

## LIVING IN SAN DIEGO'S NEIGHBORHOODS

San Diego is a city made up of more than 100 colorful and unique neighborhoods. Each neighborhood has a style and personality of their own. The task facing each student is to decide which of the following areas is most suited to their taste. The descriptions given are for areas where most of our students choose to live.

For a map of San Diego's neighborhoods, please visit: <https://www.gosandiego.com/neighborhoods/>

**Here is a selection of neighborhoods near the California Western campus:**

### **Bankers Hill (3-5 minute walk)**

This area is immediately north of the school. It is an old residential neighborhood with many vintage apartment buildings, some brand-new places, and some that have seen better days. This is a great neighborhood if you want to plan to visit the museums in Balboa Park, the San Diego Zoo and more. It is also great if you are looking for small eateries, laid-back nightlife and an open-minded crowd. It has a very residential feel, lots of green space and is ideally located if you want to be close to, but not in the heart of things. However, it can be noisy due to being directly under the landing zone of airplanes at San Diego International Airport.

### **Barrio Logan (5-7 minute drive)**

Culture, history, community, and arguably the best tacos in all of San Diego... yes, we're talking about Barrio Logan. Located just outside of Downtown, this predominantly Latino neighborhood is drenched in art and local pride. Barrio Logan has an industrial vibe with former warehouses transformed into art galleries, taco shops, and craft breweries. This funky neighborhood boasts fresh art woven straight into the infrastructure of the area. With murals telling the neighborhood's history, street art to rival any big city, and places like La Bodega Gallery, Barrio Logan is dedicated to showing up and showing off how important art is in everyday life. Looking to enjoy some time outside? Chicano Park is a central location popular with locals and visitors alike. As you walk through the skate park, playgrounds, basketball courts, and stunning murals you'll see people hanging out celebrating birthdays, each other, and life.

### **Cortez Hill (3-5 minute walk)**

Cortez Hill is Downtown San Diego's oldest neighborhood and is named after the Historic El Cortez Hotel. The El Cortez Hotel was built in 1927 but was converted into a condominium complex in 2004. Perched on a hill in the northeast portion of downtown, many of the residential towers in the neighborhood offer great views of Balboa Park, Downtown San Diego, the bay, and even the Pacific Ocean. The proximity to school makes it very desirable to students.

### **Downtown (5 minute walk)**

This area is adjacent and south of the school. Downtown San Diego, also known as Centre City, is the dazzling waterfront cultural, financial, and entertainment center of the city with seven distinct districts ranging from subtly charming to bold and overstated – Little Italy, Cortez Hill, Columbia, Core, Marina, East Village, and the Gaslamp Quarter.

**East Village (7-10 minute walk)**

The newest Downtown neighborhood of East Village is an edgy mix of reclaimed warehouse chic and new construction ultra-modern and has been likened to Manhattan's SoHo neighborhood. Anchored by the Padres' Petco Stadium, the trendy district offers upscale shopping, dining, and nightlife.

**Gaslamp Quarter (5 minute walk)**

The historic Gaslamp Quarter is the heart of San Diego's downtown nightlife. The Gaslamp's 16 blocks include 94 historic buildings from the Victorian Era. The daytime shopping mecca transforms into a sophisticated after dark playground with fine dining, live music, dancing, and theatre.

**Hillcrest (6-8 minute drive)**

This area is just north of Banker's Hill. Hillcrest has been dubbed the Greenwich Village of San Diego. It is a diverse urban neighborhood and the heart of San Diego's LGBTQIA+ community. The cultural hotspot with a multi-ethnic vibe offers boutique shops, wine bars, ethnic restaurants, and the annual San Diego Pride Parade and festival.

**La Jolla/University Town Center (UTC) (20 minute drive)**

La Jolla is the jewel by the sea with an array of sophisticated boutique hotels, shops, restaurants, and resorts. It is a family-friendly vacation destination with abundant marine life, beautiful beaches, great surfing, premier golfing, and adventure sports. UTC has a large shopping mall and lots of places to eat. This is a busy and upscale area which is heavily comprised of college students due to its close proximity to UCSD.

