

# COASTAL LIVING<sup>®</sup>

HORSING AROUND:  
**BEACH POLO**  
PAGE 84

AMERICA'S BEST  
**SEAFOOD DIVES**



Los Cabos, Mexico

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A Hollywood Producer's  
**FLORIDA RETREAT**

JUNE 2014

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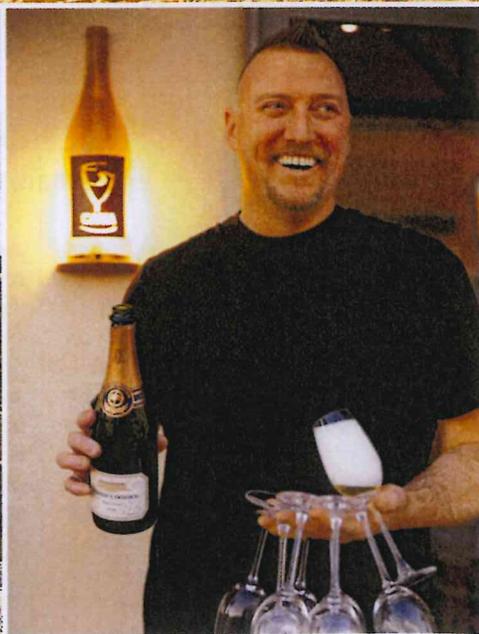
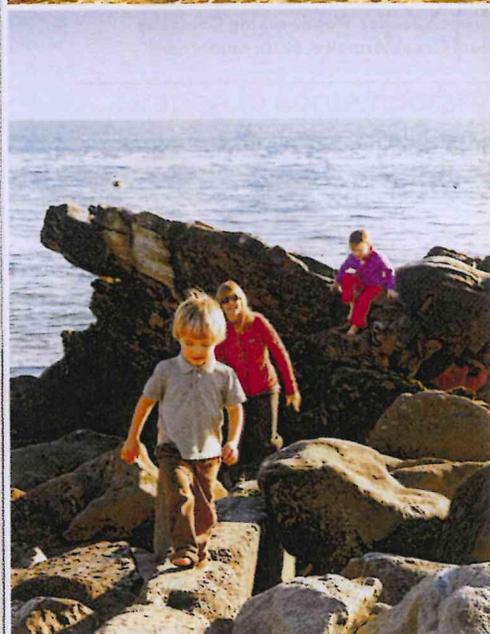
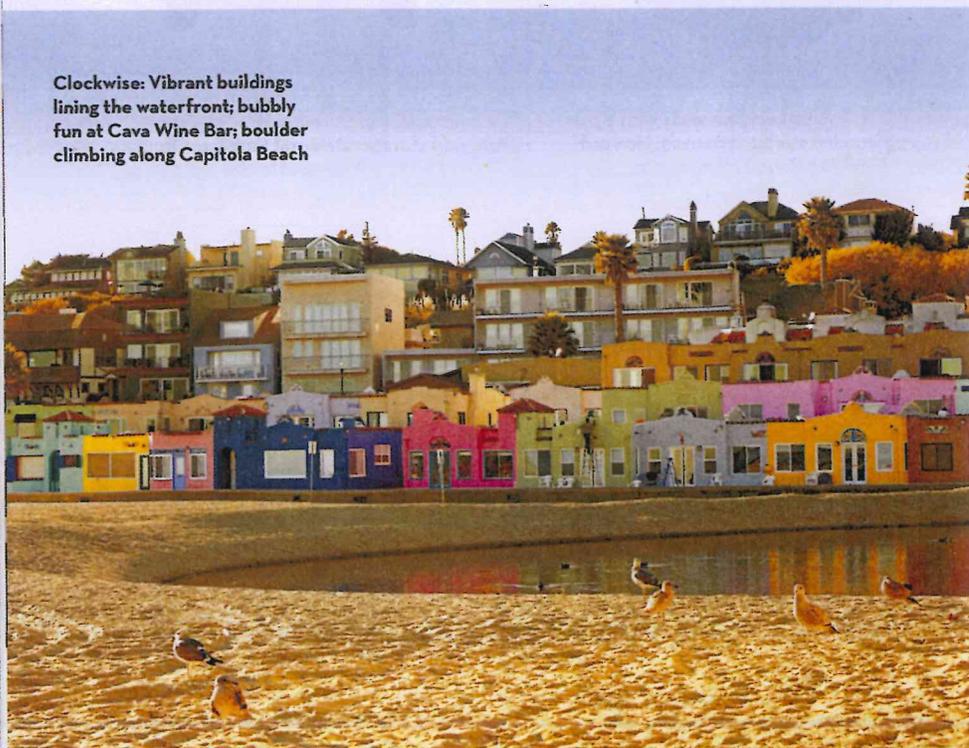
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SO YOU WANT TO LIVE IN ...

# CAPITOLA

This colorful Northern California community packs plenty of surf, sand, and style into a tiny city by the sea

Clockwise: Vibrant buildings lining the waterfront; bubbly fun at Cava Wine Bar; boulder climbing along Capitola Beach



**A**S THE SUN RISES ABOVE the brightly painted cottages on Capitola's sandy beach, you may feel like you're waking up in a coastal village in Italy.

This laid-back town has an air of endless summer; couples linger over espresso in waterfront cafés while bronzed beachgoers stroll past Mediterranean-style bungalows on their way to the sea.

