

# SONOMA COUNTY RELOCATION GUIDE



*Anita Anderson*



- FARM COUNTRY
- URBAN CONVENIENCES
- BIG CITY NEARBY
- YOU HAVE IT ALL



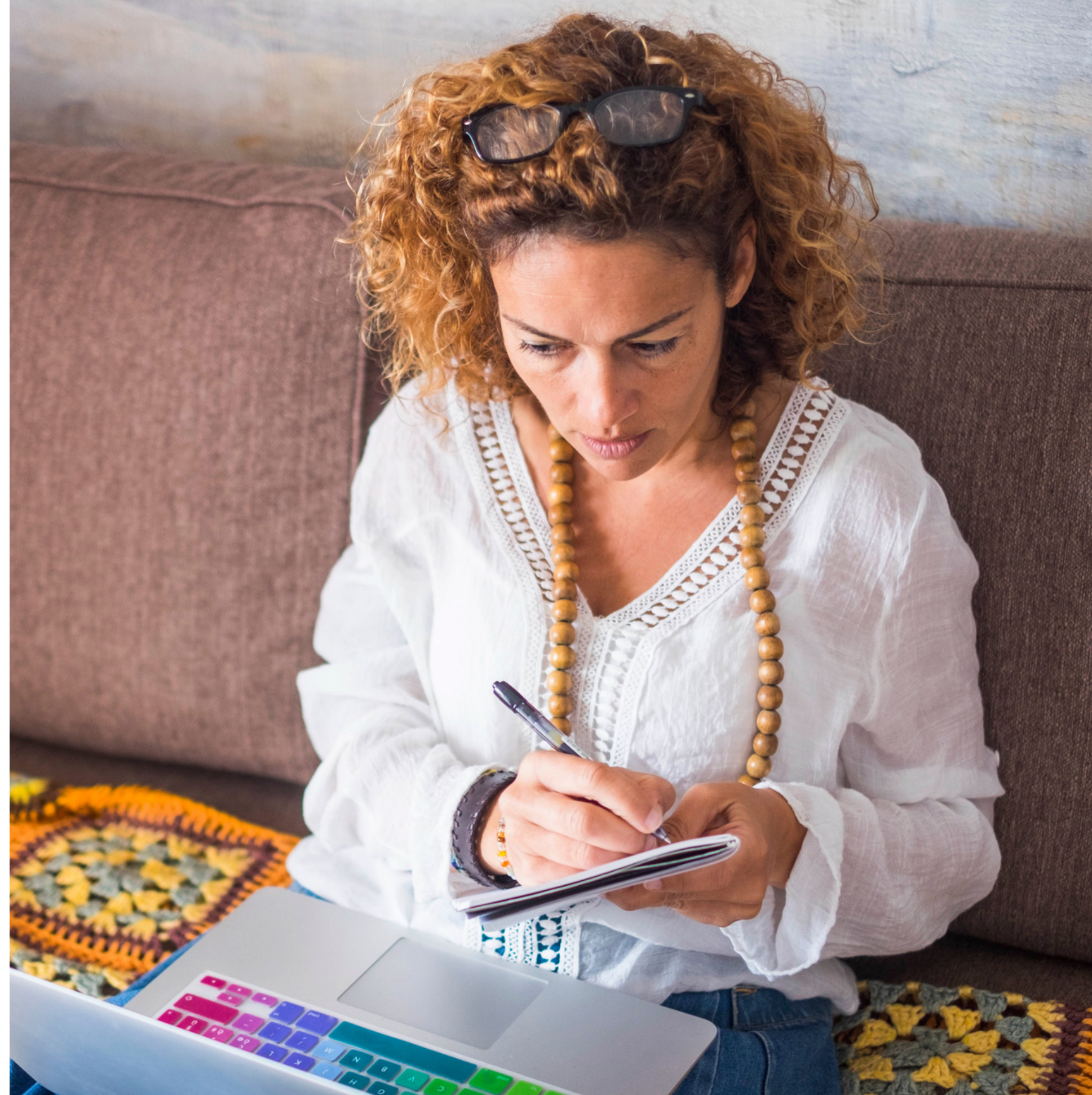


# WHERE TO LIVE?

## WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?

- ▶ Live near the ocean?
- ▶ Live away from people with some land?
- ▶ City Style near conveniences?
- ▶ Top rated Schools?
- ▶ Near Santa Rosa Airport?
- ▶ Near Sonoma State University or Santa Rosa JC?
- ▶ Is walkability a big deal?
- ▶ Do you need to live near the SMART TRAIN?

