LAFAYETTE · MORAGA · ORINDA

AUTUMN 2026

Lamorinda Home Buyer's Guide

Three towns. A place to make your own.
Local life, schools, and a thoughtful way home.





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COMPASS

WELCOME TO LAMORINDA

More than a home.
A way to spend your days.

Reservoir walks. Music at Moraga Commons. A film under the Orinda marquee. The appeal of Lamorinda lives in the places that become part of your week.

Lafayette, Moraga, and Orinda share an East Bay setting, but each offers a different starting point for life here. This guide introduces their character, gathering places, schools, and seasonal traditions.

Start with the setting that draws you in. Then compare the details that shape everyday life.

Community snapshot

	Lafayette	Moraga	Orinda
PLACES TO KNOW	Downtown Lafayette Lafayette Reservoir	Moraga Commons Saint Mary's College	Orinda Theatre Orinda Village
Population[1]	25,313	16,322	19,507
People per household[2]	2.62	2.73	2.67
Owner-occupied homes[2]	77.1%	83.1%	91.3%
BART station[3]	Yes	No	Yes

[1] U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: July 1, 2025 population estimates. [2] 2020–2024 estimates.
[3] BART station directory, checked October 21, 2026. Moraga connects via Lafayette or Orinda.
Townwide figures describe communities, not individual neighborhoods or who should live in them.

01 / THE TOWNS

Lafayette

A downtown to linger in.
A reservoir to return to.



The draw

Lafayette pairs an established downtown with a landscape that keeps the outdoors close to the story. Along and around Mt. Diablo Boulevard, shops, cafés, restaurants, and the library give the city a recognizable center.

The reservoir offers another kind of gathering place: water, wooded slopes, and paths that make room for an unhurried morning. Together, those two settings are a compelling part of Lafayette's appeal.

PICTURE YOUR SATURDAY

A reservoir walk, lunch downtown, and time to browse before heading home. A simple day that starts to feel like a familiar ritual.



Part of the local calendar

The annual Art & Wine Festival brings art, food, wine, and live music into downtown each September. It is a chance to experience Lafayette as a gathering place, beyond the stops on a house tour.

Getting connected

Lafayette has its own BART station. Walkability and the trip to downtown vary by address.

02 / THE TOWNS

Moraga

Hills on the horizon.
Community on the calendar.



The draw

Tucked between Lafayette and Orinda, Moraga brings parks, trails, and a college presence into a distinctly hillside setting. It is easy to imagine making more room for time outside here.

Moraga Commons is a local anchor, and the Lafayette–Moraga Regional Trail connects recreation with everyday places. Saint Mary's College adds another layer, from Gaels athletics to the Museum of Art's public exhibitions and programs.

A SENSE OF CONTINUITY

The Pear & Wine Festival celebrates Moraga's agricultural heritage. Summer concerts bring people back to the Commons year after year.





Picture your afternoon · A stretch of trail, a stop at the Commons, and an evening on the summer concert lawn. Moraga has no BART station, so include the connection to Lafayette or Orinda when planning your week.

03 / THE TOWNS

Orinda

A village feeling.
A memorable marquee.





THE APPEAL

A night at the movies. A town with traditions.

Small-scale gathering places and a hillside setting give Orinda its own sense of arrival.

Character you can see

Orinda's theatre is a visual signature, but the town is more than its marquee. The Village and Theatre District provide two centers to explore, while the surrounding hills give the city its semi-rural setting.

The combination can be especially appealing when you want recognizable local places to return to, with BART available for trips beyond town.

Culture close to home

The Orinda Theatre's film screenings and live events offer reasons to make an evening of it. The annual Fourth of July parade adds a different kind of energy, with community groups, music, and festivities.

PICTURE YOUR EVENING

Dinner near Theatre Square, a film, and the familiar marquee on the way home.

CULTURE & COMMUNITY

The dates that become *your traditions.*

A place begins to feel like home when there are things you look forward to returning to.



LAFAYETTE / SEPTEMBER

Art & Wine Festival

Downtown becomes a setting for art and handmade crafts, local food, wine, and live music. Come for a browse, then stay for another set.

MORAGA / SUMMER

Concerts at the Commons

The Moraga Park Foundation's concert series has been a local tradition since 1984. Bring a lawn chair and make an evening of live music outdoors.

MORAGA / SEPTEMBER

Pear & Wine Festival

Moraga's harvest heritage takes center stage with pear treats, music, community booths, and local wine. A distinctly local way to welcome fall.

ORINDA / JULY 4

Fourth of July parade

Community groups, music, and park festivities make this annual celebration part of Orinda's civic life. A chance to see the town turn out together.

Between the big dates · Look for exhibitions and public programs at Saint Mary's College Museum of Art, plus Orinda Theatre screenings and live events.

