of the smallest beaches with less than one mile of beachfront, it features renovated restroom facilities, a lifeguard lookout tower, and clean sandy areas. A bike path and volleyball courts can be found close to the beach's parking lot.



The [El Segundo Museum of Art](#) brings culture to the area with nearly 500 works of art by artists such as Monet, Sisley, Pissarro, Kandinsky, Warhol, and Rauschenberg.

[Old Town Music Hall](#) is a treasured cultural landmark showing vintage silent and sound films and presenting live concerts by some of the world's finest performers of jazz, ragtime, and popular music from the past.

A variety of restaurants and shopping locations can be found in El Segundo; there is never a shortage of establishments to eat or drink. [Plaza El Segundo](#) has some of the best shopping options, with everything from boutique dress shops to athletic wear, shoes, and home goods.

Other activities in El Segundo include:

- + [Automobile Driving Museum](#)
- + [The Point](#)

Redondo Beach

Location and Culture

Redondo Beach embodies the “Beach Lifestyle” of walking, biking, and enjoying the Mediterranean climate. Redondo Beach offers a small-town feel with wide-open beach views and amazing ocean breezes. Add the charming neighborhoods and restaurants, and newcomers are sure to fall in love with this personable community.

Housing

With the ocean right at its door step, homes in South Redondo are often stucco with large windows facing beautiful sunsets. There are also many large and small apartment complexes near the water. Other establishments are either a mix of Mediterranean style homes or Cape Cod beach houses.

Schooling

The Redondo Beach Unified School District is one of the highest ranked school districts in the area, with every school in the district receiving high marks. There are also private school options in the area for parents who wish to send their child(ren) to a private schooling system.

Activities and Landmarks

Here, residents enjoy taking in the sights of the beach. Most head to the [Redondo Beach Pier](#) for the best ocean views and for a great selection of food where diners enjoy meals outdoors. For variety in both shopping and entertainment, the [South Bay Galleria](#) features over 100 stores, numerous dining options, and an extensive movie theater.

Other activities include:

- + [Redondo Beach Dog Park](#)
- + [Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center](#)

Palos Verdes

Location and Culture

Palos Verdes is a beautiful, hilly area that feels completely removed from the hustle of L.A. This upscale community features dazzling hiking paths along the cliffs, as well as plenty of other community amenities and conveniences. Located on the Palos Verdes Peninsula, this area is an oasis of greenery in an area primarily dominated by concrete and asphalt.

Housing

One of the benefits of living further away from L.A., is that many homes have more space to spread out, meaning larger floor plans, yards, and neighborhoods full of children. Houses in the area are often very traditional, single-story ranch homes that overlook the many hills in the area. Some homes are even lucky enough to have a view of the ocean!

Schooling

The [Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District](#) serves nearly 12,000 students in the Palos Verdes area in grades PreK-12. The public schools in Palos Verdes are some of the most well-ranked in the greater Los Angeles area. Private schools are also abundant in the area and are an excellent option for education.

Activities and Landmarks

Activities in Palos Verdes include:

- + [The Palos Verdes-Rolling Hills Estates Farmers Market](#)
- + [Hiking, biking, surfing, and horseback riding](#)
- + [The South Coast Botanic Garden](#)
- + [Point Vicente Park](#)
- + [Palos Verdes Estates Shoreline Preserve](#)
- + [Agua Amarga Reserve](#)
- + [Portuguese Bend Reserve](#)

Manhattan Beach

Location and Culture

Manhattan Beach has a small beach-town feel with many nice boutique shops, upscale restaurants, and active residents. Between the beautiful ocean views and two downtown areas, there is always fun to be had in Manhattan Beach. The mix of L.A.'s upscale and beach cultures create a unique and fun aura in this community.

Housing

Housing in the Manhattan Beach area is comprised of an eclectic mix of homes. Some homes are the traditional California ranch style, while others are beach cottages or colonial homes. Along the beach-front are numerous apartment buildings and condos with spectacular waterfront views.

