

Costa Mesa

People and Place

Location

Costa Mesa is located along Interstate Highway 5, approximately 42 miles south of Los Angeles and 89 miles north of San Diego. The community is in Orange County and covers 15.62 square miles of land and 0.1 square mile of water. The geographic coordinates of Costa Mesa are lat 33°38'28"N, long 117°55'04"W.

Demographic Profile

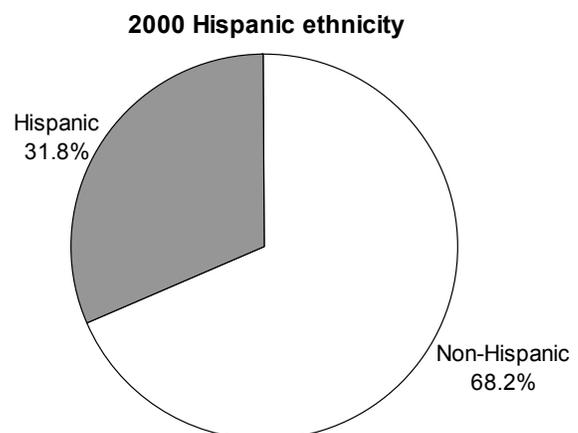
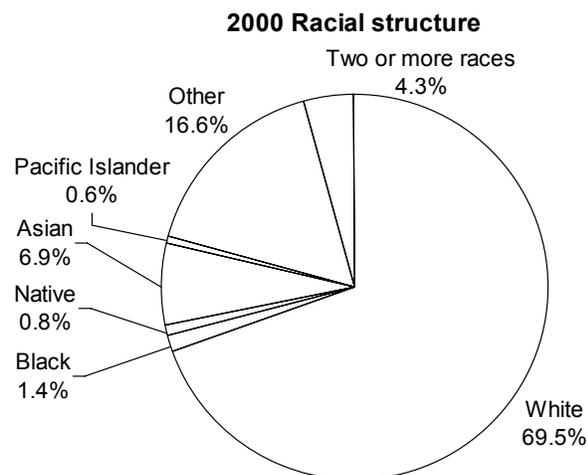
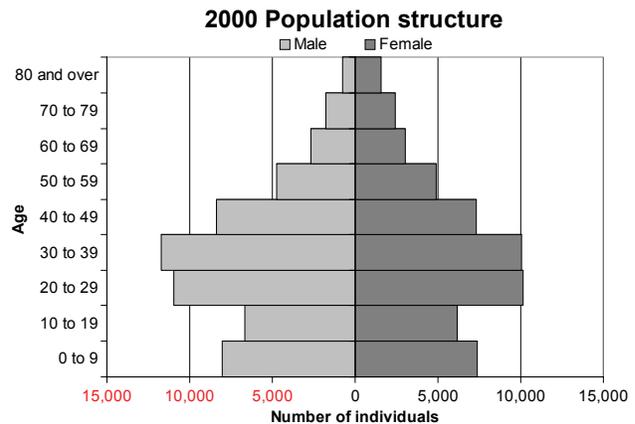
According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the population of Costa Mesa was 108,724, a 12.8% increase from 1990. The gender composition was 48.8% female and 51.2% male. The median age in 2000 was 32, compared to the national median of 35.3. Of the population 18 years of age and older, 78.1% had a high school education or higher, 26.5% had a bachelor's degree or higher, and 7.2% had a graduate or professional degree; the national averages were 79.7%, 22.3%, and 7.8% respectively.

The majority of the racial composition of Costa Mesa was white (69.5%), followed by individuals who identified with some other race (16.6%), Asian (6.9%), individuals who identified with two or more races (4.3%), black (1.4%), American Indian and Alaskan Native (0.8%), and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander (0.6%). Ethnicity data indicate 31.8% identified as Hispanic. In 2000 29.2% of the population was foreign-born, of which 53.1% were born in Mexico.

In 2000 75% of the population lived in family households.

History

The Chumash Indians were among the earliest peoples to inhabit the greater Los Angeles area, settling in the region between 5,000 and 2,000 BP (before present).^{1,2} The Chumash relied on a maritime economy for centuries (e.g., gathering and fishing). By 500 AD, the Tongva Indians arrived in Southern California from the Mojave Desert. At the onset of European migration into North America, there were an estimated 300,000 Native Americans in California. This number was drastically reduced as European diseases killed approximately two-thirds of the native population during the colonial era.³ Today the Gabrieleno/Tongva Tribe is headquartered in San Gabriel. The tribe has sought federal recognition since 1994 and may obtain federally recognized fishing rights because its historic use of marine resources is well known. In 1542, before the



Spaniard Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo landed on the California coast, he was met by Tongva Indians in their boats. Cabrillo was the first European to enter what would become the greater Los Angeles area.^{4, 5}

