

Overview of the Airbnb Community in  
**the City of Santa Barbara**

# Introduction

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Since 2009, Santa Barbara residents have been welcoming guests into their homes on Airbnb.

For hosts, home sharing has helped thousands of middle class residents to take what is typically one of their greatest expenses – the cost of their housing – and turn it into a way to generate supplemental income. For guests, home sharing has democratized travel and facilitated a more authentic experience closer to local and small businesses that haven't always benefitted from tourism and hospitality.

As we move forward, we are 100 percent committed to being constructive partners with regulatory agencies and policymakers. Our community wants to pay their fair share. We want home sharing to help people stay in their homes. And we want to equip policymakers and the public with the information they need to craft fair, progressive rules for home sharing in Santa Barbara.

To help meet these goals, we've recently released the [Airbnb Community Compact](#). In the Compact we pledge to:

- Treat every city personally and help ensure our community pays its fair share of hotel and tourist taxes
- Build an open and transparent community
- Promote responsible home sharing to make cities stronger

In that spirit, we have prepared the enclosed report to provide a snapshot of our current home sharing community. This report is one of our first steps and we look forward to releasing additional information about our community in the future.

Thank you for reading this report. We look forward to further discussions on how best to ensure home sharing makes Santa Barbara a better place to live, work and visit.

Airbnb

# Overview of the Airbnb Community in the City of Santa Barbara

Airbnb hosts in Santa Barbara have been welcoming guests into their homes since 2009. The following page captures the Airbnb community in Santa Barbara between November 1, 2014 and October 31, 2015.

## HOSTS

HOSTS WHO HAVE HOSTED  
IN THE PAST YEAR

**770**

AVERAGE HOST AGE

**46**

ANNUAL EARNINGS  
FOR A TYPICAL HOST

**\$9,600**

## GUESTS

AVERAGE GUESTS PER TRIP

**2.4 guests**

AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY  
PER GUEST

**2.6 nights**

## AIRBNB LISTINGS

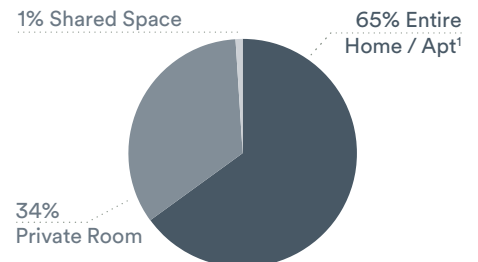
LISTINGS RENTED FOR FEWER  
THAN 90 DAYS IN THE PAST YEAR

**77%**

MEDIAN NIGHTS HOSTED PER  
LISTING IN THE PAST YEAR

**29**

CURRENTLY ACTIVE  
LISTINGS BY TYPE



Note: All data above is drawn from Airbnb proprietary bookings data for the City of Santa Barbara.

<sup>1</sup>Many accessory units, for example a small bedroom over a garage, or a portion of a dwelling with a separate entrance, can be listed as an "entire home." In these cases, the primary resident may be home and present during a guest's trip.

# Housing Affordability

Airbnb makes housing more affordable for Santa Barbara residents: everyday people can take what is typically one of their greatest expenses - the cost of their home - and turn it into a way to earn modest but significant supplemental income to help make ends meet.

## HOUSING AND HOME SHARING IN SANTA BARBARA

Most Santa Barbara Airbnb hosts rent their homes occasionally throughout the year, with the typical host earning about \$9,600 per year. Given the frequency of rental (almost 80% of listings are rented fewer than 90 days) and typical income earned, the majority of these short-term rentals do not compete financially with the long-term rental market, and are likely not full-time, dedicated vacation rentals. Since 2009, when hosts in Santa Barbara began renting their homes on Airbnb, the proportion of dedicated vacation rentals in the city has remained a steady 2%-3%.

TOTAL NUMBER OF HOUSING UNITS  
(PER CENSUS DATA)

**38,800**

DEDICATED VACATION RENTAL UNITS IN  
SANTA BARBARA, AS PERCENT OF ALL  
HOUSING UNITS (PER CENSUS DATA)

**3%**

Vacation rentals have been a steady 2%-3%  
of housing units in Santa Barbara since 2009.

ENTIRE HOME LISTINGS ON AIRBNB AS  
PERCENT OF TOTAL SANTA BARBARA  
HOUSING

**1.4%**

Of these entire home listings on Airbnb,  
most are primary residences that are  
occasionally rented while the residents are  
away (on vacation, for work, etc.).<sup>1</sup>

## HOSTING AND HOUSING

In the city of Santa Barbara, about half of residents are considered rent-burdened - that is, they pay more than 30% of their income towards housing. By home sharing occasionally throughout the year, the typical host in Santa Barbara earns about \$9,600 per year. This modest but significant income represents about 15% of the median income and helps hosts afford their homes.

LISTINGS RENTED FOR FEWER THAN  
90 DAYS IN THE PAST YEAR

**77%**

ANNUAL EARNINGS  
FOR A TYPICAL HOST

**\$9,600**

This amount of supplemental income  
represents about a 15% raise over the  
median Santa Barbara income.

RENT-BURDENED HOUSEHOLDS  
IN SANTA BARBARA

**47%**

Rent burden is typically defined as  
spending more than 30% of income on  
housing costs.

Note: All data above is drawn from Airbnb proprietary bookings data for the City of Santa Barbara. All U.S. Census data is taken from the American Community Survey: Table DP04 for housing units; Table B25004 for dedicated vacation rental information; Table DP03 for median income (adjusted to \$2015); and Table B25106 for rent burden.

<sup>1</sup> Survey data of hosts in Santa Barbara suggests that over 90% of hosts rent space in their primary residence. However, the survey sample size is too small to be definitive (95% confidence with 15% margin of error).



# All Definitions

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Annual Earnings (Typical Host)	Median value of total income earned by host during the one-year study period. Annual earnings are presented for typical hosts.
Average Length of Stay	The average length of stay per guest, rather than per trip.
Guest	Airbnb community members who stay in Airbnb listings.
Host	Airbnb community members who rent space on Airbnb.
Inbound Guest	All guests visiting a particular location. Inbound guests includes guests who live in the same location they may have stayed in.
Listing (Active)	A property listed on Airbnb. Listings may include entire homes or apartments, private rooms or shared spaces. Active Listings are all listings that appear on the website during a search. Active listings do not necessarily have availability on a particular date or at all.
Nights Hosted	Total number of nights a given listing is rented through Airbnb in the study period
Outbound Guest	All guests from a particular location who booked an Airbnb listing, regardless of where the listing is. There may be some minor overlap between Inbound Guests and Outbound Guests. All guests associated with a particular reservation are attributed to the location of the booking guest.
Typical Host	The median host for all hosts who had at least one active listing as of the start of the study period and at least one booking during the study period. Typical host definitions are used to calculate Annual Earnings and Nights Hosted. Presenting the median value for all hosts who were active as of the start of the study period provides the most representative values for the Airbnb host community.