

SANTA BARBARA

THE AMERICAN RIVIERA®

CONFERENCE + VISITORS BUREAU + FILM COMMISSION

ARTS & CULTURE:

Santa Barbara—the Cultural Center of the Central Coast

SANTA BARBARA, Calif. — Like the sun-washed towns that are its Mediterranean soul mates, Santa Barbara – a.k.a. the American Riviera® – offers visitors a big dose of sophisticated culture to complement its abundant beauty. Few cities of Santa Barbara’s size can match the quality and diversity of its artistic and cultural offerings, which include 50 museums and galleries and a wide range of stellar performance venues hosting multiple world-class theatre groups, opera and dance companies, chamber orchestras, a symphony orchestra and more. No wonder Santa Barbara has earned its place as one of the top ten art colonies in the nation.

VENUES FOR EVERYTHING UNDER THE SUN...AND THE STARS

Santa Barbara hosts hundreds of live performances every year and has a wealth of beautiful, comfortable, architecturally interesting and historically significant venues in which to experience them. All that’s left to do is choose a spot and catch a show here on the American Riviera®.

Among the city’s most beloved performing arts venues is the **Lobero Theatre** (805-963-0761) in the historic **Pueblo Viejo**, or Old Town. The intimate 680-seat space, with its smooth white Spanish-style exterior, arched entryway and red tile roof, was built in 1924 and is California’s oldest continuously operating theater.

A few blocks away is another historic downtown landmark, the **Arlington Center for the Performing Arts** (805-963-4408). The 2,018-seat venue was built in 1931 and is enhanced by faux Spanish adobe architectural details on the interior walls and a ceiling adorned with trompe l’oeil stars. The Arlington is also home to a famous Robert-Morton theatre pipe organ.

For a ceiling of *real* stars, catch a show at the newly renovated **Santa Barbara Bowl** (805-962-7411). Nestled in the foothills beneath lovely hillside homes, the 4,500-seat amphitheater is *the* outdoor venue for major talent during the April-through-November season.

Scheduled to reopen in 2008 after a major renovation, the 1930s-era **Granada Theatre** downtown has long been a Santa Barbara favorite. The 1,550-seat venue will host live performances in a variety of genres.

A series of small theaters are sprinkled throughout Santa Barbara. In the Paseo Nuevo shopping center, near the Granada Theatre, is the **Center Stage Theater** (805-963-0408), which offers stadium seating in an intimate 150-seat blackbox setting. The **Garvin Theatre** (805-965-5935) is located high above the harbor lights on the beautifully situated campus of Santa Barbara City College.

At the University of California, Santa Barbara, heavily utilized **Campbell Hall** attracts everyone from Nobel laureates to Walter Cronkite to Bob Dylan in an impressive and busy schedule of lectures and concerts.

The **Marjorie Luke Theatre** (805-963-0761) is a remarkable venue – a thoroughly professional performance space offering a lively and varied repertoire at its location on the campus of Santa Barbara Junior High School.

In North County, the city of Santa Maria's Allan Hancock College is home to both the **Severson Theatre** and the 400-seat **Marian Theatre** (both at 805-928-7731), while the **Solvang Festival Theatre** (805-928-7731) welcomes more than 700 fans for outdoor performances in the city of Solvang.

PERFORMING ARTS

Santa Barbarans are hopelessly spoiled when it comes to their range of performance options. The following organizations provide a satisfying year-round menu of dance, theatre and music. Contact the **Santa Barbara Performing Arts League** (805-563-8068, www.sbperformingartsleague.org) for current schedules and information.

Dance

Founded in 1994 by former American Ballet Theatre dancer Rodney Gustafson, **State Street Ballet** (805-965-6066) is Santa Barbara's acclaimed professional ballet company. Its classical and contemporary works are performed by extremely skilled dancers.

The **Santa Barbara Chamber Ballet** (805-564-3568) features young and pre-professional dancers performing such classics as *Sleeping Beauty*, *Swan Lake* and *Cinderella*, while another pre-professional group, the **West Coast Ballet** (805-687-6086), regularly presents full-length productions, often with celebrity dancers making guest appearances.

