

PASADENA: THE CITY THAT FEELS LIKE A VILLAGE

Located at the base of the San Gabriel Mountains, about 15 miles northeast of downtown Los Angeles, Pasadena's official slogan, "The City That Feels Like A Village," might more accurately be "The City That Feels Like Several Villages." That's because Pasadena is a wonderful patchwork of districts, each with its own distinctive character. For this reason, Pasadena reminds many of the great cities of Europe. One of the most graceful and charming communities in Southern California, Pasadena is not just a sought-after place to live, but popular with tourists as well.

Amazingly, Pasadena is bordered by seven cities-La Canada Flintridge, South Pasadena, Arcadia, Sierra Madre, San Marino, Glendale, Los Angeles, and unincorporated Altadena.

SHOPPING

The city is a shopper's paradise. Old Pasadena is a 20-block historic area complete with airy European-style piazzas and renovated late 1900s buildings housing shops, bistros, art galleries, and more.

In the city's upscale financial district, check out tree-lined South Lake Avenue. Its 10 blocks feature many of the top national retailers as well as one-of-a-kind shops, boutiques, and European restaurants.

Passionate about art and literature? Don't miss the Pasadena Playhouse District with its wealth of bookstores, antique stores, florists, and specialty shops. The area is anchored by the famed Pasadena Playhouse, California's official State Theater. The Playhouse helped launch the careers of Dustin Hoffman, Gene Hackman, and other stellar performers.

ARTS AND ARCHITECTURE

Pasadena is also an architectural delight. Visit the Magnificent Mansions Area to see how some wealthy Easterners "wintered" between 1885 and the 1930s. Mansions not to miss include the ornate Italian Renaissance Wrigley (of chewing gum fame) Mansion and the Gamble (of Procter & Gamble fame) House. The latter is the most complete and best-preserved example of the work of Greene and Greene, internationally renowned architects. It's also a favorite of film studios. Christopher Lloyd ("Doc") lived in the house in "Back to the Future."

For art connoisseurs, the Norton Simon Museum is another must see. The museum's collection includes the masterpieces of artists such as Raphael, Botticelli, Rubens, Rembrandt, Goya, Renoir, Monet, Degas, van Gogh, and Picasso.

THE PARADE

Obviously, there is much more to Pasadena than the annual Tournament of Roses Parade and Rose Bowl Game on New Year's Day. Not that you should miss this either if you have the opportunity to see them in person! The parade, which is viewed by some 1 million spectators along the parade route and another 450 million people in more than 100 countries via television, features more than 100 marching bands, equestrian units, and colorful floats. Each float must be completely covered with flowers and floral material. That means the average float requires as many as 100,000 blossoms...and may cost a quarter of a million dollars.

HOUSE PRICES

The median price for a single-family home in Pasadena varies by its six Zip codes. For the year 2004, these medians ranged between \$383,000 and \$942,000 in July 2005. Sharon Hills, a Realtor with Prudential California Realty John Aeroe Division, says the median price of a single-family luxury home is currently about \$1,800,000. These homes, she says, are the most likely to be in what is known as the Ritz Carlton District or in the San Rafael area.