

# NEIGHBORHOOD



## Santa Paula: Citrus Capital

By Maggie Hood

**B**est known as the “Citrus Capital of the World” for its expansive lemon and orange orchards, the City of Santa Paula celebrates the fruit of California each year with a summertime Citrus Festival. Santa Paula is often described as a quaint town, with a Main Street that reminds one of Middle America, but with a Mexican flavor. Nestled on 4.6 square miles of land located 20 miles from the Pacific Ocean, Santa Paula is surrounded by not only citrus orchards but avocados as well. With temperatures topping 100 degrees some summer days forcing residents to head to the coastal beaches, the cold nights of winter are, for some, a welcome respite.

Santa Paula, like the rest of Ventura County, was originally inhabited by the Chumash Indians. Father Junipero Serra became active in the area during the Spanish mission period. The town is named for the Catholic Saint Paula. The Southern Pacific Railroad came to Santa Paula in 1887, and the original depot stands today as a registered historical landmark.

In 1888, “black gold” was discovered here. An oil well called Adams No. 16 became California’s first gusher, and Santa Paula really began to grow. Several small oil companies combined to become the Union Oil Company in 1890 – today known as Unocal. The California Oil Museum is housed in the original 1890 Union Oil Company headquarters. In

1930, the Santa Paula airport opened. Today, private planes of all types can be seen taking off and landing in a most scenic setting.

Santa Paula’s economy is primarily agriculturally based, originally focusing on the growing of lemons and oranges. However, the addition of avocados, which contributes substantially to the economic prosperity of the city, earned the avocado a spot on the city’s official seal. The Mediterranean climate combined with an estimated 20 feet of topsoil combine to make it one of the best locations in the state for growing citrus.

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Santa Paula is home to more than 31 registered historic sites, more than any other city in Ventura County; tours are available. There is also a beautiful collection of fine art outdoor murals adorning the walls of downtown buildings, depicting the history of the town.

There are many cultural attractions in Santa Paula, including The Aviation Museum, located at the airport, and the well-known and loved antique Fillmore and Western Railway train. The train runs year-round and features Murder-Mystery dinner events on weekends throughout the year. Special Christmas events, such as the train that runs to the Santa Paula Christmas Tree Farm where people can cut down their Christmas trees, and the “Polar Express” train ride, especially for children, draw large crowds.

### REAL ESTATE SALES: SANTA PAULA

#### SINGLE-FAMILY HOMES:

<b>SOLD in 2008:</b> 117	<b>SOLD in 2009 (YTD):</b> 148
<b>2008 High:</b> \$4,295,000	<b>2008 Median:</b> \$325,000
<b>2009 High:</b> \$900,000	<b>2009 Median:</b> \$274,850

<b>2008 Low:</b> \$70,000	<b>2008 Average DOM:</b> 137
<b>2009 Low:</b> \$80,000	<b>2009 Average DOM:</b> 116

#### CONDOMINIUMS:

<b>SOLD in 2008:</b> 39	<b>SOLD in 2009 (YTD):</b> 43
<b>2008 High:</b> \$349,000	<b>2008 Median:</b> \$161,000
<b>2009 High:</b> \$260,000	<b>2009 Median:</b> \$144,000

<b>2008 Low:</b> \$73,000	<b>2008 Average DOM:</b> 132
<b>2009 Low:</b> \$82,000	<b>2009 Average DOM:</b> 88



### STATS

#### SANTA PAULA (from 2000 Census)

**Population:** 28,598

**Population distribution:**

**Under 18:** 31.4%

**18-24:** 10.9%

**25-44:** 29.7%

**45-64:** 17.3%

**65+:** 10.7%

**Median income:** \$41,651