The **Santa Barbara Festival Ballet** (805-966-0711), the non-profit performing company of the Santa Barbara Ballet Center, presents a fully staged *Nutcracker* every December, as well as a lively collection of other performances throughout the year.

Another non-profit organization, the **Santa Barbara Dance Alliance** (805-966-6950) arranges visits by nationally renowned choreographers and promotes local talent via performances all year long. The group offers an outdoor Multicultural Dance and Music Festival; a show of New Works by Santa Barbara choreographers; its popular BASSH series – which stands for “Ballroom, Argentine Tango, Swing, Salsa, Hip-Hop” – and more.

Music

From acoustic to classical, rock and opera; from string quartets to a full symphony orchestra; from jazz to pop and beyond, when it comes to music, Santa Barbara hits the right notes in an array of genres. Here's a sampling of what's available.

Founded in 1953, the critically acclaimed **Santa Barbara Symphony** (805-898-9626) performs a wide-ranging repertoire of traditional, choral and pops music as well as a special Family Series.

The **Community Arts Music Association** (805-966-4324), also known as CAMA, prides itself on bringing world-renowned orchestras, virtuosi and soloists to town for memorable performances. Its “Master Series” attracts world-renowned chamber musicians and soloists.

Opera Santa Barbara (805-898-3890) presents a festival-style series of repertory productions of several operas, each performed over a two-week period.

Chamber music is well represented in Santa Barbara. A varied repertoire and extremely high level of musicianship characterize the popular **Camerata Pacifica** (805-884-8410) ensemble, which also puts a strong emphasis on musical education for the public. Guest artists frequently take part in the **Santa Barbara Chamber Orchestra's** (805-944-2441) performances of classical chamber works.

Every year, talented young musicians attend the prestigious **Music Academy of the West Summer Festival** (805-969-4726) to hone their crafts. The students perform in more than 200 concerts and “masterclasses” – ensemble “lessons” that are open to the public – held in venues throughout town, including the Academy’s Mediterranean-style “Mirafloza” estate in Montecito.

The oratorio tradition is alive and well on the American Riviera® thanks to the efforts of the **Santa Barbara Master Chorale** (805-967-8287). Fans of classical vocal music will want to catch a performance by the **Santa Barbara Choral Society** (805-965-6577). The 100-member touring group, the oldest performing arts organization in Santa Barbara, performs a challenging repertoire of works by such masters as Bach, Beethoven and Handel.

The **UCSB Music Department** (805-893-7001) sponsors a pair of groups: the University Jazz Ensemble and the Ensemble for Contemporary Music. The University Artist Series presents faculty performances.

For an up-close experience with some of the world’s most famous singer-songwriters – and some supremely talented unknowns and rising stars – check out the annual “**Sings Like Hell**” series at the Lobero Theatre (805-963-0761), which has featured the likes of Randy Newman, Tracy Chapman and John Hiatt.

Catch great blues performers at venues all around town, presented by the **Santa Barbara Blues Society** (805-897-0060) as part of its ongoing efforts to preserve and support this quintessentially American style of music.

For the ultimate in laid-back family-friendly outdoor summer music, there’s the ever-popular **Thursday Night Concert Series**. The free shows run from 6-8 p.m. weekly during June and July at Chase Palm Park, right across the street from the beach. Locals and visitors pack picnics, then pack the grass to lounge or dance barefoot by the open-air stage at these rousing sunset fêtes.

Theatre

Santa Barbara presents more than 200 professional and amateur stage productions every year. Whether you prefer classics by Arthur Miller, contemporary works by up-and-coming playwrights, cabaret or kids’ pantomime, it’s on stage in Santa Barbara.

At more than 25 years of age, the award-winning **Ensemble Theatre Company** (805-962-8606) is Santa Barbara's longest-running professional resident company. Each year, it treats audiences to a nine-month season of engaging classic and modern productions by American and international playwrights. The newest professional addition to the local performance scene is the **Santa Barbara Theatre** (805-965-1508), which launched its inaugural season in 2005-2006.

