

*Places we call home*

Showcasing | Belmont

## Belmont: The Peninsula's Eclectic Community

*Belmont's interesting mix of people, architecture and landscape makes it a great place to live.*

BY MEGAN LYNCH

Living in a suburban community can be rather dull. To begin with, it can be hard to find what you're looking for, especially in cities where all the neighborhoods seem exactly the same. Finally found the home of your dreams? Life can get boring when the landscape is flat and the rows of houses seem to go on forever.

Belmont stands out as an eclectic City with wide appeal. This is especially apparent in the diversity of communities and housing options. The City is home to a variety of neighborhoods, each with their individual character and charm. This makes it easier to find your perfect home, be it a cozy house in a planned community or a charming cottage from the 1940's. "Belmont is a unique and charming community among sister cities," said Realtor Christina Chiesa. "It is a very eclectic community and has housing of all types."

Housing aside, the City is also home to an eclectic community of people from all walks of life. People come to Belmont from all over the Bay Area because of the unique homes and easy lifestyle. There is also a solid group of residents who have lived here for years and even those who grew up in the City and then stayed as adults. This diversity makes for interesting neighbors who care about their community. As a whole, residents are involved in neighborhood groups and associations and work to better their hometown.

"People here are involved in the community. They put their neighborhoods first and work together to solve problems," said Vice Mayor Coraline Feierbach, who has lived in Belmont since 1973.

Tired of cookie-cutter scenery? Belmont's varied landscape includes everything from rolling hills to flatlands. This makes not only for interesting vistas, but also for great weather. Belmont has cooler summers than neighboring cities that experience scorching July and August days (except, of course, during heat waves!). But it also has sunny skies and warmer weather than coastal cities and than San Francisco.

"We are the first ones to cool off after a heat wave," said Realtor Fran Doran, who has lived in Belmont for 38 years. "Most of Belmont is built on hills so we get cool breezes when the fog rolls in and we're not as hot as neighboring cities."

Belmont is located on the San Fran-

People are also drawn to Belmont during the weekend because it is home to Notre Dame de Namur University. The school adds a whole new level of culture and exclusivity to the City. Notre Dame regularly hosts sporting events, art exhibits, theater productions and public lectures. This brings the community together and makes Belmont a center for learning and culture. "Notre Dame is a private, catholic college with a great reputation in terms of quality of art and performances. People from across the Bay Area come here to see music, art and theater productions," said Chiesa.

Chiesa is a member of SAMCAR (the San Mateo County Association of Realtors). SAMCAR is a professional trade organization that organizes Realtors on the Peninsula.

The Association provides members with opportunities for community involvement and access to a network of professional resources and business contacts. Realtors must abide by a strict code of ethics and participate in additional training above and beyond state real estate license requirements.

Children thrive in Belmont because of the excellent schools (public and private) and quality of education. The City also provides ways for kids to grow and learn outside

of the classroom. "We have more after school activities up here than other cities," said Doran. "We also have a brand new library in Belmont. It is a great facility with a playground and places for kids to study after school."

Tired of boring suburbia? Try something different for once. Belmont is a quiet, residential community with a diverse population, eclectic architecture and varied landscape that truly stands out from other cities.

Information in this series of community profiles is provided by the San Mateo County Association of REALTORS® (SAMCAR). Megan Lynch is a freelance journalist based in San Francisco. Please send questions, suggestions or feedback by e-mail to [samcar@samcar.org](mailto:samcar@samcar.org) or call 650.696.8200.



PHOTOS BY ANSON CHAN, THE EXAMINER

cisco Peninsula approximately half way between San Francisco and San Jose. It is easily accessible via the I01, 92 and 280 freeways, which means HalfMoon Bay, Redwood City and



SFO are a hop, skip and jump away.

Because it is nestled amongst the hills, Belmont is a great place to spend the weekend. There are plenty of outdoor activities from biking to hiking or just lounging under a tree in a nearby park. Residents are also fortunate to have their own lake in the heart of the City. Reminiscent of an old-school water hole, Water Dog Park is a great place to spend the day fishing or relaxing. "We are lucky to be one of the only cities to have a lake in the middle of the City," said Vice Mayor Feierbach. "Water Dog Park is beautiful!"

## The Top Five Reasons to Live in Belmont



BY MEGAN LYNCH

### ECLECTIC ARCHITECTURE

Belmont is a diverse community with a little something of everything. Whether you're looking for a comfortable home in a planned community or a Mediterranean-style house with a little extra yard space, you're like to find it in Belmont. The City is well-planned and each neighborhood is well-defined and unique. This makes it easy to find your dream home and your perfect neighbors.

### WATER DOG LAKE

Where else can you find a beautiful lake in the heart of a residential community? Water Dog Lake is surprisingly isolated and is located in the middle of Belmont. Even if a lake isn't your cup of tea, you'll enjoy walking on surrounding trails or riding your bike through the area. It's refreshing to walk through a quiet park on a summer day, especially if you want to escape the noise and traffic of busy Peninsula cities.

### COLLEGE-TOWN FEEL

Notre Dame de Namur University has made its home in Belmont and helps give this quiet City an interesting college-town character. The University hosts monthly public lectures, art exhibits, fairs and other events that infuse the City with a touch of culture. These events draw the community together and are great ways to get to know neighbors and experience world-class art, music and events.

### IDEAL WEATHER

Although the Peninsula is well known for its picture-perfect weather (especially compared to foggy San Francisco), Belmont beats its neighbors and takes the cake for best weather. Its mild climate makes it perfect almost year-round. This means less wind than neighboring cities and cooler temperatures than San Jose and another cities that experience scorching summers.

### CARING NEIGHBORS

Residents of Belmont truly care about their community and their neighbors. People get involved in local organizations and work to accomplish their goals, even if it means making compromises. An active community also means plenty of events and other fun activities to make friends and feel at home.

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Maryann Bologna 415.359.2652

Anson Chan 415.359.2822