**Little Italy (5 minute walk)**

This is a great neighborhood for students as it is so close to school. This scenic Italian neighborhood is one of the most culturally active of the Downtown districts. Primarily comprised of Italian retail shops, restaurants, art galleries, home design stores, and residential units, the charming neighborhood hosts numerous annual events including ArtWalk and Little Italy Festa.

**Mission Beach (10-15 minute drive)**

Mission Beach is the more casual and laid-back brother to Pacific Beach and has the bigger and better beach. Local bars, shops, and eateries have a down-to-earth neighborhood vibe. Family-friendly Belmont Park and the flashy Wave House beach party complex anchor the neighborhood. It is a busy area as it is one of the most popular beaches in San Diego which brings many tourists to the area. Most of the housing is comprised of vacation rentals and can be fairly expensive.

**Mission Hills (5-10 minute drive)**

This area is located just North of Little Italy and Northwest of Hillcrest. This community is primarily residential with good restaurants and shops. Mission Hills is an affluent neighborhood with a close-knit community vibe and killer views of San Diego and the bay. It is known for being family-oriented and promoting a simple lifestyle. Take a family bike ride or enjoy a classic movie under the stars in this tranquil neighborhood.

**Mission Valley/Fashion Valley (8-12 minute drive)**

This area is east of Interstate 5 and runs along the 8 interstate. Mission Valley is at the center of the city with easy access to every major San Diego attraction. It is home to the former San Diego Chargers' Qualcomm Stadium (now Red Dragon stadium), Hotel Circle, upscale shopping malls, a challenging golf course, and a regional park for hiking and biking. Many young professionals reside here as there are tons of new apartments and condominiums. There is also trolley access to downtown from here, which makes life easy, since parking on campus can be avoided by riding the trolley.

**North Park (12-15 minute drive)**

This community is located right next door to Hillcrest (east). North Park is known best for its 30th Street Corridor craft brew scene. The culturally diverse neighborhood with Craftsman cottages, diners and cafes, boutiques, bookstores, coffee shops, microbreweries, and the Ray Street Art District is a must-visit San Diego neighborhood.

**Normal Heights/Kensington/University Heights (10-15 minute drive)**

This area is located along the southern edge of Mission Valley and just west of San Diego State University. These areas give a small-town vibe with big city perks and offer a variety of Affordable Housing apartments. At 'Adam's Avenue' also known as Antiques Row, you can wander through the quaint coffee shops, peruse the vintage record stores, and support the few, surviving used bookstores. Discover new bands before they become too mainstream at the local festivals like the Adam's Avenue Street Fair—the largest free music festival in all Southern California—or at Lestat's Coffee House where you can hear live music every night of the week. Located about eight miles northeast of Downtown San Diego, this area scores a perfect 5 in Public Transit and Safety making getting around a breeze, just like that refreshing ocean air you'll enjoy on the daily. Normal Heights comes in at one of the top neighborhoods in San Diego due to the diverse, funky, and eclectic wonders that you will find here.

**Pacific Beach (12-15 minute drive)**

Pacific Beach is the embodiment of California Dreamin' offering a mix of casual and trendy tourist and surf shops, sports and beach bars, and delectable eateries. It is a popular area for college students because of the offerings, including its nightlife. It sports one of the best beaches for swimming, surfing, and sunning; the longest boardwalk; and the iconic Crystal Pier.

**Point Loma/Ocean Beach (10 minute drive)**

This area encompasses the peninsula north of San Diego Bay. It is known as the place where California began. If you enjoy being close to, overlooking, or in the water, then this neighborhood is the place for you. Located about 5 miles west of Downtown San Diego, this area offers a well-established community situated right inside one of San Diego's tourist hotspots. Everyone is welcome in this funky, vintage beach town that attracts surfers, skaters and anyone who loves staring off into the sunset. It is also home to Liberty Station and runs along the north side of the San Diego International Airport. Point Loma & Ocean Beach are great for those looking to get in touch with Mother Nature. Check out the unique caves and catch a sunset at Sunset Cliffs Natural Park.

