

housing

Peninsula South Bay



recreation



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tips

Ready to enjoy the Peninsula & South Bay?

In-the-know Stanford young alums have shared the best tips, tricks and fabulous destinations to help you get the most out of these vibrant areas.



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Young alums love to dine at these delicious destinations.



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According to young alums, these are the best spots to kick up your heels and enjoy an evening with friends.



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These are the places to go to have fun and hang out (you'll probably spot a young alum or two!).



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Be sure to check out the best young alumni 'hoods in the Peninsula & South Bay.



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Young alums give their general advice on things to keep in mind as you explore the Peninsula & South Bay.



Dining



Don't miss these young alumni-approved places for the tastiest meals in town.

Asteria Grill

Inexpensive and authentic Greek food. - **JOE E., '12**

Bamboo Garden

Best soup dumplings! - **ANONYMOUS**

Bare Bowl

Acai blends for post-early-morning-workout breakfast; a new acai bowl business with delicious ingredients. Try the Gorilla, Trailblazer, and Powerhouse bowls. - **HALEY B., '09, FABIANNA P., '08**

Cafe Borrone

Their food is good, but the best part is their hot chocolate with house-made whip or their frosted mocha (also with house-made whip); great weekend brunch. - **HALEY B., '09**

Cafe Taxim

Best Mediterranean food, not fancy, free Wi-Fi. - **JOE E., '12**

Cafe Venetia

Best espresso near campus, Italian-style. - **ANONYMOUS**

Calafia

Nice for eating outside on a warm-weather day. - **HALEY B., '09**

Cascal

Fun vibe, tapas and great sangria. - **SYDNEE J., '11, JACQUELYN W., '13**

Chef Xiu

Great Northern-style Chinese food. Their potstickers are to die for! And I also recommend getting the MuShu here. The "wraps" are made by hand and taste better than any other MuShu wraps I've ever had. - **MICHELLE R., MA '10**

China Stix

Really, really good dim sum. Their pot stickers are also to die for. Their food is so good my husband and I had them cater our wedding. They did a great job. - **MICHELLE R., MA '10**

Darbar

Great Indian food at reasonable prices. - **ANONYMOUS**

Dining

Dharma Coffee

Best coffees/espresso I've had in the Bay Area, also has food.
- **ANONYMOUS**

Dishdash

Amazing kebabs but kind of expensive; on Murphy Street and close to Caltrain stop. - **MAGALI F., '10**

Evvia

Go-to restaurant for a special occasion or business dinners. Relatively high-end Greek food and delicious lamb chops.
- **JOE E., '12**

FantAzia

This place is amazingly homey and delicious. My partner and I are regulars because the staff here are so friendly and good at what they do. We come here so often, the staff recognize us and know just the way we like it... which is spicy! Also, the prices here are super, super reasonable for the quantity of food you order. Don't miss out on the Tom Kha soup!! - **KATHERINE H., '11**

Gochi

Izakaya-style food that's good. - **MICHELLE R., MA '10**

Godfathers Burger Lounge

Awesome burgers. - **JOE E., '12**

Indo

Not as crowded since it's on El Camino, good Thai food, nicer atmosphere, reasonably priced. - **SYDNEE J., '11**

J.T. McHart's

The most consistently amazing pizza we've found south of Palo Alto. If you like ranch sauce you'll love their BLT pizza. If you like EVERYTHING you have to try the JT Supreme—remember to ask for pineapple, olive oil, and fresh garlic! And if you're feeling crazy, order the Baja Express. - **RODRIGO M., '05**

Joya

Pricier, but a nice date restaurant, tapas-style. - **SYDNEE J., '11**

Kahoo Ramen

Some of the best ramen. There's almost always a line.
- **MICHELLE R., MA '10**

Lilly Mac's

SUCH good fish and chips ahhhh. - **MAGALI F., '10**

LV Mar

This place is great for seafood and Latin American cooking. Cocktails are also carefully crafted by very friendly bartenders.
- **FABIANNA P., '08**

LYFE Kitchen

Casual, healthy and delicious food; healthy and fresh. - **JOE E., '12**

Dining

Madame Tam's

A hidden gem in plain sight. The Pho and Bahn Mi sandwiches are amazing and there's never a wait for a table. - **ANONYMOUS**

Milagros

Amazing guac and chips, fun vibe. - **SYDNEE J., '11**

Mountain House

It's a trek to get there but it's become a family favorite. We go there almost every birthday. Great food, amazing atmosphere, and friendly service. - **FABIANNA P., '08**

Nemea

Amazing Greek food! - **CELEN Z., '07**

Orenchi

A great ramen place, but you have to get there 30 minutes before they open. If you like Miso ramen you have to try their Kotteri Miso Ramen; if you like ramen, you need to go here; it's so good, but there is always a line; great vegetarian broth. - **MICHELLE R., MA '10, MAGALI F., '10, JUANA B., '09**