Every year, **Shakespeare Santa Barbara** (805-231-5088) combines fine wine with a weeklong run of a selected work by the Bard, performed in the outdoor courtyard of historic Casa de la Guerra downtown. The much-acclaimed **Pacific Conservatory of the Performing Arts (PCPA) Theaterfest** (805-922-8313) presents thoroughly professional theatre year-round at the Marian and Severson Theatres in Santa Maria and, in summer, at the Festival Theatre in Solvang. Robin Williams trained with the resident theatre group, the only one between Los Angeles and San Francisco that has a two-year conservatory training program.

Student and professional actors team up in the five plays presented each year by the **Santa Barbara City College Theatre Group** (805-965-5935) at its two on-campus theatres. **UCSB** (805-893-3535) presents high-quality student productions performed by **Theatre UCSB**, while faculty members hit the boards locally as the **Theatre Arts Group**. More local talent is on display at the recently formed **Victoria Hall Theatre Company** (805-654-1801), which focuses on contemporary drama and comedy.

For an alternative take on live performance, drive into the mountains northwest of Santa Barbara to enjoy the **Circle Bar Dinner Theatre** (805-967-1962). Shows are performed weekend nights from April through November.

VISUAL ARTS

Santa Barbara is a living architectural masterpiece in its own right, and a visitor could spend weeks and never make it to all the visual-arts venues and events. Yet, thanks to the city's intimacy, an extension of its manageable size, art viewing here is a pleasant indulgence rather than a daunting challenge. From museums and galleries to beachside festivals, accessible eye-catching excellence comes with the territory in Santa Barbara.

For the most up-to-date information on the local visual art scene, request a copy of the free **Visual Arts Guide**, which lists galleries, museums, shows, openings and special events all over the county, courtesy

of the **Visual Arts Alliance** (805-745-8533, www.sbva.org). The guides are also available at museums and galleries throughout town.

A major recent mural acquisition installed adjacent to the State Street entrance of the **Santa Barbara Museum of Art** (805-963-4364) – *Portrait of Mexico Today* (1932), by world-renowned Mexican artist David Alfaro Siqueiros – symbolizes the extensive reach of this exciting regional institution. The world-class collections from North America, Mexico, Europe and Asia include an antiquities collection rivaled in the western United States only by the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles. The 2,600 objects in the Asian collection span a period of 4,000 years. The European, American and contemporary collections include major works by such masters as Monet, Matisse, Braque, Bonnard, Chagall, Sargent, Remington, Hartley, Diebenkorn and Oldenberg. Photography and the 23,000 works on paper cap a collection rivaled by few, if any, museums of this size.

For visual arts beyond the museum, check out the world-famous **Brooks Institute of Photography** (805-966-3888), which houses a collection of 1,000 superb photographic images created by Brooks students, many of whom have gone on to achieve photographic fame.

The **University Art Museum** (805-893-7564) at UCSB has 8,500 works. Emphasizing vanguard contemporary art, the museum also houses an impressive Architecture & Design Collection, works on paper and fine arts from antiquity to the present day. The university also offers a guide to the art on campus.

Located over the mountains in the charming wine country town of Los Olivos, the **Wildling Art Museum** (805-688-1082) features works inspired by the American wilderness.

On the edgier side, the **Contemporary Arts Forum** (805-966-5373) offers a regularly rotating collection of high-quality work from up-and-coming artists.

Galleries Galore

Whatever you're looking for, from figurative oils to abstract acrylics, from watercolor landscapes to bronze sculpture, from folk-art to fine-art photography and lithographs, it is created, exhibited and sold in Santa Barbara. With some 60 galleries located throughout the county, visual enticement is never far away.

A visitor could spend weeks browsing Santa Barbara's galleries and never see them all. Several galleries are located in libraries, bookstores, coffee shops, and in restaurants, such as at the **Arts & Letters Café** (805-730-1463), an art bookstore and café. Discover galleries tucked into quiet paseos like La Arcada Court, home to three wonderful galleries – **Waterhouse Gallery** (805-962-8885), **Bottoms Art Gallery** (805-962-5772) and Santa Barbara's oldest fine arts gallery, **Gallery 113** (805-965-6611), a cooperative showcasing painting, sculpture and jewelry by more than 500 artists.

Some galleries are situated in converted homes, such as **Easton Gallery** (805-969-5781) in Montecito, specializing in landscape art by local members of the Oak Group. Even government buildings have their own galleries, like **Channing Peake** (805-965-9663), located in the County Administration building.