Schooling

The [Manhattan Beach Unified School District](#) provides education for grades PreK-12 for over 7000 students. Manhattan Beach receives the highest marks in educational standards and is well known for its profound achievements on national tests and college matriculation.

Activities and Landmarks

Full of beautiful views, the 2.1 miles of pristine beaches and the bike and pedestrian-friendly Strand Boardwalk are the main attractions at Manhattan Beach. Other activities include:

- + [Polliwog Park](#)'s free Sunday music concerts
- + [The Strand House](#)
- + [Rock'N Fish Restaurant](#)
- + [Manhattan Beach Post](#)
- + [Manhattan Village Shopping Mall](#)

Torrance

Location and Culture

Originally created as a planned, mixed-use industrial-residential community, Torrance has undergone numerous expansions and renovations since the city's founding. Surviving several economic challenges and industry shifts, Torrance has been able to strengthen the residential feel of the community by maintaining 90,000 street trees and 30 city parks.

Housing

Many of the houses in Torrance are single-family ranch homes and are great for young, new families. Torrance also has a variety of available apartments and townhomes.

Schooling

[The Torrance Unified School District](#) is a highly-rated public school district. The district has 23,947 students, with a student-teacher ratio of 26 to 1.

Activities and Landmarks

City programs, non-profit groups, and businesses provide a variety of services, exciting events, and activities in which residents may participate. Torrance's accessibility to L.A. and Orange County, as well as its own beach and parks, provide relaxation and adventure. Other activities include:

- + [The Torrance Cultural Arts Center](#)
- + [Madrona Marsh Wildlife Preserve and Nature Center](#)
- + [Wilson Park](#) and the [Torrance Farmers' Market](#)
- + [Del Amo Fashion Center](#)
- + [Western Museum of Flight](#)
- + [Smog City Brewing](#)
- + [Torrance Art Museum](#)
- + [Torrance Antique Street Faire](#)

Westside

Santa Monica

Location

Santa Monica is one of Los Angeles' best known neighborhoods. At heart a beach town, Santa Monica also offers sophisticated shopping and restaurants, and quintessentially Californian housing, and an active street scene. The city can be divided into five sections including the beach, Montana Ave. on the north side of the city, the Third Street Promenade/Place in the city core, the business district in Mid-City, and Main Street on the south end of the city. This location is ideal for its unique city culture as well as its proximity to the beach and many popular areas of L.A.

Housing

Houses and apartments in Santa Monica vary in size, but often have one characteristic in common: the number of windows. Plenty of windows allow for splendid views of the ocean and sunsets. Homes are often open and airy with a Spanish and stucco influence.

Schooling

As part of the [Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District](#), Santa Monica has over 26 primary and secondary school campuses, as well as the Santa Monica High School campus. SMMUSD receives high rankings nationally and from the community, allowing residents to feel confident in their child(ren)'s education.

Activities and Landmarks

[Santa Monica Pier](#) is known around the world for its iconic Ferris Wheel. Featured in movies and TV shows, this famous Pier is a fun place to visit with family and friends. The beach and various parks offer opportunities for swimming, surfing, paddle boarding, outdoor sports, bike rides, and rollerblading. With artists and street musicians performing every day, residents are never far from a great time.

Marina Del Rey

Location

Marina Del Rey is a small, unincorporated, beach community that is calm yet full of fun. Located on the coast and just south of Venice Beach, Marina Del Rey has an area of 1.45 square miles and a population of 8,000. It is home to more than 6500 boats, making this community ideal for those who love the sun and water.

Housing

Housing in the area consists of mostly large apartment buildings that have wonderful views of the ocean and Marina.

Activities and Landmarks

The Marina is the neighborhood's greatest appeal. Other appealing locations for fun include the restaurant, [Tony P's](#), a dining location with breathtaking views of the Marina. Other activities include:

- + [Mother's Beach](#)
- + [Ballona Wetlands](#)



San Fernando Valley

Glendale

Location

Located at the east end of the San Fernando Valley, Glendale is a pleasant community near downtown LA and Pasadena. It is also centrally located to popular areas in northern LA, such as Hollywood, [The Angeles National Forest](#), and the beach.

