

Housing Solution

Entry Level Acting in LA 2016

“I love visiting the zoo, I just don’t want to live in it” said the *talent* in *background holding* whose name I wish I had gotten. Her’s was the most dramatic quote I heard during my total first year in LA. As well, I have heard other actors speak of the advantage of living outside of the LA basin. Yes, most everyone would agree that Hollywood is like a zoo . . . everything goes!

Visit Los Angeles Before Moving

Since the Town is not for everyone, I suggest, if possible, a **TIMELY** pre-move visit would be most helpful. Early in my first *Hollywood* season, I befriended the lovely and dedicated European model turned LA *entry level actress* Shahira Barry. Among others, she spoke about the advantage of spending months in LA on a visiting visa, setting things up for her imminent move.

However, personally I regret to inform you that once I decided to move South, I chose not to bear the additional expense of visiting first. Therefore, I left it up to my family members who already resided in Rancho Cucamonga to find me an apartment.

I am blessed with a very special granddaughter. I know that all grandparents think that but this time it is true. Her initial great choice for my move came while she accompanied her mother’s housing search for me.

On one visit, three (3) year old Aliah was reported to have danced around with extreme glee, upon entering the apartment I subsequently rented. Thanks Granny's baby!

AMLJ at Empire Lakes Residence

So, through no work of my own, I now happily live in the best particular apartment, in the best possible housing complex. Adjacent to the public golf course, this Southern California (SoCal) gated community has all the classic luxury apartment amenities: beautiful grounds, resort-style pool & spa, 24-hour state-of-the-art fitness center, executive business center, yoga studio, media center (theater) with surround sound, putting green & bocce ball court, par course exercise area, sand volleyball court, outside fire pit, poolside barbecue & serving area, garden gazebo, pet-friendly apartments and even short-term furnished apartment availability.

Spacious one, two and three bedroom apartment floor plans all include such features as: nine-foot ceilings with fans, crown molding, full-size washers & dryers, fully-equipped kitchen appliances, track lighting in kitchen and dining room, plantation blinds, oversized sliding glass doors, utility rooms and intrusion alarms. Various floor plans also include combinations of: wood-burning fireplaces, kitchen island and pantries, oversized oval garden tubs, double vanities, entry closets and patio/balcony storage closets. Further, ample free parking is available with garages and covered carports also available to rent.

If I sound like a real estate agent, it is because I am suggesting that actors moving to Southern California should live in Rancho Cucamonga's AMLI at Empire Lakes apartment complex. I know that, to The Industry, this is a radical suggestion. Following is why I take this position.



Phil in front of the AMLI at Empire Lakes
photo by Michael Delgado

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

The well established real estate adage is super true in SoCal. Residents new to the area might be shocked as to how bad some affordable living locations can be in the Southland. Most often, SoCal living facilities are not what they look like on TV. However, the Inland Empire's AMLI living has a myriad of location advantages.

Striking Distance From Most of Southern California

With the exception of the western side of Los Angeles (due to traffic), Rancho Cucamonga (RC) is uniquely positioned with direct ground transportation routes to all of the very large Southern California region. With the historic US Route 66, State freeway CA210 plus Interstate freeways 10 and 15 running through our City's corporate boundaries, when driving, I most often take the less crowded, nearby State freeway CA60 to enter the LA basin. Given that RC is only forty plus (40+) miles from downtown Los Angeles, it is no wonder that large consumer product storage facilities are abundant herein. Because of it's striking distance to the bulk of SoCal's mammoth sized population, many of the goods purchased by those people are delivered from Rancho Cucamonga. In fact, because of traffic patterns, I can often drive to a south or north of LA *shoot* in less **TIME** than my colleagues who live in Los Angeles.

East Is A Different Community

Perhaps because very little LA film & TV *production* is done east of the Town, I have found that Inland Empire living is most likely to offer one the environment to help establish actual community. As so many actors new to Los Angeles seem to complain about how hard it is to make friends in *Hollywood*, this East is a different community fact should not be overlooked.

Clean & Safe Living

Although **TOLERANCE** helps, like most American big cities, Los Angeles is a dangerous place. For example, despite being a very savvy, long time metropolitan dweller, in my 1st LA year I chased a pickpocket down to retrieve my wallet which he stole. Wow, that was scary!

Although San Bernardino county has the largest population in America's most populous State, let me tell you this. Even your mother will feel like you are safe if you live in RC. The little hamlet still has that suburban / rural life feeling, so hard to find these days in the USA.

And, OMG, Rancho Cucamonga is so clean that seeing a homeless type dressed person is shocking!

Public Transportation Accessibility

As my first year in Los Angeles seven (7) day, nearly every week commute was headlined by the SoCal public transportation system, my favorite aspect of AMLI at Empire Lakes living is that it is the closest housing to the Rancho Cucamonga Metrolink Station. See the previous Ground Transportation chapter to uncover the great importance attached to this unique fact.

Bonus Mentoring

In addition to my hosting the inaugural www.InlandEmpireFilmFestival.com in the AMLI Theater, to actors new to Town who move into my housing complex, I will personally offer no cost mentorship.

HOUSING COSTS

City Of Angels Apartment Rents

The ultimate supply and demand housing situation is tilted in the favor of SoCal landlords. Unless one has an extremely good contact, someone new to living in the LA basin is most likely to pay a lot of money for not so nice housing. Similar to their reaction to traffic jams, actors new to LA seem to simply accept uncomfortable living arrangements. Just do a little online apartment searching to see how expensive housing can be in Los Angeles. Then personally visit the locations you think you can afford. My guess is that you will be appalled! It's no surprise that upon arriving in LA one of my first reality TV roles was as the questionable landlord Ron Sampson on the "Slumdog Bakava" episode of Entertainment Studio's Supreme Justice with Judge Karen. "We're not in Kansas anymore, Toto".

AMLI Costs

Rents at my housing complex are generally less than in LA. Plus you get so much more for your money. Therefore, I suggest you compare availabilities at www.amli.com/apartments/southern-california/inland-empire/rancho-cucamonga/empire-lakes. Perhaps like me, your **TIMING** will be perfect and you too will score a special rate for an apartment that is slow to rent. Coupled with roommates to share the costs, while they also help one develop community, I believe you too will find comfort living in AMLI at Empire Lakes.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

Don't get me wrong. Many LA basin residents have mentioned to me the fine arrangements of their abode. In that regard, particular LA neighborhoods seem to offer the best prospects. However, as it is the goal to share my own experience in this Workbook, I have no advice to help one uncover those situations. All I know is that **TENACITY** will be required to find the best housing arrangement for your needs.

Finally, while working on Code Black, fellow *background talent* Christopher Belino mentioned that upon arriving from Asia he stayed at a Hollywood hostel until he found a permanent arrangement. Sounds like a great idea to me, for those that cannot afford a pre-move visit.

A Very Important Decision

Whatever your choice, I surmise that a bad housing arrangement is one of the largest contributing factors that cause *want-to-be-actors* to often give up their dream of making a living as *Hollywood talent*. It is hard to build success while living in uncomfortable housing. That is why Housing Solution is one of this guidebook's major chapters. I encourage you to be very careful in getting this one right in the beginning.

Once appropriate housing is secured, one can move on to concentrating on how to act on the job. So, let's next consider a little Set Etiquette advice.