

WHERE THE WHOLE FAMILY CAN PLAY

FUN ACTIVITIES FOR FAMILIES

BY KATIE JOLL

Santa Clara has a wide range of family-friendly entertainment options that suit visitors of all ages and interests. Speedsters, gamers, thrill-seekers, shoppers, spa-goers, and teenage instagrammers—come and choose your adventure.

K1 SPEED

Fulfill motor racing dreams with a trip to **K1 Speed**, a European-style kart-racing experience with an indoor track catering to both novices and experienced drivers. Speedsters can reach up to 45 mph, and the high-grip surface allows for some experimentation when rounding the corners. This is where all great family rivalries can be nurtured.

When you've found enough thrills on the track, K1 also features arcade games, pool tables, and a restaurant. Chill with a cold beverage, or perhaps ramp up for the next round of racing.

For more thrills, check out our feature on all that **California's Great America** theme park has to offer!

DINE AND SHOP

If there's a universal language among families with teens, it's probably food and shopping. For a venue that has it all, head out to **Westfield Valley Fair**, where there are more than 60 dining options and more than 200 stores.

With more than 100 fashion retailers, there is something that meets everyone's wardrobe approval, while a spa date may be just the thing for a more laid-back outing. If family fun is the order of the day, try bowling or immersive gaming, or test your group problem-solving skills at an escape room.

Campus Visits

If you're traveling with teens, there's a good chance that college is already on the radar for the entire family. Luckily, Santa Clara and the greater Bay Area are bursting with iconic institutions, making for an ideal opportunity to take an official campus tour or get out for a beautiful walk. Here are some of the best destinations within driving distance.

SANTA CLARA UNIVERSITY

Santa Clara University is the only four-year university in the city and boasts a long tradition of both academic and athletic success. It is also one of the oldest institutions of higher education in the state of California, making it one of the culturally engaging campus tours in the Bay Area. **Hosted tours** are offered most weeks throughout the academic year, with some dates over the summer as well. Bookings are available online for tours. **Self-guided tours** using the SCU mobile app may also be available.

(Learn more at scu.edu/admission/visits-events/campustours/)

UC BERKELEY

Always on the cutting edge, the **University of California, Berkeley** was founded in 1868 and has since solidified itself as one of the most innovative academic establishments in the country. **Guided tours** are offered in English, Spanish, and Mandarin, with family and large group options. **Self-guided tours** are available with audio guides and are offered across a range of campus departments. If you're traveling with younger kids, there's even a **kids' scavenger hunt** available.

(Learn more at visit.berkeley.edu/campus-tours to find the tour options, including multilingual guided and audio tours.)

STANFORD UNIVERSITY

Like UC Berkeley, **Stanford University** is often recognized for its academic prowess and status as an "honorary Ivy League" school. Only the highest-performing students attend classes in the historic stone buildings, but anyone can admire the architecture. **Guided tours** are available via online registration Monday through Friday, with registered participants requested to bring no more than three guests. Visitors are also welcome to take a **self-guided tour** on weekends or university holidays.

(Visit stanford.edu to learn more about self-guided tours or to register for guided tours.)

UC SANTA CRUZ

You'd think that the **The University of California, Santa Cruz** would have a nice view of the coast, but you'd be wrong. Instead, the campus is tucked in the lush inland forest, making for an unparalleled visiting experience as you navigate your way between different landmarks beneath the canopy of tall redwoods. **Guided tours** are an outdoor experience with a 1.5-mile walk through the grounds. Online bookings are essential, as is appropriate footwear! **Self-guided tours** are available if there are no bookings available coinciding with your schedule.

(Visit ucsc.edu to learn more.)

SAN JOSE STATE UNIVERSITY

Located in downtown San Jose, **SJSU** is a leading academic institution in Silicon Valley and is consistently ranked as a top school in the United States. Student ambassadors lead **one-hour family or individual tours** via online registration. **Self-guided tours** offer the opportunity to explore at your own pace with the aid of a tour map.

(Learn more at sjsu.edu/soar/services/campus-tours.php.)

Most Instagrammable Spots

Don't miss some of Santa Clara's most Instagrammable spots while

you're here! Some picturesque gems include:

MURALS

- **Merry Mart Uniforms Store Mural** (33 Washington St.)
- **Agrihood Mural** (76 N. Winchester Blvd.)
- **Mission Santa Clara de Asis** (Santa Clara University, 500 El Camino Real)

STATUES AND SCULPTURES

- **Morgan Horse statue** (Triton Museum, 1505 Warburton Ave.)
- **Persian and Horn chandelier** (Edward M. Dowd Art and History Building, 775 Franklin St.)
- **Franklin Square fountain** (Old Town Quad)
- **Giant 49ers helmet** (outside Levi's® Stadium)
- **Our Lady of Peace statue** (2800 Mission College Blvd.)

OUTDOOR SPACES

- **Baylands Park Trail**
- **Ulistac Natural Area**
- **San Tomas Aquino/Saratoga Creek Trail**
- **Alviso Marina County Park**