Housing

While this neighborhood is primarily residential, it is a great choice for anyone who has a tight budget, but still desires a suburban feel. Residents here enjoy the safe feeling of home and community that the area provides, making this an ideal location for new families.

Schooling

The [Glendale Unified School District](#) is comprised of 33 schools, allowing parents a varied choice of which institutions in the district to send their children. Private schooling systems are also available.

Activities and Landmarks

Glendale offers a variety of excellent activities for locals and visitors to enjoy. Shopping, dining, sports, and the arts are all well-represented in the city, allowing locals a variety of activities to partake in every day.

- + [Alex Theatre](#)
- + [Brand Park](#)
- + [The Brand Library](#)
- + [The Glendale Galleria](#)
- + [The Americana at Brand](#)
- + The Glendale Fashion Center
- + The local cupcake shop, [Sprinkles](#)

Burbank

Location

Burbank is located east of Hollywood and north of downtown, with Glendale as its eastern neighbor. Divided into two sections, downtown and residential, Burbank offers an excellent mix of residential and commercial environments.

Housing

Many of Burbank's residents live in apartments or single-family homes. There is a wide variety of modern housing, as well as popular architectural designs from the past century.

Activities and Landmarks

Despite Walt Disney, Warner Bros., and Universal having their studio bases in Burbank, the city emits a small-town charm, while still attracting tourists and locals alike to tour the city's massive studios. Other shopping, dining, and entertainment attractions include:

- + The oldest [Bob's Big Boy](#) restaurant
- + Wildwood Canyon Park
- + The Verdugo Mountains



Calabasas

Location

In northern Los Angeles County, the city of Calabasas is nestled at the base of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. Many American celebrities choose to settle here, which results in a valley of neighborhoods and gated mansion communities alike.

Housing

Single-family homes are the most common type in Calabasas, accounting for two-thirds of all property types. Others include large apartment complexes or high-rise apartments and a few duplexes. Apartments in the area are relatively affordable, considering the abundance of high-end homes all around.

Activities and Landmarks

This semi-rural city offers natural beauty and striking landscapes for those who like to spend time outside biking, running, or playing tennis. Due to the location just off Interstate 101, many people will stop here as they pass through, even if just to explore:

- + Topanga State Park
- + Malibu Hindu Temple
- + [Leonis Adobe Museum](#)



San Fernando

Location

San Fernando lies within the city of Los Angeles. This centrally located community enjoys a private feel due to the San Gabriel foothills yet is close to downtown Los Angeles. Manufacturing and commerce centers provide a vibrant energy thanks to the close-knit, friendly residents.

Housing

As a primarily residential area, single-family homes are the most prevalent housing type in this neighborhood. Three- and four-bedroom homes have the highest availability, and styles range from cape cods to ranches. The mixture of owners and renters is nearly an even split.

Schooling

The Los Angeles Unified School District ([LAUSD](#)) serves students in an area of 720 square miles with over 900 schools (and 187 public charter schools).

Activities and Landmarks

There is no shortage of opportunities for fun in the sun in San Fernando. Spend the day roller-skating or hiking or seek out some shopping and movie-making experiences.

- + [Universal Studios Hollywood](#)
- + [Getty Center](#)
- + Hollywood Boulevard
- + Universal CityWalk
- + [Dolby Theater](#)
- + Runyon Canyon Park
- + Melrose Avenue

Agoura Hills

Location

Agoura Hills is a picturesque city located northwest of L.A. County, just 30 minutes from Malibu Beach. It is a very safe, quiet and family-oriented neighborhood, making it a desirable spot for families, with a close proximity to great restaurants, shops, and beach and hiking trails.

Housing

The area has a mixture of property types, from the typical Spanish California ranch style home, to beautiful townhomes and apartments near the shopping and business areas. Some of the more popular apartment communities include Avalon Oak Creek, the Lexington Agoura Hills and Old Agoura Luxury Apartments. The average rental price does fluctuate with the changing seasons, with highs during the summer and lows in the winter.

