

Palm Springs Neighborhoods Close to Downtown

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Many fantastic Palm Springs neighborhoods are located within walking distance of the city's major shopping, dining and entertainment areas. With year-round gorgeous weather that makes you want to spend time outdoors, being able to step outside your door and walk to your favorite spots is a big plus. So, if you're searching the Palm Springs real estate market for a home with a high "walkability rating," this is a brief guide to some of the best locations. The oldest neighborhoods in Palm Springs are also the closest to Palm Canyon Drive (North, South and East). Which figures. Palm Canyon Drive has always been the main drag, the street where all the original businesses and hotels were located, and the focus of downtown Palm Springs. And it was originally Highway 111 which steered traffic through downtown and then to the east, to connect with other Coachella Valley cities. Besides being the core of downtown Palm Springs, Palm Canyon Drive is the main street for the Uptown Design District, just north of downtown, and the primary boulevard for trendy, restored resorts, quirky motels and restaurants along East Palm Canyon Drive. The Movie Colony The oldest part of the Movie Colony is south of the Desert Regional Medical Center (site of the old El Mirador Hotel with its iconic bell tower) and north of Alejo Road. The neighborhood's west border is North Indian Canyon Drive, where you can now find several chic hotels and restaurants. That's one block from North Palm Canyon Drive and the city's Uptown Design District, with a lineup of popular restaurants and bars, plus a selection of shops featuring vintage and contemporary home furnishings, art and hip duds. Close to Alejo, there's Francis Stevens Park, the Palm Canyon Theater, the Desert Art Center, and (soon) the new Andaz Hotel. All this is within a few blocks of most of the Movie Colony. A bit further east in the Movie Colony, you can walk to one of the largest city parks, Ruth Hardy Park, named for the owner of the famed Ingleside Inn and the first city councilwoman in Palm Springs. On any given day, Movie Colony residents walk and play with their dogs and kids, have picnics, take in a tennis or basketball game and stroll through the Wellness Park opposite the Medical Center. Old Las Palmas Across North Palm Canyon Drive from the Movie Colony, sits another classic Palm Springs neighborhood, Old Las Palmas. North of Alejo Road and east of Via Monte Vista you'll find meandering streets with large lots, high ficus hedges, big palms and old homes, some in the multimillion dollar range. Like the Movie Colony, Old Las Palmas attracted scores of Hollywood celebrities from the 30s to the 60s. At Alejo and North Palm Canyon, sits the neighborhood hangout, the Corridor, which includes Koffi (a popular, local alternative to Starbucks), several restaurants and shops surrounding a charming, park-like courtyard. Not to be confused with Vista Las Palmas, which is to the west, up against the mountains and newer, Old Las Palmas, like the Movie Colony, is just blocks away from Uptown, with all the attractions mentioned earlier. And just walking around through the neighborhood is very pleasant; there's very little traffic, no sidewalks, and pedestrians and their dogs can pretty much stroll aimlessly down the middle of the street. If you like that easy-going pace, but with quick access to nightlife, Old Las Palmas is for you. The Historic Tennis Club Named for the original Tennis Club, which is nestled up against the mountains and anchored by Spencer's Restaurant. Pearl McManus, a name you'll hear a lot in Palm Spring history, started the club in the 30s. The neighborhood grew up around it. It's a snap to walk to South Palm Canyon Drive (that's anything south of Tahquitz Canyon Way) and to the Palm Springs Art Museum, the new downtown park, and the retail and hotel developments around Palm Canyon and Tahquitz Canyon Way. Village Fest, the Thursday evening street fair on South Palm Canyon, is such an easy walk you can brag about it to your friends, who have to hunt for parking on those busy evenings. It's also walking distance to restaurants in the many boutique hotels in the neighborhood, such as Melvyn's at the Ingleside Inn, Azucar at La Serena Villas and Four Saints

