Neighborhood Profiles

THE SANTA BARBARA/GOLETA AREA is beautifully situated between the Pacific Ocean and the Santa Ynez Mountains. A variety of neighborhoods cover the area and each of them have UCSB students, staff or faculty who have chosen to make it their home.

Isla Vista
I.V. covers half a square mile of land adjacent to both the UCSB campus and the Pacific Ocean. It is home to about 20,000 people, half of which are college students. I.V. is dense with apartments and 96% of the total population are renters. The I.V. community is intimately connected to UCSB; in fact, you could say that it’s UCSB’s college town. There are some quiet, quaint areas at the west end of I.V., including many houses; but overall, I.V. is primarily made up of apartment buildings which are largely home to students who are enjoying their youth and freedom from their folks.

Goleta
With a population of about 29,553, Goleta is a quiet city which is home primarily to families living in houses. There are some apartments available, but rentals are mostly houses or rooms in homes. Goleta residents that live over two miles from campus are eligible for a UCSB parking permit.

Ellwood Neighborhood. South (on the ocean side) of the 101 freeway, the Ellwood area is located about 2 miles west of campus. There are many apartments available in Ellwood, a popular neighborhood for graduate students and quiet undergraduates. Rental rates are generally lower than in I.V. A nice bike ride or a quick bus trip can get you to campus in 15 minutes.

El Encanto Heights Neighborhood. This neighborhood area north (on the mountain side) of the 101 freeway and about 2 miles northwest of campus is inhabited primarily by private home owners. However, there are many multi-bedroom houses for rent that are popular for groups of students that want to live outside of I.V.

Santa Barbara
Most newcomers don’t realize that Santa Barbara is actually quite a distance away from the UCSB campus. Living in Santa Barbara offers a home away from UCSB, with many opportunities for a “regular” community experience complete with culture, night-life, employment opportunities and bragging rights for living in one of the most desirable cities in the country. Keep in mind that if you live anywhere in Santa Barbara, you will face a commute to campus of up to 20 minutes by car and up to an hour by bus.

Downtown. Living downtown puts you in the heart of our beautiful coastal community. Many apartments and studios are available in close proximity to downtown Santa Barbara and its commercial and cultural offerings.

Mesa Neighborhood. The Mesa area offers many apartments near the beach and is largely popular among Santa Barbara City College students because of its proximity to their campus. If you choose to live among City College students, keep in mind that their semester schedule is very different from our quarter schedule at UCSB, so they may want to party when you need to be studying for finals.

PET PEEVES
Few property providers allow tenants to keep a cat, dog or any animal that is not in a cage or tank (and even those are not guaranteed to be allowed). If you try to smuggle your pet in and keep it hidden, you can face stiff penalties or even eviction. If you have a cat or dog from which you are inseparable, you will need to work that much harder and longer to find a rental that will permit you to stay together. Be prepared to pay hundreds of dollars for an additional security deposit.

Visiting pets are also not allowed and you may be charged a fee per day that the pet is visiting or receive a notice to remove the pet or leave.
San Roque (Upper State St.) Neighborhood. The beautiful San Roque area is increasingly becoming an option for renters. It is very quiet, and, while you won’t be within walking distance of anything, you may find more affordable rates in this area.

Lower East Side Neighborhood. The Lower East Side offers many apartments at rental rates lower than most others in the area. The commute to UCSB is a bit more difficult than other areas, but all other types of conveniences are close at hand.

Other Neighborhoods. The Upper East Side, Riviera, Samarkand, Hidden Valley/Modoc, Mission Canyon, Hope Ranch and Montecito are other neighborhoods in Santa Barbara which are inhabited primarily by private home owners. Some of these owners rent rooms in their homes or rent out guest houses on their property.

North County, South County & Ventura County Many UCSB students, staff and faculty choose to live in nearby communities such as Lompoc, Santa Maria, Buellton, Santa Ynez, Carpinteria, Ventura and Oxnard. Rental rates can be much more affordable in these areas for those who don’t mind commuting up to an hour each way.

Social Host Ordinance
At press time of the Rental Success Guide, the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors voted to move forward a Social Host Ordinance intended to hold responsible adults liable for underage drinking on property they lease or own. Providing underaged people alcoholic beverages has long been against the law, but the only way for the provider of the alcohol to get in trouble was for law enforcement to see the interaction. The Social Host Ordinance allows law enforcement to penalize people if they are “knowingly” having a party where underage people are drinking.

The new ordinance focuses on those who host parties or allow underage drinking in their homes. According to the Social Host Ordinance, a party is defined as a gathering of five or more people. The first penalty yields a $500 fine and mandatory alcohol counseling class, a second violation increases the fine to $1000, and a third violation carries a $2000 fine.

The goal of the Social Host Ordinance is to act as a preventative measure to reduce the amount of underaged drinking and the negative effects associated- including drunk driving, sexual assault, and alcohol poisoning.

Students who live in Isla Vista are worried about what the Social Host Ordinance means for rentals where some roommates are of legal drinking age and some are not. Another concern is that many households have more than 5 people on the lease, which already constitutes a party.

Lastly, many are concerned about what happens if some of the roommates are not home or do not know there is a party- what is their level of responsibility? These questions and concerns have yet to be answered.

After a public outreach and educational component ending in November 2010, the ordinance becomes effective in the unincorporated areas of Santa Barbara County, namely Isla Vista.

Neighborly Relations
Want to avoid problems with your neighbors throughout the school year? Be proactive! Some helpful tips:
• Introduce yourself and get to know a little about one another, especially regarding lifestyle. Exchange phone numbers so that if anything comes up, you know how to get in contact.
• Be aware of shared walls or ceilings/floors with your neighbors since noise from TVs, appliances, and even walking can carry through walls and floors.
• Be courteous regarding parking, especially in Isla Vista with parking in such high demand. Park in your allotted spot or risk getting towed!
• Give neighbors plenty of notice before you have a party. Make sure they have your phone number so that if things get out of hand they will call you first, rather than law enforcement. If you get along well, invite them to the festivities.
• Keep your trash contained in the appropriate receptacles and keep common areas clear. During move-out, if a mess is left, the property provider may divide the charge amongst all tenants.
• Be aware of your surroundings as well as those of your neighbors, and report any suspicious activity.