*Go to Anita's YouTube Channel:  
Discover Sonoma County Living to  
learn more about Sonoma County Cities*







# SCHOOLS

I have created a custom link for you to see the School ranking in 4 Major Cities on [GreatSchools.com](https://GreatSchools.com)

Sonoma

Sonoma Schools

Santa Rosa

Santa Rosa Schools

Petaluma

Petaluma Schools

Rohnert Park

Rohnert Park Schools

Windsor

Windsor Schools

Sebastopol

Sebastopol Schools

Go to [GreatSchools.com](https://GreatSchools.com) to lookup schools in the other cities in the county



# CITY NEIGHBORHOODS AND DESCRIPTIONS

## HIGHLIGHTS OF 6 MAJOR CITIES SONOMA

Sonoma is not just a city. The name embraces the 10,000 people inside the two square miles defining the city limits as well as the 25,000 others strung in a skein of unincorporated towns lining the Valley of the Moon along Highway 12 and creeping upland into the adjoining hills and mountains. Here are some highlights.

## ARMSTRONG ESTATES

Armstrong Estates is local builder Steve Ledson's homage to an earlier time that may never have existed but looks great in the guise of spacious Craftsman homes with wide porches on wide streets with big lots and lots of lawn. Ledson is known as a stickler for detail and the quality of his finished work. His own restored country house sits in sparkling white splendor on three-plus acres in the center of the subdivision, surrounded by magnolias, redwoods, oaks and palms.

The neighborhood is embraced by an air of calm and serenity, the houses embellished with lush landscaping. Homes start somewhere north of \$2 million and call to mind a simpler, safer era when kids rode bikes to school and played stickball in the street.





## HISTORIC OVERLAY ZONE

Hard up against the western edge of Armstrong Estates is Sonoma's Historic Overlay Zone, where restrictive zoning seeks to preserve the traditional Sonoma style, whatever recent generations believe it to be. The area is studded with stately heritage trees, deep lots that disappear into acres of backyards, a mix of Mediterranean, Victorian and Craftsman homes with never fewer than three bedrooms each and a prevailing commitment to a lifestyle of leisure and practical comfort.

Most commonly described by one word — Eastside — the historic zone is constantly argued over and the subject of endless planning commission appeals. Don't even think about cutting down a tree without consulting your neighbors. That second-story addition you're planning up against the property line? Forget about it.

But if you're a successful professional — young or old — this is where you'll probably want to live.



## LOVALL VALLEY ROAD

Lovall Valley Road is a specific stretch of asphalt but also a cultural and demographic address. The farther up it you live, the more cash you have to invest in architectural extravagance. California invented the term “ranchette,” which describes an estate of at least two acres, often with a barn and a horse and a pool. Lovall Valley Road is riddled with ranchettes and homes that cross the threshold of 10,000 square feet, separated from each other by acres of vineyards, pastures and white-fenced paddocks and barns. This is where you come to be a country squire.

But if you just want the manor house without the acres to worry about, you'll probably explore Old Winery Road, which intersects Lovall Valley and is dotted with all manner of manor houses shaded by enormous eucalyptus trees. Old Winery Road leads, as the name suggests, to Buena Vista, the oldest winery in California.



## THE SPRINGS

One hundred eighty degrees in the opposite direction geographically, demographically and architecturally is The Springs, the amalgam of unincorporated Highway 12 towns all with names — Boyes Hot Springs, Feters Hot Springs, Aqua Caliente — that bespeak the historic spa period when San Franciscans rode the train north to take the region's healing waters. Funky, ethnic, rundown and now building up, the Springs has what passes for affordable living with a spicy Hispanic flavor.

