

Chapter 1

County at a Glance

ENERGETIC, INTELLECTUAL AND DIVERSE, Alameda County is located across the bay from San Francisco and counts 1,443,741 residents, the great majority of them residing in 14 cities and two unincorporated towns. Alameda County also includes — a point of confusion — a city called “Alameda.”

Just north of Alameda County is Contra Costa County. Together the two counties make up what is known locally as the East Bay.

In land, Alameda encompasses 733 square miles, about one-third the size of Delaware. North to south, the county runs from Albany to Fremont and east to west from Oakland to Livermore and the edge of the San Joaquin Valley. Discovery Peak, located south of Livermore-Pleasanton, is the highest mountain, 3,841 feet.

With the exception of Livermore, Pleasanton, Dublin and the hamlet of Sunol, all cities are located on or near the Bay. Tall hills divide the Bay cities from the inland towns and create different weather patterns.

Temperate with a Punch

The weather is balmy, one of the great attractions of the region. Rarely do temperatures roast or freeze. Rarely does humidity cause discomfort. Many shore cities, however, are too cool for outdoor pools. On some summer days, when the fog barrels through the Golden Gate, the Oakland hills can be plain cold. If you travel a few miles inland, over the ridge into Dublin-Pleasanton, you’re in swimming pool country.

In the fall, dry winds called Diablos occasionally roar through the Berkeley-Oakland hills. In 1991, a Diablo fire killed 25 and destroyed 2,500 homes and apartments, a loss of about \$1.5 billion.

Fingertip Facts

Three bridges connect Alameda County with the “Peninsula” (San Francisco and San Mateo counties). They are the Bay, the San Mateo and the Dumbarton. Of the three, the Bay, with its spectacular views of San Francisco, is by far the prettiest.