Schooling

Agoura Hills belongs to the award-winning [Las Virgenes Unified School District](#), serving roughly 11,500 students from Agoura Hills, Hidden Hills, Calabasas and the L.A. County portion of Westlake Village. Most of the 15 schools within the district have been distinguished as US Blue Ribbon and CA Gold Ribbon schools due to their excellence in supporting students learning and success.

Activities and Landmarks

Being so close to Malibu and the Pacific Coast Highway makes Agoura Hills a great destination to enjoy the best outdoor activities California has to offer like whale watching, kayaking and paddle boarding. The Malibu Café offers a terrific environment to unwind on the weekends and enjoy activities like Wine Safari Tours and tastings. Nearby Ventura Harbor also provides opportunities for fun activities for the whole family.

- + [The Malibu Café](#)
- + [Channel Islands National Park](#)
- + [Hana Paddle Boards](#)
- + The M*A*S*H Site (where the TV series was filmed)

Hidden Hills

Location

Hidden Hills is both a city and a gated community, which is not uncommon in the southern Los Angeles area. Once a sleepy, small area, now it is becoming the home to many celebrities who find respite in the peaceful, natural layout. Hidden Hills is in between San Fernando Valley foothills and the Ventura County line.

Housing

The area is predominantly single-family homes in a variety of styles, as well as condos and townhomes. The availability of rental properties is very low however. Less than four percent of properties are rented out within this area because of the gated community nature within the city.

Activities and Landmarks

This exclusive community cherishes the more relaxing side of life. Hidden Hills residents prefer to spend their free time rock climbing, enjoying equestrian trails, or sharing a picnic with a sunset view at one of these parks:

- + Cave of Munits (hiking and rock-climbing locale)
- + Sage Ranch Park
- + Upper Las Virgenes Canyon Open Space Preserve



Transportation Options

Major L.A. County Highways and Roads

Highways and Roads

Locals often refer to freeways by route number, not by name, and say “the” before the number.

- + The I-5: the Golden State Freeway
- + The I-105: the Century or Glenn Anderson Freeway
- + The I-405: the San Diego Freeway
- + CA-90: the Marina Freeway Route 90
- + Highway 1: the Pacific Coast Highway
- + U.S. 101: the Hollywood Freeway
- + The 110: the Harbor Freeway and the Pasadena Freeway
- + The 1-10: the Santa Monica Freeway and the San Bernardino Freeway
- + Route 2: Santa Monica Boulevard, the Glendale Freeway, and Angeles Crest Highway



Public Transportation

Rail and Bus

- + **Metro Rail:** Made up of three lines, the Metro Rail operates between 5am and 12:30am. Tickets are available at all stations. All stations and trains are wheelchair accessible.
- + **Metro Bus:** Bus tickets may be purchased on board with exact change only. Some buses change routes. All bus lines are wheelchair accessible.
- + **Torrance Transit System Bus:** Service is available within Torrance and to various other communities within the South Bay region of L.A. County.
- + **MetroLink:** MetroLink is Southern California’s long-distance commuter rail system. It is run by the Southern California Regional Rail Authority. Tickets and passes are available at all station ticket vending machines. Some MetroLink stations are shared with Amtrak trains.
- + **Culver City Bus:** Service areas include Culver City, Los Angeles International Airport (LAX), Venice Beach, Century City, and Westwood.
- + **DASH (Downtown Area Short Hop):** The L.A. Department of Transportation (LADOT) operates the DASH minibus in Downtown L.A.
- + **Santa Monica Big Blue Bus:** The Big Blue services West L.A., Santa Monica, Downtown L.A., and LAX. Bus transfers are available.
- + **Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority**

Taxis

- + Except for those lined up outside of airports, train stations, and other transportation hubs, taxis in L.A. are not as easily accessible as in other cities. Riders typically need to call ahead for taxi service. Uber and Lyft are widely available.



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