**South Park/Golden Hill (7-10 minute drive)**

South Park & Golden Hill is a charming residential area, as full of delicious adventure as that craft beer you're trying not to spill. Innovative eateries, spectacular views in every direction, and a prime location give residents and visitors alike a perfect place to bask in all that sunshine. Residents enjoy convenient access to the freeways and to Balboa Park as well as a perfect score in both Public Transit and Walkability. Amidst some of the most scenic landscapes in San Diego, you can find historical sites like the original home of the Women's History Museum, enjoy access to happy hiking trails that start at Balboa Park, and let loose at the many hot spots on 25th Street.

**OUTSIDE THE SAN DIEGO CITY LIMITS**

**Chula Vista/National City/South Bay (20-40 minute drive)**

Located south of downtown San Diego and just north of the Mexico border is San Diego's South Bay, the gateway to Baja California. South Bay is home to a number of exciting attractions and also offers great surfing, sportfishing, beach volleyball and horseback riding along the coast, as well as some of the best Mexican food this side of the border. Some attractive affordable housing, but definitely check out each place individually. The National City neighborhood of the South Bay has a strong military presence. Chula Vista is accessible by trolley – traffic coming out of South Bay in the mornings can be challenging.

**Coronado (15-25 minute drive)**

Coronado is a peninsula, which forms one side of the entrance to the San Diego Bay, consisting of North Island Naval Air Station to the north and a beautiful town to the south. Coronado can best be described as seaside luxury. It is connected to mainland San Diego by the stunning Coronado Bridge, is home to the famous Hotel Del Coronado, has the only white sand beach in San Diego, and boasts over 100 upscale shops and restaurants. This area offers mostly expensive rentals and million-dollar homes. However, its relatively close proximity to school, yet beautiful, quiet community, makes Coronado an attractive area for all San Diego residents. The Coronado and Silver Strand beaches are beautiful, family-oriented beaches.

**East County (20-45 minute drive)**

Just east of the sprawling San Diego metro area sits a growing enclave of East County apartments and homes. This area is home to towns such as Alpine, El Cajon, Lemon Grove and Spring Valley, which are a little more rural than some of the other parts of San Diego County, but boast a special, laidback charm. In sharp contrast to San Diego's beaches to the west, the rolling hills, majestic mountains, sparkling lakes and deep canyons make east county one of the most diverse areas in San Diego County to explore. The area offers hiking, mountain biking, rock climbing, fishing and camping in the vast and beautiful wilderness. Even though it's growing quickly, the East County area has remained a desirable retreat for those hoping to get away from the hustle and bustle of the big city, without going too far from the urban pulse.

**La Mesa (20-30 minute drive)**

East of San Diego off I-8. This area offers moderately priced affordable apartments. La Mesa is a suburb of San Diego with a population of 61,040. La Mesa is in San Diego County. Living in La Mesa offers residents an urban suburban mix feel and most residents rent their homes. In La Mesa there are a lot of restaurants, coffee shops, and parks. Many families and young professionals live in La Mesa. It is accessible by the trolley line.

**North County (25-50 minute drive)**

North County is characterized by two distinct areas – North County Coastal and North County Inland. The coastal neighborhoods of North County include small seaside towns that dot the Pacific shoreline between Camp Pendleton Marine Corps Base and Torrey Pines Natural Reserve. Some of these areas where students tend to live include, Mira Mesa, Escondido, San Marcos, Carlsbad, Del Mar, La Jolla. Cost of living is generally more expensive here but there are some affordable housing apartments the further north you go. Known for its rustic beauty and desert landscape, the inland area of North County is characterized by valleys, lakes, hills, mountains, and canyons. The area is deeply rooted in agriculture, yet only about 30 minutes from the most popular San Diego County beaches and downtown San Diego.