Oren's Hummus

All of their dishes are delicious, but my favorite is the Shakshuka; it's busy and crowded most days, but the food never disappoints. OrderAhead is a great option here. Go for the chicken skewers, sweet potato fries, and the hummus, of course; perhaps the most popular hummus (Israeli style) in South Bay. - **FABIANNA P., '08**

Pho Kim Long

A well-known go-to for pho ga (chicken pho). - **JOE E., '12**

Pizzeria Delfina

Go for the outdoor patio (and burrata). - **HALEY B., '09**

Quattro at the Four Seasons

Go for brunch—namely, the lemon ricotta pancakes and the chicken and waffles. - **FABIANNA P., '08**

Rangoon Ruby and Burma Ruby

Delicious Burmese food; amazing Burmese! - **HALEY B., '09**

Rick's Cafe

Hearty brunch. - **SYDNEE J., '11**

Ryowa Ramen

Good food, can watch Ninja Warrior and see ridiculous stunts on their TV—easy to show up by yourself because it's almost all bar seating. - **CLARE K., '09**

Sabor Salvadoreño

They make amazing pupusas. - **JUANA B., '09**

Dining

Sakae Sushi

If you want to splurge for some really good stuff, go here.
- **MICHELLE R., MA '10**

Shah

Really great Pakistani/Northern Indian food. My husband and I love their Banggan Bharta (eggplant). - **MICHELLE R., MA '10**

Shanghai Flavor Shop

Best pan-fried pork buns I've ever had! - **JUANA B., '09**

Shezan

Favorite South Asian food (caution: spicy). - **JOE E., '12**

Stein's Beer Garden

Lots of beers on tap, nice outdoor communal seating area; great on a warm afternoon! - **JACQUELYN W., '13**

Sushi Tomi

Reliably good, home-cooked style Japanese food (and some sushi that's quite good). - **MICHELLE R., MA '10**

Sushirrito

Because sushi + burrito = amazing. - **HALEY B., '09**

Tacos Los Gemelos

Love this place. In my opinion, they have the best tacos in the Bay Area. - **JOE E., '12**

The Refuge

A gastropub with a great selection of beers and delicious food. You can't leave here without trying (and sharing!) a Reuben sandwich—they are huge. - **JOE E., '12**

The Sweet Potato Stall

I love supporting the couple running this stall. Roasted sweet potatoes are delicious, cheap snacks. It's a simple business, and they do it well. - **ANONYMOUS**



Dining

The Table

Great outdoor seating area for people-watching with a farm-to-table menu. - **CELEN Z., '07**

The Tofu House

Good food, fast service, and a casual feel. They serve more than tofu so don't be confused. They are known for their hot clay pot bowls. Great meal at a super reasonable price. - **SYDNEE J., '11**

Vesta

If I could eat here every day I probably would. They have amazing dishes that change seasonally and pizza that is perfect. It's my go-to for out-of-town guests. - **FABIANNA P., '08**

Vung Tau

This chain restaurant is one of the few places in the Bay Area where one can try Vietnamese restaurant cuisine beyond pho and banh mi. And at reasonable prices! - **ANONYMOUS**

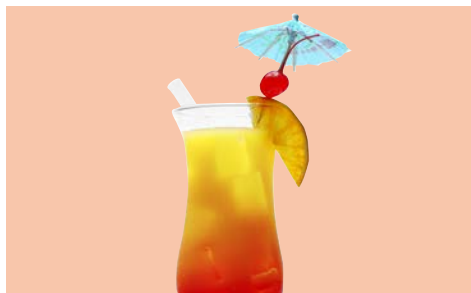
The Willows Market

Food Trucks on Monday nights. Must do. - **HALEY B., '09**

Yam Leaf Bistro

Excellent vegetarian Latin American-inspired food. - **JOE E., '12**





These are the hot spots young alums love to hit up to have a good time and make great memories.

Nightlife

Donato Enoteca

50% off appetizers and discounted drinks until 6 pm.
- **LISA H., '06**

Dutch Goose

Casual local spot. - **HALEY B., '09**

Epiphany Hotel

Good drinks, nicer venue. - **SYDNEE J., '11**

Gott's Roadside

Beers and burgers outside on the patio. Across the street from Stanford. - **HALEY B., '09**

Gravity

Wine bar, more upscale, has appetizer plates too. - **SYDNEE J., '11**

Local Union 271

Nice atmosphere. Farm to table. - **ANONYMOUS**

MacArthur Park

It is never too crowded, they have a great outdoor patio, it is right next to the train station, and it is one of the few places where the HH goes until 7 pm. - **ANONYMOUS**