Taco trucks ply the cheapest and tastiest fast food you can find up and down the highway, while countless cafes, mercados and bodegas service the local trade. The sumptuous Fairmont Sonoma Mission Inn & Spa is an island of luxury in a sea of modest bungalows and summer cabins. Property appreciates the higher you climb the flanking hillside, and creative gentrification is happening all over the Springs as investors and second-home buyers snatch up the relative bargains in real estate.



## GLEN ELLEN

Finally, there's sunny, laid-back Glen Ellen, home to Jack London's fabled Wolf House, his Beauty Ranch and the state park where he's buried. Glen Ellen also hosts Doobie Brothers manager B.R. Cohn, his award-winning winery and annual for-charity rock concerts, along with countless cult winemakers whose vintages you'll never taste unless you're a member of their clubs. They are all nestled in a carpet of vineyards that stretches in every direction, intersected by roads and trails that lead up into mountains on both sides of the valley.



Downtown Glen Ellen is blessed with a gourmet market with a deli to die for and an exhaustive wine list. Village life centers around the market, the post office and an old-fashioned auto body shop. Homes range from modest cabins to Pixar honcho John Lasseter's mansion-in-the-making, which will reportedly top 14,000 square feet.

Out on the highway, Little Vineyards has its own recording studio where proprietor Rich Little plays his Chapman Stick. On Jack London Ranch Road just outside the state park is Benziger Family Winery, a biodynamic model of sustainable agriculture with a tram tour through geologic time. The Gage House is a nationally acclaimed Bed & Breakfast, and the Chauvet Hotel has luxury condominiums for rent that are part of the National Historical Registry.





# SANTA ROSA

## Popular Neighborhoods

Santa Rosa is a huge city with 504,217 people living in it. In this beautiful city there's so much to do, and no matter where you live, you're surrounded by wineries all around! Though Santa Rosa is known for its wineries, there's more to it than that. Santa Rosa is also known for the Schulz Museum, which honors the whole Peanuts gang. Plenty of people come every year for the Children's Museums miniature train and hands-on exhibits. Santa Rosa is the largest city in the county and is the county seat for the county so the court houses and civic offices are in Santa Rosa. There are some distinct older neighborhoods, well established neighborhoods and the Newer West side of the 101 which is flat with mostly 1970's homes and growing new developments.



## McDonald Historic District

### Santa Rosa's Historic Neighborhood

The McDonald Historic District, sometimes called the Junior College neighborhood, is a historic part of downtown Santa Rosa where many people own their homes. There is lots of charm with this Santa Rosa suburb, and it's clear that history is in every part of the neighborhood. With beautifully renovated historic homes and apartments, this neighborhood has everything you could want.

It's easy to walk somewhere to grab a bite, it's very safe, and it's nearby shops and walking trails. There are towering trees that have spent hundreds of years growing, well-kept roads, and a suburb feel while being close to downtown. If you have kids, this is a wonderful place to be, though many people are retirees as well.



## Oakmont

### Santa Rosa's Master Planned Community

If you're looking for a master-planned adult community in Santa Rosa, Oakmont is where you'll want to be. This Santa Rosa suburb is for adults looking for an experience run by HOA that includes everything from tennis courts to swimming pools. There are even some homes that are maintained by the HOA.

Whether you want independent or assisted living, Oakmont offers it. This safe community is where adults can come together to make friends and live in a master-planned community with everything you could ever want. The residents are extremely friendly and happy living at Oakmont. There are activities planned every day to get residents together. With a golf course and gorgeous gardens, some of the homes are pushed up against the mountain, others border the greens, and some are in quiet cul de sacs. There's something for everyone here.

Homes range from \$500,000+ depending on location, how big, and any other extra amenities you want to add on.





## Downtown

### Hip, Young & Active Suburb

When most people say downtown Santa Rosa, they are really talking about 4th street. This is where you'll find many bars, restaurants, and apartments for those looking for an urban- style life. Though there are some older homes here, most of them are remodeled apartments and loft-style rooms above businesses.