At the unique **Artiste Gallery** (805-686-2626) in Santa Ynez, visitors can not only sip wine and browse fine art but also paint on a collective canvas.

Want to do more than just visit galleries? A couple of local organizations take visitors behind the art and into the studios – from garages to grand mansions – where artists do their work. The 40-plus professional artists in the **Santa Barbara Studio Artists** (805-899-8854) organization open their studios to the public every year during Labor Day weekend for an Open Studios Tour. They also publish a free *Studio Artists Directory* for art lovers interested in setting up private tours by appointment throughout the year.

Public Art

There's nothing like turning a corner to encounter a piece of vibrant public art. Santa Barbara is home to an array of murals, sculptures, fountains, bronzes and mosaics. Some stand as vibrant sentinels in prominent locations; others require a careful eye or even a bit of searching to locate. Either way, the reward lies in the discovery. To download a map of public art in Santa Barbara city or the whole county, go to the **Santa Barbara County Arts Commission** Web site at www.sbartscommission.org, or call 805-568-3992.

Ben Franklin and a host of other bronze figures can be encountered in the cozy La Arcada Court off State Street. Among them are a couple of dolphins by **James A. Bottoms**, who created the dolphin-themed **Centennial Fountain**, located where State Street ends at Stearns Wharf. Near La Arcada, a circa-1931 **Samuel Armstrong** mural adorns the facade entry to the Arlington Theatre.

Muralist **Manual Unzueta**'s art depicting Latino culture and its contribution to local life have been gracing the walls of public buildings in Santa Barbara since the 1970s. Look for ***Allegory of Brotherhood*** at La Casa del la Raza and ***Chicano Dreams*** at Santa Barbara City College.

Elings Park, the perfect place for a late-afternoon walk high above the city, has its own **sculpture garden**. Santa Barbara airport is home to a terrific kinetic-art clock as well as ***Albatross***, another kinetic sculpture by artist **Dustin Shuler**. Nearby, **George Roads'** ***Wind-A-Ma-Jig*** takes Goleta Beach visitors for a wind-driven spin.

The stage at Chase Palm Park is shaded by **Scott Peterson**'s award-winning ***Sail Sculpture***, and **Michael McMillen**'s ***Lightning Gate*** sculpture tops the bluff at Rincon Beach's upper parking lot. Perhaps the most notable piece of public art in Santa Barbara is **Herbert Bayer**'s 21-foot-tall, 12.5-ton ***Chromatic Gate***. Inspired by a Chumash legend, the striking rectangular steel arch cum rainbow stands on the grass in front of Fess Parker's DoubleTree Resort.

Sir Anthony Caro's lacquered steel sculpture ***Intermezzo*** rests in the courtyard behind the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, which is also home to ***Retrato del Mexico de Hoy***, a mural created in 1932 by **David Alfaro Siqueiros**. A few steps away you'll find the ***Don Quixote*** mural on the Central Library, and within easy walking distance are the 224,640 individual *tessera* (tiles) of **Joseph Knowles**'s ***History of Santa Barbara County*** mosaic, which brightens the Victoria Street façade at Vons supermarket. Farther down State Street, ***Crescent Crossing***, the sculptural bench created by **Donald Davis** in 2002, adds imagination to an Old Town shuttle bus stop.

If you're really into finding secret treasures, track down ***Swordfish***, a brass sculpture drain spout by architect **Greg Rech** on the second floor of Public Parking Garage #9, at 21-27 E. Canon Perdido Street. Reach it via a brick walkway between the Lobero Theatre and the El Centro Building.

In the north county, **Lompoc** is aptly called "The City of Murals in the Valley of Flowers" in reference to its roughly 100 large and small public murals depicting the town's unique history as an agricultural, military, and commercial center. Maps of the murals are available at the Lompoc Chamber of Commerce (805-736-4567).

ART EVENTS

Taking in some great art, accompanied by food, music or both, is a perfect way to enjoy Santa Barbara culture. Mark these events in your calendar.