Recurring traditions, not an upcoming-event schedule. Dates and programs change. Check current organizer calendars before making plans.

ROOM TO ROAM

Make the outdoors *part of the ordinary.*



Water & woodland

Lafayette Reservoir offers a different pace from downtown: a place for a walk, a picnic, and time beside the water.

A trail between towns

The 7.65-mile Lafayette–Moraga Regional Trail links the two communities, with connections to parks and other local destinations.

A wider horizon

Briones Regional Park brings rolling grasslands, oak-lined canyons, and broad views into the surrounding East Bay landscape.





Photographs show Briones Regional Park and Lafayette Reservoir. Check current access, weather, trail conditions, and any fees or permits with the park operator.

MAIN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Schools, town by town.

The main neighborhood public schools in each town, with their GreatSchools overall ratings. Select a school name to open its profile.

GreatSchools ratings accessed September 29, 2026. Scale: 1–10. Overall ratings, not parent-review stars or a single test-score measure.

Lafayette

Acalanes High School	10/10	HIGH
M. H. Stanley Middle School	8/10	MIDDLE
Burton Valley Elementary	9/10	ELEMENTARY
Happy Valley Elementary	8/10	ELEMENTARY
Lafayette Elementary	9/10	ELEMENTARY
Springhill Elementary	7/10	ELEMENTARY

Moraga

Campolindo High School	10/10	HIGH
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate	9/10	MIDDLE
Camino Pablo Elementary	9/10	ELEMENTARY
Donald L. Rheem Elementary	8/10	ELEMENTARY
Los Perales Elementary	9/10	ELEMENTARY

Orinda

Miramonte High School	10/10	HIGH
Orinda Intermediate	10/10	MIDDLE
Del Rey Elementary	9/10	ELEMENTARY
Glorietta Elementary	10/10	ELEMENTARY
Sleepy Hollow Elementary	10/10	ELEMENTARY
Wagner Ranch Elementary	10/10	ELEMENTARY

Look beyond the number

Ratings are one input. Explore programs, student support, school culture, and your student's needs. Read the factors behind each score and visit schools when possible.

Confirm the address

Town names do not establish attendance eligibility. Verify the exact property and intended school year with the K–8 district and Acalanes Union High School District. Boundaries and transfer rules matter.

A selected directory of main public campuses, not a complete list of private, alternative, or specialized schools. Each school name links directly to its GreatSchools profile.

BUYING WITH PERSPECTIVE

Fall for the setting.
Understand the property.

The views and landscape are part of the attraction. A careful look at the home itself helps you enjoy them with greater confidence.



Slope, drainage & access

Ask about retaining walls, foundations, drainage, and vehicle access. Qualified inspectors should evaluate concerns; the setting alone cannot tell you a property's condition.

Wildfire & insurance

Check current hazard mapping and local requirements for the address. Obtain an insurance quote early and review coverage, exclusions, and any required work.

Permits & responsibilities

Review disclosures, permit history, title exceptions, and HOA documents where applicable. Clarify easements, shared driveways, and maintenance obligations.

A beautiful setting deserves a clear picture of ownership.

Use property-specific professional advice. Consult current CAL FIRE / OSFM and California Department of Insurance resources. Hazard maps are not insurance quotes.

A THOUGHTFUL PURCHASE

Keep the feeling. *Build the full picture.*

Once a home feels promising, bring the practical questions together. A clear process helps the important details stay in view.

01 Know the full budget

Compare financing, cash to close, taxes, insurance, assessments, HOA dues, and a repair reserve with your lender and advisers.

02 Understand the price

Review recent comparable sales for the home's location, condition, and type. Use that evidence to inform the offer discussion.

03 Read the terms

Review representation, compensation, offer terms, contingencies, and deadlines. Understand the consequences before signing or removing protections.

04 Resolve the questions

Complete the agreed inspections and document review. Confirm insurance and financing, and compare the Closing Disclosure with the latest Loan Estimate.



SAVE FOR YOUR NEXT TOUR

A home worth coming back to.

Capture what draws you in and what still needs an answer.

Property / date

What would I love about living here?

What would I want to understand better?

- ☐ Everyday routes and commute tested
- ☐ School assignment verified, if relevant
- ☐ Insurance quote and coverage reviewed
- ☐ Condition, permits, and obligations reviewed
- ☐ Full budget and comparable sales discussed

Commute check

Time the whole trip, including station access, parking, waiting, and the final walk. Test the return journey too.

Use current BART and CFPB guidance when planning. Financing and contracts require advice specific to your circumstances.

WITH ELENA MARLOWE

Which part of Lamorinda *feels like your next chapter?*

The energy of Lafayette's downtown. Moraga's hillside setting and community traditions. Orinda's familiar gathering places.





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Let's talk about the places that caught your attention, the life you want to build here, and the homes worth exploring.