Mountain House

Nice for a post-hike drink. - **HALEY B., '09**

Murphy's Law

On Murphy Street by the train station; \$3 well drinks until 7 pm—no food though. - **MAGALI F., '10**

Scotty's

Casual feel with a good happy hour menu. - **SYDNEE J., '11**

SP2

Huge bar with an extensive drink menu. Really great deals for happy hour. - **CELEN Z., '07**

Tacolicious

Fun drinks, and more casual; fun after-work crowd, vibrant atmosphere, great drinks and mini taco appetizers. - **SYDNEE J., '11**

The Patio

Great happy hour drinks and apps that last until 7 pm; less crowded than Old Pro for watching sports. Perfect spot to sit outside on a warm afternoon. - **MAGALI F., '10**

Recreation



Whether it's hiking, live music or a new adventure, young alums recommend these interesting events and locales.

\$2 Wine tasting at Bevmo (Menlo Park)! Make friends with the staff. They give great recommendations and will let you know of upcoming sales. - **FABIANNA P., '08**

Big Basin: a local retreat to the redwoods. - **NICOLE P., '14**

Bike along the San Jose riverwalk!! - **KATHERINE H., '11**

Boating/kayaks/pedal boats. Shoreline in Mountain View and Vasona Lake in Los Gatos. - **SYDNEE J., '11**

Bonfires. Santa Cruz. - **SYDNEE J., '11**

Check out the locked-room puzzle games in the area! - **MICHELLE R., MA '10**

Drive-in movies. San Jose. - **SYDNEE J., '11**

Emma Prusch Farm Park. Weary of the lines at trendy events hyping farm animals? Here, one can pet feather and furry ones for free, while also learning more about a historical agricultural park of San Jose. - **JOE E., '12**

Goldstar. Great deals on shows and events in the area. - **SYDNEE J., '11, FABIANNA P., '08**

Groupon. Great deals from events/shows to health/fitness to gifts to house cleaning. - **SYDNEE J., '11**

Hiking. Rancho San Antonio, Los Altos, Arastradero, Palo Alto/Portola Valley, Almaden Quicksilver Mines, San Jose. - **ANONYMOUS**

Hiking! The Peninsula/South Bay has incredible (and free) hiking trails you probably didn't explore as an undergrad. Monte Bello Open Space and Purisima Creek Redwoods on Skyline are beautiful and easy to get to. The reservoirs off 280 (Crystal Springs) have fun trails as well. - **HALEY B., '09**

It's only about 45 minutes to Santa Cruz or Pescadero—if you have access to a car, you can have the best beach or hike days when the weather is nice! - **ANONYMOUS**

Keplers in Menlo Park has lovely author visits—you often get a book as part of your ticket. - **HALEY B., '09**



Recreation

Kuma Escape in Santa Clara is great. - **JOE E., '12**

Little Saigon: a sprawl of Vietnamese businesses, sharing food, culture, and community events, like the Mid-Autumn Festival or Lunar New Years. - **ANONYMOUS**

Miss Green? Get a library card. - **FABIANNA P., '08**

Mitsuwa: a Japanese market and hub for cuisine and fun. - **ANONYMOUS**

Nextdoor. Sign up as soon as you move to your new area. You will get local advice and tips from neighbors. - **SYDNEE J., '11, HALEY B., '09**

Off the Grid. Comes to the South Bay frequently, in Menlo Park, Sunnyvale, Cupertino, and elsewhere. - **SYDNEE J., '11**

Outdoor movies. Redwood City Downtown Square. - **JOE E., '12**

Palo Alto Online is helpful with local news. - **HALEY B., '09**

San Pedro Square. Very casual outdoor area (similar to Ferry Plaza in the sense that there are shops and food stands under one big roof), great food stands, live music on the weekends. - **CELEN Z., '07**

SF Fun & Cheap. Cheap events going on along the Peninsula and SF. - **SYDNEE J., '11**

Shakespeare in the Park. Cupertino, SF. - **SYDNEE J., '11**

Shoreline. If you have a Mountain View address, you get discounted (sometimes free) and early release tickets to events and concerts at Shoreline. You have to show proof of residency and go in person to get the tickets. Check the City of Mountain View website and Shoreline website for details. Note: they make it hard to find since it's such an awesome perk to living in the area. - **ANONYMOUS**

Sign up online for the local paper—they'll list events/resources in the area. - **SYDNEE J., '11**

Sosh (online app) for activities in San Francisco. - **JOE E., '12**

Stanford Theatre and the Aquarius in Palo Alto! I've seen the BEST movies here while avoiding the typical movie crowd. - **FABIANNA P., '08**

Swimming pools give discounts if you live in that city (Palo Alto, Sunnyvale). - **JOE E., '12**

The Stanford Theatre is a blast (and there's dim sum next door). - **HALEY B., '09, FABIANNA P., '08**

There are lots of free lectures and events happening nearby at Stanford. Take advantage! Young Alumni discounted football tickets! - **FABIANNA P., '08**

Yelp (search for categories and pages, not just businesses). - **FABIANNA P., '08**

Housing



Moving to the Peninsula or South Bay? These neighborhoods are young alumni favorites.