at The Rowan. The neighborhood is a terrific place to see old and new Palm Springs, sometimes in the same place. At the southwest corner of the neighborhood, at Ramon Road, the homes butt up against the mountains and the North Lykken Trail, which connects to several other mountain trails. Across Ramon from the Tennis Club, newer neighborhoods have sprouted, most recently homes dubbed Skye, million-dollar plus showcases built along midcentury modern lines. Tahquitz River Estates Tucked in the area south of Tahquitz River and the curve where South Palm Canyon transitions to East Palm Canyon lies another of Palm Springs' original neighborhoods, Tahquitz River Estates. A collection of unique homes, some dating from the beginning of Palm Springs, this neighborhood is best seen on foot. Nearby South Palm Canyon features some of Palm Springs favorite dining spots, El Mirasol, Miro's and Mr. Lyons. Local shops line this strip of South Palm Canyon, as well as a shopping center featuring Stein Mart. Dog owners love this neighborhood, because there is always something new to discover on your walks: old homes, lovely mature landscaping, newly remodeled midcentury modern homes, and a long trail that follows Tahquitz River (on both sides) from South Palm Canyon all the way to Sunrise Way. Walk west on Mesquite Avenue toward the mountains, and you'll find the north trailhead for the South Lykken Trail, which leads up the hills for breathtaking views of the entire Coachella Valley, and the entrance to Tahquitz Canyon, a must-see for any resident or visitor to Palm Springs. Twin Palms Follow the big curve in the road on the south end of town along East Palm Canyon Drive, and you'll find a row of what looks like cheap motels. That is what they used to be. There's still a Motel 6 among this strip of what has become a series of millennial tourist favorites, hip motel-to-hotel conversions, such as the Ace Hotel, the V, L'Horizon and Sparrows Lodge. (During Coachella, the average age of the neighborhood drops by a couple of decades.) The Twin Palms neighborhood is just south of this strip of East Palm Canyon at Camino Real. One of the original Alexander Construction Company neighborhoods, it's small, full of fine examples of midcentury modern homes and within walking distance to some of the finest dining in town. Mr. Lyons, King's Highway (at the Ace), SO.PA (at L'Horizon), Del Rey (at Villa Royale) are a few examples. Another Koffi (there are three in Palm Springs) is next to the Ace and always hopping with locals and tourists, and the Smoketree Shopping Center, with a Ralph's and several good restaurants, is close by. Besides the nearby attractions, the neighborhood is just fun to walk around in. There aren't many places where you'll find a street named Aquanetta. If you're looking into Palm Springs condos, the area around Twin Palms has many communities, some quite recent, and the large Biltmore complex lies just across East Palm Canyon Drive from Koffi. Deepwell This delightful, mixed midcentury Palm Springs neighborhood of unique homes is situated across East Palm Canyon Drive from Twin Palms, and a little bit further east (south of Mesquite Avenue and west of Sunrise Way). Originally from the 40s, and home to several celebrities, Deepwell homes are distinctive, mostly midcentury modern style, dating from the 50s to the 70s. This is a very popular neighborhood, not only because of its stylish architecture and gorgeous landscaping, but also its central location. Like Old Las Palmas, it's lightly trafficked, since few streets go through, and residents stroll around and walk their dogs in the middle of the lanes, chatting with neighbors. As it's close to East Palm Canyon Drive, it is also walking distance to the same attractions as Twin Palms. But it is closer to the Smoketree Shopping Center and the ever-popular Purple Room, a restaurant and bar with live entertainment that's been around since the Frank Sinatra era. Live in Deepwell, and you could have breakfast, lunch and dinner every day at the ever popular Elmer's on East Palm Canyon Drive. Palm Springs has great weather for walking and hiking, so buyers looking for Palm Springs real estate often ask for a location that has the attractions Palm Springs is known for within walking distance. When you live close to Palm Canyon Drive, you have many interesting and fun destinations at your

doorstep. Once you're off the main drag, however, the neighborhoods are so quiet, you wouldn't know you're mere blocks away from all the activity.

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