

Where to Find California's 24 Cultural Districts

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With its abundance of artistic communities and culturally rich neighborhoods, there is no shortage of contenders for the California Arts Council's [Cultural District](#) designations.

First launched in 2017, the statewide program honors places with distinct creative identities and a shared commitment to the arts and history. The first 14 districts were announced in 2017, and in 2026, 10 new districts were added for a total of 24 unique communities.

“Our goal with this program was to support a group of districts that met high but broad standards of coherence, vision, and purpose—ones that could set an example for districts that will follow as the program develops and grows,” says Donn K. Harris, California Arts Council Chair.

From the redwood-lined North Coast to the vibrant neighborhoods of San Diego in the south, here are California's 24 officially designated [Cultural Districts](#).

[Eureka Cultural Arts District](#), Eureka

On California's [North Coast](#), redwoods surround this vibrant arts district in [Eureka](#) where public art, local breweries, and chocolate makers converge. Every month, the downtown area hosts [First Saturday Night Arts Alive](#), which features art-focused sites and businesses; other seasonal events include the Redwood Coast Music Festival, Taste of Main Street, summer concerts, and more. Beyond town, Humboldt County offer hiking trails, forests, beaches, and quaint fishing villages.

[Redding Cultural District](#), Redding

The stunning Sundial Bridge sets the tone for [Redding](#)'s Cultural District, which blends the natural surroundings (trails, rivers, forest) with artistic activities such as microbrewing and theater. Walk around the historic downtown to see more than 70 public art sites—like the rotating sculpture exhibit outside City Hall—and 50 restaurants and bars or find local- to international-level talent at the Cascade Theatre and Redding Civic Auditorium.

[Grass Valley-Nevada City Cultural District](#), Grass Valley and Nevada City

The [Gold Country](#) towns of [Grass Valley](#) and [Nevada City](#), both in Nevada County, experienced a cultural revolution in the 1960s when several Beat Generation authors and musicians took up residence here, and the community of artistic residents remains strong. In Nevada City, check out the Nevada Theatre—the oldest theater in California—which hosts more than 200 arts-related events per year, along with street fairs and seasonal art walks.

[Truckee Cultural District](#), Truckee

This charming [mountain town](#) near [Lake Tahoe](#) balances heritage and hands-on creativity. Museums like the Old Jail Museum and the Truckee Railroad Museum reflect the town's past, while galleries and exhibit spaces showcase its present-day arts scene. At the 3,000-square-foot Truckee Roundhouse “makerspace,” residents and visitors can learn a variety of artistic skills, from woodworking to metal arts.

[Downtown San Rafael Arts District](#), San Rafael

Downtown San Rafael thrives as a cultural hub in Marin County, with frequent art walks, festivals, and nearby film events like the acclaimed [Mill Valley Film Festival](#). Highlights include the 11-acre Falkirk Cultural Center and Art Works Downtown, which house four galleries and artist studios, create an energetic, artistic-driven community.

[Rotten City-Emeryville Cultural Arts District](#), Emeryville

Cutting-edge art forms such as animation and digital mapping compositions have helped Emeryville, just outside [Berkeley](#), develop its own unique cultural distinction and arts colony. Partners such as Pixar Animation Studios and Bullseye Glass continue to grow and incubate the arts on San Francisco Bay's eastern shoreline.

[Black Arts Movement Business District](#), Oakland

Anchored by galleries, Black-owned businesses, murals, and performance spaces, [Oakland](#)'s vibrant 14th Street is the heart of this district that fosters Black culture, arts, and businesses. The district hosts a biennial Black Arts Movement Business District Fest featuring film screenings, lectures, art installations, family and youth programs, and more.

[American Indian Cultural District, Yelamu \(San Francisco\)](#)

Located on unceded Ramaytush Ohlone land in an area of [San Francisco](#) now known as the [Mission District](#), this is the first established cultural district dedicated to honoring the American Indian legacy. Visitors can explore Indigenize SF public art, including murals, pole banners, statues, and digital QR code walking tours.

[The Calle 24 Latino Cultural District, San Francisco](#)

This vibrant neighborhood, also located in the heart of the Mission District, has celebrated Latino culture, arts, and activism since the 1940s. Today, Calle 24 boasts the largest collection of murals in San Francisco, and there's no shortage of events and specialty businesses to keep the culture alive.

[SOMA Pilipinas, Filipino Cultural Heritage District, San Francisco](#)

This South of Market neighborhood in the City by the Bay is home to thousands of Filipino families and multiple Filipino-American businesses (such as Bindlestiff Studio). Check out its exciting cultural events—like the Pistahan Parade and Festival in August—that showcase the area's performers, culinary arts, and supporting businesses.

[Dos Rios Arts and Culture District, Modesto](#)

In the heart of California's farmland, [Modesto](#) is home to this cultural district full of vibrant street art, performance centers, and galleries. To experience the area in all its glory, check out the Third Thursday Modesto Art Walk, when musicians, artists, and businesses come together to show off the city's thriving creative community.