Costa Mesa gained its name from the coastal tableland landscape above Newport Bay. Originally grazing grounds for cattle belonging to the rancho of the Mission San Juan Capistrano, the area became a gathering spot for vaqueros (cowboys) tending cattle. In 1810 this area was a part of a Spanish land grant made to Jose Antonio Yorba, whose family retained ownership until the late 1800s when settlers began buying portions of the rancho and established the town of Fairview. Following a devastating storm, the community was revived with the new name of Harper, named for a nearby rancher. Harper, however, officially changed the community's name to Costa Mesa in May 1920. Agriculture and subsequently the building and oil drilling industries brought new growth to the area until these industries crashed during the depression. Since the end of World War II, however, the population has boomed due to military and civic institutions located in the area. Today Costa Mesa is a major commercial and industrial center of Orange County.⁶

Infrastructure

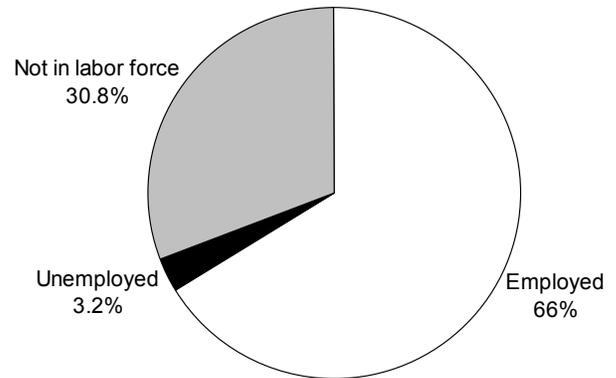
Current Economy

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 66% of the potential labor force 16 years of age and older were employed, 3.2% were unemployed, and the unemployment rate was 4.7% (calculated by dividing the unemployed population by the labor force). In addition, 30.8% were not in the labor force. The major employment sectors were education, health, and social services (15.6%), manufacturing (12.7%), retail trade (11%), accommodation and food services (9.1%), and local, state, or federal government (9%). Natural resource jobs including agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting employed only 0.3%, but this percentage may be artificially low because many fishermen are self-employed and are underrepresented in these data.

The California Employment Development Department lists Apria Healthcare Group Inc., ICN Pharmaceuticals Inc., and Nordstrom as major employers in Costa Mesa.⁷

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Costa Mesa's per capita income in 1999 was \$23,342, the median household income was \$50,732, and 12.6% of the population lived below the poverty level. In 2000 there were 40,406 housing units in Costa Mesa, of which 97% were occupied and 3% were vacant. Of the occupied units, 40.5% were by owner and 59.5% were by renter.

2000 Employment structure



More than half (56.5%) of the vacant housing units were for rent and 11.4% were for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use.

Governance

Costa Mesa is a general law city with a council-manager form of government. The city has a five-member city council, including a mayor and four council members. Residents pay a 7.75% sales and use tax rate. Orange County has a 10% lodging tax, which earned \$337,549 in revenue in fiscal year 2001.⁸ See the Governance subsection (page 43) in the Overview section for a more detailed discussion of taxes affecting fishermen and processors in California.

A California Department of Fish and Game Marine Region field office and a U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) station are located 80 miles away in San Diego. Del Mar, approximately 70 miles away, is the nearest city that hosts Pacific Fishery Management Council meetings. The southwest regional office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is in Long Beach. Eight Coast Guard vessels are stationed at the USCG Marine Safety Office/Group Los Angeles-Long Beach, 38 miles away in San Pedro.

Facilities

Costa Mesa is located north of Newport between California Highway 1 and Interstate Highway 405. John Wayne Airport is about 4 miles away. Costa Mesa falls within Newport-Mesa Unified School District, which supports 33 schools. The Costa Mesa Police and Fire departments administer public safety, and there are six hospitals in the area. The City of Costa Mesa provides gas, water, wastewater, and refuse services. Costa Mesa links into the greater Los Angeles area and its extensive tourism industry and well established infrastructure catering to a multitude of tourism activities. No

commercial harbor facilities are available within Costa Mesa, but private recreational facilities are plentiful.

Involvement in West Coast Fisheries

Commercial Fishing

According to available data, there were no seafood processors operating in Costa Mesa in 2000. Landings data for Costa Mesa were recorded as part of the Other Los Angeles and Orange County Ports port group, which includes the nearby communities of: Alhambra, Anaheim, Avalon, Balboa, Bell Gardens, Beaumont, Bloomington, Capistrano, Carson, Catalina Island, Chatsworth, Corona Del Mar, Covina, El Segundo, Elsinore, Fountain Valley, Fullerton, Gardena, Glendale, Granada Hills, Hawaiian Gardens, Harbor City, Hermosa Beach, Huntington Beach, Inglewood, Irvine, La Canada, Laguna, Lancaster, Los Alamitos, Los Angeles, Los Angeles Area, Lynwood, Malibu, Manhattan Beach, Mission Viejo, Newhall, Norco, Norwalk, Ocean Park, Ontario, Orange, Pacific Palisades, Paramount, Pasadena, Playa Del Ray, Point Dume, Rancho Palos Verdes, Redondo Beach, Reseda, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Clemente, Santa Ana, Santa Monica, Seal Beach, South Gate, Sunset Beach, Topanga Canyon, Torrance, Upland, Venice, Vernon, Walnut, West Los Angeles, Westminster, and Whittier.