This is a great neighborhood in Santa Rosa if you are a younger, single adult or couple. It's a liberal district filled with hardworking, friendly people. You won't find many kids in this section of downtown, and the apartments may be a bit on the pricey side. Expect to pay around \$1,600 to rent a one bedroom apartment in downtown Santa Rosa.



## Bennett Valley

### Attracts Retiree's in Santa Rosa

Fit with the Bennett Valley Golf Course, the Bennett Valley neighborhood is a fairly popular one for older folks looking for a nice place to retire. Those living in this Santa Rosa suburb enjoy walking trails, multiple vineyards, gardening and hiking, and more. Because of the prime location, these homes can cost anywhere from \$700,000-\$1,200,000+, making it perfect for those wanting to be in a wealthy neighborhood to retire.

Bennett Valley's neighborhood isn't a true HOA-run neighborhood, but more of a main road with beautiful sprawling homes. Because of this, there's no planned community, HOA fees, or community pool, gym, or other things that come with planned communities. That being said, many of the homes have pools of their own, and the golf course has a membership option for those who enjoy being part of a club.





## Roseland

### Affordable & Diverse Santa Rosa Neighborhood

In south Santa Rosa is the Roseland neighborhood. It's known for being a commercial area with lots of warehouses, stores, and businesses lining the streets. However, there are also affordable homes that attract many young families with kids. There are three different elementary schools in Roseland because of the number of young kids living there. So if you have children, this is one of the best neighborhoods to be in.

It's a very diverse neighborhood as it serves as an entrance for immigrants and refugees. Because of this, the Roseland schools are boasted as the most diverse in the county! They're rated well, there are people of all ages, and the community is nice and friendly.

If you're looking for homes for sale in this Santa Rosa suburb, you can expect to pay anywhere from \$165,000-\$550,000 depending on the part of Roseland you're looking at. It's affordable and a very convenient location right next to Costco!



## Fountaingrove

### Recovering From The Fire

In 2017, Fountaingrove was burned to the ground in one of Santa Rosa's fires. It used to be one of the wealthiest neighborhoods in Santa Rosa, with homes selling for over \$2,000,000 on a regular basis. However, when 1,500 homes were burned to the ground, no one was sure whether the neighborhood would recover.

Thankfully, it has. The neighborhood is still pricey, but it's taken a price cut due to the fires. Single adults, young families, and LGBTQ+ couples are moving in. It's one of the best Santa Rosa neighborhoods for LGBTQ+ individuals, and it even boasts an LGBTQ+ retirement community!

Though many contractors have bought up plots and are building to sell, you can still snag one of the many lots and build yourself for a much cheaper cost. Expect to pay anywhere from \$550,000+ for a new home in this area.





## Memorial Hospital Neighborhood

### Safe & Affluent Santa Rosa Neighborhood

Located near the Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital is the Memorial Hospital neighborhood. This is one of the best places to live for those who are retired or just want a safe place to live. Relatively affluent, the homes are generally in the \$600,000-\$1,000,000 range. Inside of this area, there are a few thousand people who live there. It's a large neighborhood in Santa Rosa, and you can expect most people to keep to themselves.

Because this isn't a planned community, this Santa Rosa suburb has a downtown feel, but the homes are all suburb- style. Some of the homes are a few decades old, but many people are redoing the homes or remodeling them. The property is expensive, and it may be cheaper to buy an old home and then start over from scratch. However, many of the homes have been remodeled, so if you're wanting modern updates, this is a great neighborhood to be in.

Though you'll hear sirens more often than most neighborhoods because you're close to the hospital, there is a lot to do. Nearby, is 4th street for shopping and eating and Spring Creek for some beautiful views or hiking.