1st Thursday, a free monthly, multi-venue downtown arts and culture event, debuted in February 2007. Over 20 galleries, museums and retail locations extend their hours until 8pm on the first Thursday of each month and offer special food, beverage and entertainment offerings, making for a lively community evening on State Street in the downtown Cultural Arts District corridor. Highlights include street performers, opening receptions, lectures, gallery talks and interactive demonstrations. www.santabarbaradowntown.com/go

Experience art like never before at Santa Barbara Museum of Art's "**Nights**" events, the third Thursday of each month May through September. The museum opens its doors for one of the hottest parties in town featuring art, music, cocktails and outrageous art activities.

The weekly **Arts and Crafts Show** is just the thing for those who like to discover art of every kind in the open air. Every Sunday, dozens of local vendors sell pottery, painting, sculpture, photography and crafts from booths set up along oceanfront Cabrillo Boulevard.

Every fall, the **Santa Barbara Art Walk** attracts more than 200 artists, who show and sell their work on the oak-shaded grounds behind the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History.

Also in fall, the annual **Santa Barbara Festival of Art & Jazz** brings the potent duo of music and art to the gorgeous sunken gardens at the famous Santa Barbara County Courthouse.

The most colorful event in Santa Barbara has to be the annual Memorial Day weekend **I Madonnari Festival**. Artists create a collection of some 200 large-scale chalk "paintings," which transform the concrete plaza of the mission into a dazzling tapestry of temporary art. Music and food round out the fun.

MUSEUMS, HISTORY AND EDUCATION

Santa Barbara is fortunate to have so many fine museums and outstanding collections that reach beyond traditional "art"—from the natural world that sustained the Chumash and creates such a striking context for the city, to the legacy of the mission, pueblo and rancho eras; from the world's intellectual history to Santa Barbara's maritime past.

The **Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History** (805-682-4711) is a lovely place to spend a day. Set in an oak grove and specializing in California and North American West Coast natural history, the museum highlights prehistoric Native American life and Chumash Indian culture in a series of dioramas and exhibits and hosts the largest collection of intricate Chumash basketry anywhere. Extensive displays of birds and insects delight kids, as do the planetarium and the enormous skeleton of a baby blue whale at the museum's entrance. The "Butterflies Alive" exhibit provides close-up encounters with exotic flutterers during its annual spring/summer run.

A few hundred yards away, the **Santa Barbara Mission Museum** (805-682-4713) features 18th-century paintings and sculpture by Spanish masters, plus large statues created by California Indians.

Another hidden gem is the **Karpeles Manuscript Library & Museum** (805-962-5322) whose one million-plus original works make it the world's largest private manuscript holding and includes writings by Gandhi, Mozart, Thoreau, Darwin, Washington, Lincoln, Einstein and others.

Down at the Harbor, the engaging **Santa Barbara Maritime Museum** (805-962-8404) covers local maritime history all the way back to the days when the Chumash paddled dugout canoes to the Channel Islands. The museum has multiple interactive children's exhibits and a 45-foot-tall U.S. Navy periscope. One of only three in the world in public use, it affords a 360-degree sub's-eye view of paradise.

Nearby at Stearns Wharf, the **Ty Warner Sea Center** (805-682-4711), named for the Beanie Babies creator who underwrote a recent major renovation of the site, features terrific interactive exhibits. Kids and adults can encounter live tidepool animals and work like scientists by sampling and testing ocean water, studying animal behavior, and examining microscopic marine life. A theater showcases the wonders of the Santa Barbara Channel.

The **Santa Barbara Historical Society Museum** (805-966-1601) is the perfect first stop for exploring local history. The U-shaped latter-day adobe stands adjacent to a pair of historic adobes from the early 1800s, surrounds a picturesque courtyard and houses fine art, Western saddles, period costumes and antique toys. It also hosts lectures and other programs tracing significant movements in local history. The society offers tours of two nearby historic homes – a Queen Anne-style Victorian built in the early 1860s and an 1854 adobe.

Managed by the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation, **Casa de la Guerra** (805-966-6961) is a city and state landmark listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The early-19th-century adobe was the original home of Santa Barbara Presidio *Commandante* José de la Guerra and is operated as a museum today.