[San Jose Japantown, San Jose](#)

This neighborhood in [San Jose](#) was one of the areas where Japanese immigrants first settled upon arriving in California. Today, you can experience the area's [world-class food scene](#), learn about its history at the Japanese American Museum of San Jose, and stroll through eclectic local boutiques. Immerse yourself in Japanese culture at the annual Nikkei Matsuri festival.

[Downtown Merced Cultural District, Merced](#)

Anchored by the Merced Multicultural Arts Center, this [Central Valley](#) district welcomes visitors to explore the downtown's shops, galleries, and cafés, and learn about [Merced](#)'s history at the Merced County Courthouse Museum. The area frequently hosts arts-related gatherings to uplift historically underrepresented artists and foster community collaboration.

[Watsonville Cultural District](#), Watsonville

The state's agricultural roots are on full display in this town near [Santa Cruz](#), where you can walk the historic downtown to take in the public art and murals and stop at Pajaro Valley Arts to check out the rotating exhibits of local works on display. The annual Watsonville Strawberry Festival is a regional highlight, with carnival attractions, performances, and lots of strawberry treats.

[The BLVD Cultural District](#), Lancaster

Since the late 1800s, The BLVD has been a hub for cultural events in the Antelope Valley, with concerts, farmers' markets, and holiday festivals taking over the streets of [Lancaster](#). This High Desert district, east of [Los Angeles](#), is home to several historic sites, including the Aerospace Walk of Honor and the Western Hotel Museum, and it also focuses on environmental initiatives.

[Downtown Oxnard Cultural District](#), Oxnard

The area's agricultural roots and Indigenous history are evident as you explore [Oxnard](#), home to one of the most diverse populations on the [Central Coast](#). Visiting for one of the many festivals, from Fiestas Patrias to Juneteenth and Guelagueta, will bring these cultures to life through musical performances, artisan vendors, and food.

[Little Tokyo](#), Los Angeles

Museums, anime shops, poetry venues, and historic landmarks all add to the eclectic vibe of Little Tokyo, a special pocket of [Downtown Los Angeles](#), where both traditional and contemporary artworks find a home. Take a Little Tokyo walking tour to explore the Frank Gehry–designed Geffen Contemporary at MOCA and sample the signature ramen at Men Oh Tokushima Ramen.

[Historic South Los Angeles Black Cultural District](#), Los Angeles

Whether you choose to take a Black history and culture tour, explore historic sites such as Leimert Park and the Crenshaw Corridor, or attend a jazz or spoken word performance, you will feel the roots of this historic L.A. district. On the last Sunday of the month, check out the vendors and performers at the Leimert Park Art Walk.

[The Arts and Culture District](#), Riverside

California's citrus industry was born in the sunny town of [Riverside](#), where you'll find a thriving arts scene anchored by museums, theaters, and public art. (Just one example: The [Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Art & Culture](#).) Whether you come for a live performance at the Riverside Municipal Auditorium or to attend the First Thursday Riverside Artswalk, you'll get a taste of this vibrant [Inland Empire](#) city.

[San Pedro Waterfront Arts, Cultural, and Entertainment District](#), San Pedro

There's a small-town feel in the Los Angeles peninsula town of [San Pedro](#), where the historic downtown has been hosting artist studios since 1944. You can see the artistic influence at Crafted, a permanent weekend market with handmade apparel and home decor, in the nontraditional spaces for art openings and classes, and at the First Thursday ArtWalk.

[Oceanside Cultural District](#), San Diego

Because of its proximity to Camp Pendleton, [Oceanside](#) has historically been known as a military town. But not anymore: This coastal city in [San Diego's North County](#) has put itself on the map with great food, quality craft beer, and an emerging arts scene. The California Surf Museum pays tribute to the [local surf culture](#); historic venues like The Star Theatre and The Sunshine Brooks Theater bring the performing arts to the community, and annual cultural events feature local artists.

[Arts District Liberty Station](#), San Diego

Former naval buildings are the centerpiece of this [unique district in San Diego](#), home to working art studios, galleries, and exhibition spaces. Make some art of your own at a pottery or drawing class, shop for one-of-a-kind pieces at boutiques, then tuck in for a meal at the food hall or at Stone Brewing World Bistro & Gardens. To learn the history of the area, check out the exhibits at the Nautical History Gallery & Museum.

[Balboa Park Cultural District](#), San Diego

Sprawling across an impressive 1,200 acres and featuring 17 [museums](#), iconic architecture, and multiple performance venues, Balboa Park truly is [San Diego's](#) cultural center. Along with its rich history, the park offers 65 miles of hiking trails, [beautiful gardens](#), and a [world-renowned zoo](#).

[Barrio Logan Cultural District](#), San Diego

A grassroots coalition of artists, community leaders, and residents has kept [Barrio Logan](#) true to its authentic Chicano culture. Check out Chicano Park, where more than 100 historic murals create a colorful backdrop for cultural events like Azteca dance and drumming groups. The area also features galleries, cafés, and breweries that showcase local art.