Downtown Palo Alto is the best. I feel safe, I'm surrounded by families and young professionals, and I can walk to my favorite places. - **FABIANNA P., '08**

Downtown Redwood City—not as expensive as San Francisco. Has a Caltrain express stop. Up and coming. A few good coffee shops and a beer garden downtown. - **ANONYMOUS**

I love Mountain View. It's less snobby than Palo Alto, has plenty going on, and if you feel like experiencing more of the big city life, San Francisco is a short train ride away. Also, there's a lot of great food nearby, and it's a super convenient commute for both my husband and me. -**MICHELLE R., MA '10**

I would definitely think very carefully about how much time you're spending on commute when you decide where to live. It really impacts your quality of life. - **ANONYMOUS**

Mountain View, especially if working in the South Peninsula. - **JACQUELYN W., '13**

Mountain View—really excellent downtown area for Asian food (four ramen places, at least three bubble tea places, etc.) - **CLARE K., '09**

Palo Alto and Menlo Park for walkability and comfortable neighborhoods. Redwood City and Mountain View for a more affordable, younger option with good restaurant options. - **ANONYMOUS**

Piece of advice: many apartments in the area are not advertised online, so drive/walk/bike through the neighborhood and call the number on the “for rent” sign in the front yard! - **ANONYMOUS**

San Mateo near the Burlingame city border—waaay cheaper than Burlingame because it's a crummy school district, but safe and close to downtown Burlingame and close to Caltrain and Bart. - **JOE E., '12**

Sunnyvale is quiet and peaceful—if that's what you're into. - **JUANA B., '09**

Housing

The South Bay is extremely expensive, no matter where you go. Keeping that in mind, I would recommend downtown Mountain View, Sunnyvale, and Redwood City. Even more expensive are places in Los Altos and Palo Alto. If you're living in Los Altos, it's a cute suburb, but not much else. If you can handle the commute, I would recommend San Jose and Campbell. - **SYDNEE J., '11**

We love living in Downtown Palo Alto. We feel safe, it's warm, our neighbors are very kind (many have lived in the same houses for decades), and we can walk or bike to almost everything we need. The California Ave farmers market on Sundays continues to be wonderful even after undergrad. Lots of trees, plants, and parks. Palo Alto libraries totally rule. Being able to walk to Caltrain is a huge luxury, especially when you have guests visiting! We were nervous we'd hate living in Palo Alto since we aren't a part of the tech scene, but it hasn't been an issue at all. It makes overheard tech-centric conversations at local restaurants very entertaining! - **HALEY B., '09**

Willow Glen, Rose Garden and Campbell are all great South Bay communities with local restaurant scenes and cute downtowns. - **CELEN Z., '07**



Tips



Keep these young alumni words of wisdom in mind as you get to know the Peninsula & South Bay.

Explore away while also respecting and perhaps learning about the diversity of existing communities. - **NICOLE P., '14**

Can't find any Palo Alto housing on craigslist? Lots of places seem to prefer putting "for rent" signs in windows, so go on a run in your favorite neighborhoods and see what you see. The Stanford Classifieds occasionally have helpful listings as well. - **HALEY B., '09**

Find the nearest hiking and walking trails in the area. I love the Dish but it's often difficult to find parking, so I've been exploring Foothills Park and the Arastradero Preserve. There are hidden gems everywhere. Get out and explore the beautiful natural surroundings (hikes in Marin or Lands End in San Francisco). - **FABIANNA P., '08**

If you live in the lower Peninsula or South Bay, use 237 to cross over to the East Bay to avoid paying tolls. - **MAGALI F., '10**

Investigate alternatives to driving. Parking is horrendous most days. - **FABIANNA P., '08**

Reach out to alums in the area, join meetups for new grads in the area—browse the meetup site, there's something for everyone there. Volunteer within your community, it's a great way to get to know long-time residents who are extremely knowledgeable about the area and have great advice on what to do/places to visit. It's also a great way to feel connected to your new neighborhood. Also, take advantage that you're close to Stanford to attend lectures, conferences, or even take a class. - **SYDNEE J., '11**

San Francisco is one Caltrain ride away! - **JUANA B., '09**

Save your Stanford moving boxes, they are the bomb. - **MAGALI F., '10**

The San Jose Airport is much smaller, easier, and cheaper than SF or Oakland! - **KATHERINE H., '11**



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