

SANTA CRUZ TOPS COSTLY LIST

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San Francisco no longer tops the list for least-affordable housing in the nation: that distinction now falls to Santa Cruz, an hour and a half to the south. That result comes from the National Association of Home Builders, which compiles the list each year by comparing family incomes and home prices for metropolitan areas. The latest survey is based on third-quarter numbers for 2001.

The Santa Cruz metro area's median income is \$65,000. Its median home price is \$420,000, up \$5,000 from the last quarterly survey. San Francisco dropped to second, as its median home price fell \$10,000 to \$520,000, still the most expensive in the country.

Nine of the 10 least-affordable markets are in California. The Salinas metro area in Monterey County was third, followed by San Jose, with a \$450,000 median home price - the second most expensive in the nation. Rounding out the top 10: Santa Rosa, The Vallejo-Fairfield-Napa area, the San Luis Obispo-Atascadero-Paso Robles area, Oakland and San Diego. The Portsmouth-Rochester are in New Hampshire and Maine took 10th. Most affordable: Rockford, Illinois., with a median home price of \$99,000 and median family income of \$57,100.