# PETALUMA

## **Downtown: History, culture, and more**

Unlike many of the old neighborhoods in the San Francisco Bay Area, Petaluma's downtown area resists the destructive power of earthquakes because the downtown area rests on granite bedrock. As a result, Downtown Petaluma contains blocks and blocks of (1) gorgeous architecture, (2) vibrant shopping, (3) restaurants, (4) theater, and (5) art exhibits. Indeed, if you want to live near the pulse of Petaluma, you can't do any better than to buy a place in Downtown

## **College: A premier walking and biking neighborhood**

Although Petaluma isn't the first town that pops into mind when you're listing the top Bay Area colleges, we are home to a branch of the terrific Santa Rosa Junior College. The neighborhood around the campus, known simply as College, boasts family homes connected to a beautiful system of walking and biking trails that lead to shopping and medical destinations.

## **Oakhill Brewster: A haven for historic home enthusiasts**

The Oakhill Brewster residential neighborhood sits northwest of the downtown area of the city and treats residents to lovely views of the Downtown and Sonoma County. As one of the earliest housing areas in Petaluma, this is the place to live if you want to buy a bungalow or Victorian-era home.



## Midtown: Embrace mid-century modern

Like many communities in the Bay Area, Petaluma saw a post World War II housing boom during the 1950s, and you'll find numerous examples of mid-century modern homes in the Midtown neighborhood. Convenient access to Highway 101, along with a future SMART train stop, makes commuting across the San Francisco Bay to jobs in San Francisco, a doable option for local homeowners. Midtown is a favorite housing location for first-time homebuyers and empty nesters.

## West Side

Newer with modern 1970's to Present neighborhoods and growing new developments East Side homes are Newer built from 1960/70 to the present. This is the newer part of town and holds the 4 major shopping centers to include Home Depot, Kohls and Trader Joes and Target (actually on the West side of the 101). There are \$500,000 homes and \$1M homes. The walkability is amazing, the convenience is terrific and the schools are great too.







# ROHNERT PARK

Nicknamed "The Friendly City," Rohnert Park offers a wide variety of activities for folks of all ages in central Sonoma County, in the heart of Wine Country. Laid out in the 1950s, Rohnert Park (pop. 40,971) was one of the first planned communities nationwide.

Tall redwoods and other trees line many of Rohnert Park's wide boulevards, and biking and walking trails connect its 159 (and growing) residential neighborhoods, each designed around its own park and elementary school. There's also the Central Rohnert Park district, immediately east of Highway 101, and West Rohnert Park and North West Rohnert Park to the west (of course) of the highway.

Some folks might see Rohnert Park as mainly a residential town, but it also boasts an acclaimed state university with 9,300 students, a dynamic arts community, a gambling casino, a multitude of indoor and outdoor recreational opportunities, and an eclectic mix of restaurants and eateries. It's a great place to spend a couple days, relaxing and exploring.

The City is laid out in Sections with each section Coded with a letter of the alphabet starting with A section on the southern border up through and going East towards the hills to G and H Sections..and more its growing. Each section's street names start with the appropriate letter of the alphabet. "A" sections streets all start with A and so on. Every development 9sections) has a new flavor of architecture. This city did it's major expansion in the last 50 years. A flat world of suburbia there is not one hill and it is super easy to get around. Very convenient and near everything.



The town is a straight drive up Highway 101 from San Francisco, or if you fly into the Charles M Schulz-Sonoma County Airport (STS) in Santa Rosa, Airport Express drops you off at Doubletree by Hilton Hotel Sonoma Wine Country in Rohnert Park (and also connects to San Francisco International and Oakland International airports). Sonoma County Transit offers bus routes around Rohnert Park and to various destinations countywide, and the Sonoma-Marin Area Regional Transit (SMART) trains stop at a station in central Rohnert Park. For more details, read [How to Get to Sonoma County](#), [Guide to Exploring Sonoma County by SMART Train](#), and [Getting Around Sonoma County](#).







# WINDSOR

The town of Windsor (pop. 26,801) brings a deliberately designed family-friendly emphasis to the heart of the Sonoma County wine and food country.

Located two miles from the Russian River, the well-planned 7.3-square-mile town boasts six community parks, more than 13 neighborhood parks, and three large regional parks. Each year Windsor hosts the popular Wings Over Wine Country Air Show.

