

Five Most Affordable San Diego Neighborhoods

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Are you still dreaming of sun, surf, West Coast vibes, and an affordable neighborhood? Well, you can wake up now, because that's exactly what you'll find in [San Diego, CA](#). It's possible to rent a cheap apartment in a state that has always boasted a higher cost of living.

The city's perfect, year-round warm weather, combined with fun attractions and close proximity to the beach, make [San Diego a great place for renters](#). The average cost of rent in San Diego is \$1,779. However, affordable neighborhoods do exist in this city and are listed below.

you'll be glad you did when the savings start to add up.

The Most Affordable Neighborhoods in San Diego:

1. National City
2. Balboa Park
3. East San Diego/El Cajon
4. Chula Vista/Imperial Beach
5. North I-15 Corridor West

NATIONAL CITY

Like any [Southern California](#) resident, locals of National City are encompassed by tourism. [National City](#) is the cheapest San Diego neighborhood to live in – the average rent for an apartment is \$1,335. Renters living in this affordable community have easy access to a plethora of conveniences and two major roadways: Interstate 5 and Interstate 805.

National City apartments are 25% cheaper than the city's average. This area is unique because it houses the Mile of Cars auto mall, and it celebrates California's car culture with a heritage car show every year beginning in the early '90s. Westfield Plaza Bonita is the community's premier shopping mall, while many of National City's best restaurants and bakeries are located along East Plaza Boulevard. Café La Maze is one of National City's most historic chophouses and has live music every evening.

BALBOA PARK

Situated just four miles east of San Diego International Airport, [Balboa Park](#) can be described as a cultural wonderland made up of museums (it has 17!), lush gardens, and the San Diego Zoo. This urban area is extremely walkable and features incredible outdoor art. The actual park is the main attraction within the community. Tourists and locals alike come to experience the park's beauty at its many gardens – Palm Canyon is over two acres and has hundreds of palm trees.

Just minutes from Downtown San Diego and the Gaslamp Quarter, you'll love how accessible everything is from your cheap Balboa Park apartment. The San Diego Air & Space Museum houses a collection of historic air- and spacecraft artifacts from legends like Amelia Earhart and Buzz Aldrin. Nightlife is widespread here, and there are so many breweries to try. Locals look forward to nighttime concerts at the Starlight Bowl, Balboa Park's outdoor amphitheater. In addition to great food, you'll love that Balboa Park apartments rent for \$1,420, a 20% cheaper rent price than San Diego metro apartments.

EAST SAN DIEGO/EL CAJON

From hiking to hitting the slots at Sycuan Casino, there's so much to do within the [East San Diego/El Cajon](#) community. And with the amount of money you'll be saving, you won't feel bad about spending time (and money) at the neighborhood attractions again and again. Nicknamed "The Big Box," El Cajon and the surrounding area are home to a variety of family-friendly attractions, including the butterfly exhibits at Cuyamaca College's Water Conservation Garden and the Boardwalk, El Cajon's local amusement park. America on Main Street is a very popular neighborhood event which highlights the city's abundant diversity.

interstate 8, and a great park system. Apartments in East San Diego/EI Cajon go for an average of \$1,438 or a 19% reduction from San Diego metro rentals. The community is surrounded by mountains, affording residents an impeccable hiking experience.

CHULA VISTA/IMPERIAL BEACH

Want to be close to the mountains and the beach for cheap? The [Chula Vista](#) and [Imperial Beach](#) community gets you both. Though, it will take you significantly less travel time to get to the ocean (it could be in your backyard!). Surfing is a way of life here in San Diego, and the neighborhood is home to one of city's best surfing spots. Surfers from all over the world come to ride the waves and hang ten at Boca Rio.

In the Chula Vista/Imperial Beach community, you'll discover a U.S. Olympic training facility as well as a naval base. Pier Plaza showcases the area's surf history while also operating a community farmers market. The City of Chula Vista is abound with nightlife and good food, especially along Seacoast Drive and Palm Avenue. With four miles of pristine beach, lifeguards are employed all year long to ensure a safe and relaxing day at the beach for everyone. Living in such a great and affordable area sounds too good to be true, right? Well, it's not. Chula Vista/Imperial Beach apartments are priced 9% lower than those in the San Diego metro with an average rent of \$1,625 per month.

NORTH I-5 CORRIDOR WEST

Just 25 miles north of Downtown San Diego, renters love the neighborhood of [North I-5 Corridor West](#) because of its lower-than-average priced apartments in the city. The community is highly upscale and is 3% lower in price. Residents of this family-friendly community enjoy a selection of homes for rent near a sprawling backdrop of rolling hills.

They also look forward to a day at the park – North I-5 Corridor West has numerous to explore. Black Mountain Park is the ideal place for a horseback riding adventure, or hiking and cycling if that's more your speed. 4S Commons Town Center is an outdoor shopping plaza just minutes from neighborhood apartments. An upscale community with affordable apartments, close to modern comforts and golf resorts, is no dream; it's reality at North I-5 Corridor West, where rent for an apartment averages \$1,719.

**Apartment rent data is provided by CoStar Group's December 2018 San Diego submarket reports.*

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WHAT DO YOU THINK?

18 Responses



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Hello! I'm Lauren Ross, a copywriter here at Apartments.com. I love dogs, cupcakes, and lifestyle trends! In my free time, you can find me traveling or sipping my favorite cab-sauv wine. Tweet me @larossingaround!

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