To see how history literally rolled through the region, visit the **Santa Barbara Carriage and Western Arts Museum** (805-962-2353). Some 300 years of Old West vehicular history are on display at the 11,000-square-foot museum, in a collection comprising horse-drawn carts and carriages used by pioneer Santa Barbara families, plus stagecoaches, buggies, army wagons and a bright red firefighting steam pumper.

More transportation history is on display at the **South Coast Railroad Museum** (805-964-3450) in Goleta, a ten-minute drive from downtown Santa Barbara. Kids love this museum, which is built around a restored circa-1901 Victorian-style Southern Pacific Depot. Railroad artifacts and rare photographs are complemented by a 300-square-foot model railroad and a miniature train for kids.

Enjoy a two-wheeled trip into the past at the **Solvang Vintage Motorcycle Museum** (805-686-9522). It features an impressive rotating display of rare and classic motorcycles – many of them racing bikes.

Regional Museums

A collection of widely dispersed regional museums provide insights into some of the more intriguing areas in Santa Barbara County.

South of Santa Barbara, the **Carpinteria Valley Museum of History** (805-684-3112) traces the history of this quaint coastal town from the Chumash days through the end of the 19th century. Chumash artifacts and dioramas are also on display at the **Santa Ynez Valley Historical Society Museum** (805-922-3130).

Rapidly growing Santa Maria is home to several museums. The **Santa Maria Valley Historical Museum** (805-922-3130) casts a light on Chumash and other local history. Highlights at the **Santa Maria Museum of Flight** (805-922-8758) include several aircraft used in World War II, and the **Santa Maria Discovery Museum** (805-928-8414) is home to a series of interactive art and science exhibits.

A replica of an old farmhouse is the setting for the **Elverhoj Museum** (805-686-1211) in Solvang, which traces life in the early days of this Danish settlement, established by a group of educators in what is now the heart of Santa Barbara Wine Country. Also in Solvang, the **Hans Christian Andersen Museum** (805-

688-2052) houses an impressive collection of letters, manuscripts and other exhibits highlighting the great Danish storyteller.

Set in a former library built with a grant from Andrew Carnegie, the **Lompoc Museum** (805-736-4567) has an impressive collection of Chumash artifacts, as well as re-creations of historic Lompoc storefronts, a carriage house and information about local mining and a local shipwreck.

WORDS AND (MOTION) PICTURES: FILM, BOOKS, POETRY

Writers were among the earliest artists to come to Santa Barbara, and before Hollywood had its backlots, Santa Barbara was already home to a thriving film industry. Today Santa Barbara continues to support the literary and film arts and the people who make them through a series of festivals and special events.

Santa Barbara predated Hollywood as the film capital of California, and the annual **Santa Barbara International Film Festival** (805-963-0023), held each January/February, continues the legacy. For ten days, cinema fans deluge the city, joining movie stars and other celebrities for more than 150 film screenings at local theaters, plus special events, panel discussions, galas and more.

A plethora of writers call Santa Barbara home; so do an abundance of readers, guaranteeing an enthusiastic audience for the city's many bookstores, as well as for the lectures and other intellectual offerings at local academic institutions. One leading purveyor of books is **The Book Den**. Opened in 1933, it's Santa Barbara's oldest and largest used bookstore and home to an enormous collection of international newspapers and magazines. Another great haunt is **Chaucer's Books**, one of the largest independent bookstores in the nation and the site of an excellent children's section.

December through May, hear such top local talent as Jane Seymour, Jeff Bridges and John Cleese read short stories as part of the "**Speaking of Stories**" series at the Lobero Theatre.

De La Guerra Plaza gets a literary charge every September when the one-day **Santa Barbara Book & Author Festival** comes to town, featuring author signings, readings, panel discussions and much more.

In May national and regional poets compete in the **Santa Barbara Poetry Festival**, and in June, the week-long **Santa Barbara Writer's Conference** attracts such best-selling authors as Amy Tan and Ray Bradbury for a week of readings, seminars, workshops and signings.

The **Santa Barbara Women's Literary Festival** brings nationally-known women writers for a one-day event that promotes literacy, diversity and social justice.

The spoken word takes center stage in February as some of the best storytellers on the circuit show up in Solvang for the annual **Flying Leap Storytelling Festival**.

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