Reported landings for this port group in 2000 were in the following West Coast fisheries (data shown represent landings in metric tons/value of landings/number of vessels landing): coastal pelagic 73 t/\$54,656/13; crab 16 t/\$53,799/14; groundfish 38 t/\$196,068/24; highly migratory species 4 t/\$22,968/18; shrimp 6 t/\$110,054/5; and other species 91 t/\$431,800/52. See the Santa Ana community profile for additional information.

Costa Mesa residents owned eight commercial vessels in 2000, including one that participated in the federally managed groundfish fishery. The number of vessels owned by Costa Mesa residents in 2000 that participated in each fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: groundfish 0/0/NA, highly migratory species NA/0/NA, shellfish NA/0/NA, and shrimp NA/0/0.⁹

In 2000 six residents held seven federal groundfish permits. The number of Costa Mesa residents holding permits in each fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: coastal pelagic 0/0/3, groundfish 0/0/4, highly migratory species NA/0/2, salmon 0/0/1, shellfish 0/0/NA, shrimp 0/0/1, and other species 0/0/20.¹⁰

Costa Mesa community members held at least 50 commercial fishing permits, including 43 registered state permits in 2000. The number of state permits held by Costa Mesa residents in each fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: coastal pelagic 0/0/4, groundfish 0/0/5, highly

migratory species NA/0/2, salmon 0/0/1, shellfish 0/0/NA, shrimp 0/0/1, and other species 0/0/30.¹¹

Sportfishing

A number of charter vessels operate out of Costa Mesa targeting albacore tuna, rock cod, salmon, and other species. Many also offer seasonal whale watching tours. In 2002 at least 11 charter businesses served sport fishermen and tourists in Costa Mesa. Three agents sold sportfishing licenses in Costa Mesa. In 2000 Orange County license vendors sold 26,250 resident sportfishing licenses, 47 nonresident sportfishing licenses, 7 sport salmon punch cards, and 29 abalone report cards. In the port group surrounding Newport, 21 commercial passenger fishing vessels served 57,515 anglers in 2000. These vessels reported 247,746 landings composed of more than a dozen species. Sea bass (various species) and barracuda accounted for 59.1% and 8.8% of the landings respectively.

Subsistence

Local tribal and nontribal community members may engage in subsistence fishing in the Costa Mesa area. However, specific information on subsistence fishing is not discussed in detail in this community profile due to the lack of available data. The California Department of Fish and Game uses the term “recreational” for fishermen who do not earn revenue from their catch, but fish for pleasure or to provide food for personal consumption. Information on subsistence fishing in California is captured to some degree in the sportfishing data.

Involvement in North Pacific Fisheries

Commercial Fishing

In 2000 Costa Mesa residents owned two vessels that participated in North Pacific fisheries. The vessels made landings in the North Pacific salmon fishery, but specific information (landings in metric tons/value of landings) is confidential.

In 2000 two community residents each held a single Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission salmon permit. Three Costa Mesa residents held crew member licenses for North Pacific fisheries.

Sportfishing

In 2000 Costa Mesa residents purchased 123 Alaska sportfishing licenses.

Notes

1. The Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History. 2002. Chumash Indian life. Online at <http://www.sbnature.org/research/anthro/chumash/index.htm> [accessed 12 February 2007].
2. Los Angeles Almanac. 2004. Los Angeles County-Pre-history to 1799. Online at <http://www.laalmanac.com/history/hi01a.htm> [accessed 12 February 2007].
3. United States Geological Survey. 2004. Regional trends in biological resources: California. Online at <http://biology.usgs.gov/s+t/SNT/noframe/ca162.htm> [accessed 12 February 2007].
4. Los Angeles Almanac. 2004. Where did the name Los Angeles come from? Online at <http://www.laalmanac.com/history/hi03a.htm> [accessed 12 February 2007].
5. Gabrieleno/Tongva. 2004. Gabrieleno/Tongva. Online at <http://www.tongva.com/> [accessed 12 February 2007].
6. City of Costa Mesa. No date. History. Online at <http://www.ci.costa-mesa.ca.us/about/history.htm> [accessed 12 February 2007].
7. State of California. No date. Labor market information: Major employers in Orange County. Online at <http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/cgi/databrowsing/?PAGEID=4&SUBID=131> [accessed 12 February 2007].
8. State of California. 2004. California counties transient lodging tax revenue. Online at <http://www.sco.ca.gov/ard/local/locrep/adhoc/county/0001cotranslodgtax.pdf> [accessed 12 February 2007].
9. NA refers to data that were not available, for example, due to few or no recorded permit numbers, or the partially permitted nature of a fishery in 2000.
10. See note 9.
11. See note 9.