One of California's oldest resort towns, Capitola began as a destination for people from Silicon Valley wanting to escape to the coast. While the city still lures day-trippers today, its nearly 10,000 residents find it second nature to balance work with play—especially when it comes to surfing. The primo waves here even inspired wet suit manufacturer O'Neill to build its headquarters in adjacent Santa Cruz.

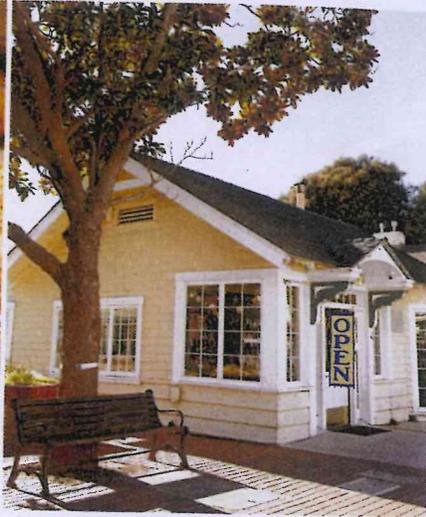
The city itself is quite small—just 1.6 square miles. But Capitola Village, the shopping and dining district, is packed with big style and flavor. Sea Level boutique has anything you need for the beach, from sandals and shirts to cover-ups. Standout dining choices include Geisha Japanese Restaurant & Tea House's killer sushi selection, and fettuccine with lobster at Caruso's Tuscan Cuisine.

With neighborhoods tucked between the ocean and the Santa Cruz Mountains, homes with water views here are in high demand. Along the bluff, older cottages mix with new homes ranging from \$1.3 million to \$5 million, but you can find some deals—mostly condos without sea views—starting around \$400,000.

While much of Capitola looks the same as it did in the city's early days (there's proof in the vintage photos scattered among local businesses), the town offers lots of modern-day appeal. "Businesses and community services are plentiful, and that helps keep residents from feeling like they have to go elsewhere to get what they need," says resident Gayle Ortiz.



**WHY WE LOVE IT ...**



From left: The sweet bear claws and warm muffins that attract long lines at Gayle's Bakery & Rosticceria; Capitola Seashells shop in Capitola Village

### 1 THE UP-AND-COMING.

Small businesses such as Sante Adairius Rustic Ales, which produces innovative old-world-style brews beloved by beer aficionados, are helping turn Capitola's whisper factor into a louder buzz.

### 2 THE NEIGHBORHOOD GATHERINGS.

Small-town Capitola has a large capacity for entertaining its residents. Concerts fill Esplanade Park throughout the summer, the annual Capitola Art & Wine Festival features area wineries, and Santa shows up on a surfboard during the holidays.

### 3 THE DOG-FRIENDLY FOUNDATION.

Your furry best friend can also be your lunch date: Local shops, restaurants, and patios on the Esplanade, which curves along the beach, make sure pups (and their humans) feel welcome.

### 4 THE BLOOMS.

The Capitola Begonia Festival has been around since 1952, and during this late-summer celebration (held every Labor Day), the town's begonias are in full bloom. Highlights include the parade of flower-laden rafts floating down Soquel Creek, and the impressive sand castle contest.

## THE ESSENTIALS

#### BEACH

Capitola City Beach has sweeping views of Monterey Bay, and a long wooden fishing wharf for catching smaller fish. The family-friendly shore is busy on weekends; kayaks, paddleboards, and beautiful sailboats scatter out beyond the surf.

#### MAIN STREET

Residents head to Capitola Avenue for shopping. At The Craft Gallery, nautical art and crafts from 500 artisans are on display. Big Kahuna offers bright Hawaiian shirts; The Village Mouse charms with unique collectibles and fashionable gifts.

#### RESTAURANTS

Gayle's Bakery & Rosticceria has made-from-scratch breads, pies, and pastries. For dinner, bring your appetite to Shadowbrook Restaurant for the bacon-wrapped prawns in a soy glaze and the 1-pound surf-and-turf entrée.

#### ACTIVITIES

Surfers delight in the waves here, and lessons are in ample supply. For history buffs, the Capitola Historical Museum includes a reconstructed cottage from an early 20th-century beach resort, and offers free walking tours around town.

**JUST VISITING?** Once home to a Southern Pacific Railroad Depot, the luxe Inn at Depot Hill has 12 rooms, all patterned after the golden age of first-class travel. Rates start at \$299; innatdepothill.com.

## READY TO MOVE IN?



### Too-Cute Cottage

1 bedroom, 1 bath

543 square feet • \$549,950

**DETAILS:** Recently renovated home with a spacious patio, hot tub, storage shed, and fireplace within walking distance of the beach

**NEIGHBORHOOD:** Capitola  
MLS #81404899; realtor.com



### Waterfront Perch

3 bedrooms, 3 baths

1,779 square feet • \$2,495,000

**DETAILS:** New construction, with ocean views from every room

**NEIGHBORHOOD:** Depot Hill  
MLS #81334922; capitolahomesonline.com



### Sweet Retreat

3 bedrooms, 3 baths

1,850 square feet • \$995,000

**DETAILS:** Mediterranean-style single-family bungalow with stucco walls and hardwood flooring

**NEIGHBORHOOD:** Capitola  
MLS #81407251; trulia.com