Windsor's Town Green, designed as a pedestrian-friendly center of town, hosts more than 30 free annual events, including summer movie nights, concerts, a farmers market and special events such as car shows, art fairs, cooking demonstrations, and a variety of festivals.

Visit Old Downtown Windsor, home to shops featuring gifts, accessories, jewelry, clothing, sporting goods, toys, books, coffee, candy, and more. But it looks New! Dining opportunities in Windsor offer something for everyone, from fast food and coffee shops, to fine dining and a wide variety of ethnic choices.

Windsor also is divided into East and West Side as the 100 freeway does divide this city too. Both sides are lovely with newer and more modern homes built with modern conveniences. What a pleasant place to live.







# SEBASTOPOL

Sebastopol with its Russian influence from the pioneer day history. Sebastopol Has a population of 50,000 residents.[7][8]

Sebastopol became known as the "Gravenstein Apple Capital of the World". The apple industry brought a steady rural prosperity to the town. In 1890 the San Francisco and North Pacific Railroad connected Sebastopol to the national rail network.[12] The town was incorporated in 1902, with schools, churches, hotels, canneries, mills, wineries, and an opera house to its credit.

This town is cute and has miles of small hilly orchards that lead you into redwood trees, many different micro-climates and views to die for. Views from small hills overlooking the flat lands. There are pretty high mountains and very rural private homesteads and land. Gated properties and private estates abound. Whole foods is nearby and if other shopping is calling you just drive to Santa Rosa it's 15 minutes away. The regions wines are terrific and the cheese tasting is even better. Hunt down that goat cheese cheddar.

Sebastopol has a rich agricultural history, including Luther Burbank's Experiment Farm, where the renowned horticulturist developed more than 800 varieties of fruits, flowers, vegetables, and grains beginning in the 1880s.

*Don't miss the annual Apple Blossom Festival and Parade (April 18-19, 2020)*



Sebastopol embraces the fine arts, culture, history (West County Museum), the healing arts, fine dining, healthy dining, wine, farming, the environment, sustainable living, outdoor recreation (Laguna de Santa Rosa Wetlands Preserve) and more.

Wander charming downtown Sebastopol and discover the many unique shops featuring crafts, health food, clothing, books, house wares and toys, along with restaurants, pubs, New Age stores, and art galleries. Antique stores abound, making this a great place to go antiques, earning the area the nickname Antique Row. And about a half mile northeast of downtown, visit the shops, tasting rooms and eateries in the park-like setting of the 220,000-square-foot business center known as The Barlow.






# WHY SONOMA COUNTY LIVING COUNTRY + CITY = GREAT LIVING

- ▶ The Santa Rosa Airport and Airpoter are close by
- ▶ Traffic is not bad. In fact in July 2020 it's a breeze
- ▶ World Class Dining, famous chefs galore!
- ▶ The Best Wine on the Planet
- ▶ Pacific Ocean 40 Minutes away
- ▶ San Francisco 40 minute to an hour aaway
- ▶ Top notch life style
- ▶ Employment is Plentiful
- ▶ Prop 13 tax restrictions
- ▶ US Coast Guard Base in Petaluma, national Guard in Santa Rosa
- ▶ The most perfect weather on the planet all year round
- ▶ Beauty and lifestyle combined for premier lifestyle





A black and white photograph of a modern interior space, likely a living and dining area. On the left, there is a white sofa with cushions and a large, dark, smooth rock resting on a dark, polished stone ledge. In the center, a dining table with a dark top and light-colored legs is visible, surrounded by white chairs. To the right, another dining table with a white top and dark legs is partially visible. Large windows and a glass door in the background offer a view of the ocean and a rocky coastline. The ceiling features a curved wooden beam structure. A large, semi-transparent red rectangle is overlaid in the center of the image, containing white text.

VIRTUAL TOURS ARE ON THE WAY.  
ASK ANITA. SHE WILL MAKE SURE YOU  
CAN SEE HOUSES THOROUGHLY IF YOU  
ARE MOVING FROM OUT OF STATE.



# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

## Anita Anderson

- ▶ Born and raised in Sonoma County
- ▶ Certified Tourism Ambassador
- ▶ Full Time Realtor
- ▶ Top Keller Williams Realtor
- ▶ Homes for Heroes Affiliate
- ▶ Expert Relocation Specialist for 25 Years
- ▶ Abundant resources for reducing Down and retirement
- ▶ Military and first responder relocation expert
- ▶ Loves Helping YOU!
- ▶ Expert Understanding of the Market and buying and selling Strategy



**NEED A LOCAL GUIDE?**

**Call Anita**

**707-636-4024**



[www.discoversonomacountyliving.com](http://www.discoversonomacountyliving.com)



[hello@discoversonomacountyliving.com](mailto:hello@discoversonomacountyliving.com)



# TOP EMPLOYERS IN SONOMA COUNTY

EMPLOYER NAME	LOCATION	INDUSTRY
Aabalat Fine & Rare Wines	Petaluma	Wineries (mfrs)
Amy's Kitchen Inc	Santa Rosa	Frozen Food Processors (mfrs)
Army National Guard Recruiter	Santa Rosa	Government Offices-State
Clover Stornetta Farms Inc	Petaluma	Dry Condensed/Evprtd Dairy Prod (mfrs)
Fairmont Sonoma Msn Inn & Spa	Sonoma	Hotels & Motels
First Security Svc	Rohnert Park	Security Guard & Patrol Service
Flex Products	Santa Rosa	Coatings-Vacuum Deposition (mfrs)
Ghilotti Construction Co	Santa Rosa	Excavating Contractors
H2Hotel	Healdsburg	Hotels & Motels
Kaiser Permanente Santa Rosa	Santa Rosa	Hospitals
Medtronic Cardiovascular	Santa Rosa	Surgical Instruments-Manufacturers
Petaluma Valley Hospital	Petaluma	Hospitals



# TOP EMPLOYERS IN SONOMA COUNTY

EMPLOYER NAME	LOCATION	INDUSTRY
Protransport-1 LLC	Cotati	Transportation Services
Redwood Empire Recycling	Santa Rosa	Recycling Centers (whls)
Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital	Santa Rosa	Hospitals
Santa Rosa Police Department	Santa Rosa	Police Departments
Sonoma County Fire Svc	Santa Rosa	Fire Departments
Sonoma County Sheriff	Santa Rosa	Government Offices-County
Sonoma Developmental Center	Eldridge	Hospitals
Sonoma Valley Hospital	Sonoma	Hospitals
Sutter Santa Rosa Regional Hospital	Santa Rosa	Hospitals
US Coast Guard	Petaluma	Federal Government-Transportation Pgrms
Walmart	Windsor	Department Stores
Walmart	Rohnert Park	Department Stores





WHAT SONOMA COUNTY IS KNOWN FOR  
GO HAVE SOME FUN!  
HERE'S A LINK

# SONOMA'S BEST FUN

[SONOMACOUNTY.COM/ARTICLES/WHAT-SONOMA-COUNTY-FAMOUS-Z-GUIDE](https://sonomacounty.com/articles/what-sonoma-county-famous-z-guide)

ANITA'S YOUTUBE CHANNEL:  
DISCOVER SONOMA COUNTY LIVING  
See Neighborhood Tours and highlights of the County



# GREAT FIRST RESPONDERS & HEALTHCARE

- ▶ 911
- ▶ Kaiser in Petaluma and Santa Rosa
- ▶ Petaluma Valley Hospital
- ▶ Sutter Health Care
- ▶ Sonoma Valley Hospital
- ▶ Healdsburg District Hospital
- ▶ Petaluma Health Center
- ▶ Palm Drive Hospital Sebastopol
- ▶ Sonoma County Department of Health Services





# SONOMA COUNTY BUSINESS LINKS

## Business Resources

<https://srcity.org/1148/Business-Resources>

## Animal Care

This county has abundant veterinarians and adoptions agencies for pets as this is an agricultural community and a very pet friendly County.

