

## Top 10 Artists Colonies

Share the creative spirit—and find a great memento—in these coastal havens.  
Shelley Metcalf



### Carmel-by-the-Sea, California

Artists have long been drawn to this bohemian (and beautiful) town on the Monterey Peninsula. Home to more than 100 galleries and the Pacific Repertory Theatre, this is a place where culture thrives. Start at the Carmel Art Association, the second-oldest art cooperative in the country, celebrating its 81st anniversary this year. It displays works from more than 120 local artists. For the lively arts, check the schedule for the historic Golden Bough Playhouse, which hosts more than 175 performances annually; [carmelcalifornia.com](http://carmelcalifornia.com).

### Rockport, Texas

A quiet town in southeast Texas might seem an unlikely haven for the arts, but creative types have been coming here for years. The scene revolves around the Rockport Center for the Arts, located along Aransas Bay in the Heritage District. Visit the historic Bruhl-O'Connor home and its sculpture garden for workshops, exhibits, and lectures; 361/729-5519 or [rockportartcenter.com](http://rockportartcenter.com).

### Wynwood Arts District, Miami, Florida

This warehouse district-turned-artistic-hot spot bustles with lofts, galleries, museums, and studios. Goldman Properties is reshaping the 20-block neighborhood into an arts-oriented pedestrian community. Wynwood Arts District hosts alternative fairs during Art Basel and gallery walks the second Saturday of each month. Explore the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) at Goldman Warehouse (404 NW 26th Street) and the Margulies Collection at the Warehouse (591 NW 27th Street); [artcircuits.com](http://artcircuits.com).

### Monhegan Island, Maine

No cars, paved roads, or streetlights mar the scenery on Monhegan Island. Perhaps that's why it has attracted artists for more than a century—there's beauty to capture at every turn. Plan to devote a day to visiting, because the island is accessible only by boat. (Ferries run from Port Clyde, Boothbay Harbor, and New Harbor.) A few galleries welcome visitors to browse through studios; [monheganwelcome.com](http://monheganwelcome.com).

### Grand Marais Art Colony, Grand Marais, Minnesota

You'll find Minnesota's oldest artists colony in a renovated church on Lake Superior's North Shore. Since its beginning in 1947, Grand Marais Art Colony has worked to educate artists of all skill levels. The nonprofit group offers classes in glasswork, book art, ceramics, printmaking, painting, and mixed media. Each summer, it sponsors the Grand Marais Arts Festival so you can take a masterpiece home; 800/385-9585 or [grandmaraisartcolony.org](http://grandmaraisartcolony.org).

### Salt Spring Island, British Columbia, Canada

On the ferry ride over to this art haven between Vancouver and Victoria, be sure to pick up a studio brochure. (It's also available online at [saltspringstudiotour.com](http://saltspringstudiotour.com).) The island has more than 30 galleries and studios. Many welcome guests year-round, but call first in the off-season. From Easter weekend through October, don't miss the popular Saturday Market, a perfect place to find island-made art and nibbles, and to enjoy the waterfront setting; [saltspringvisitor.com](http://saltspringvisitor.com).

### Towles Court, Sarasota, Florida

Once a thriving residential neighborhood, Towles Court had deteriorated into an area of cramped apartments and blighted homes by the 1980s. Its future remained uncertain until a plan developed more

than a decade ago began to attract artists to the area. Now it thrives again. Some galleries welcome the public regularly, but all open their doors to visitors year-round on the third Friday of each month for the Gallery Walk; [towlescourt.com](http://towlescourt.com).

### **Laguna Beach, California**

Every summer a trio of festivals—Art-A-Fair, Sawdust Art Festival, and Festival of Arts—draws crowds to celebrate the artistic heritage of this Southern California community. One popular event, Pageant of the Masters, re-creates famous works with real people. Don't miss the Laguna Art Museum, which participates in a gallery walk the first Thursday evening of every month. For fine art, head to Gallery Row; for live action, visit The Laguna Playhouse; 800/877-1115 or [lagunabeachinfo.com](http://lagunabeachinfo.com).

### **Provincetown, Massachusetts**

This town on the tip of Cape Cod has long celebrated its rich artistic heritage. The Fine Arts Work Center aids budding artists through its residence program, workshops, and lectures. The Provincetown Art Association and Museum holds a large permanent collection, and offers summer classes as well as fall and winter workshops. Just south of Provincetown, the Truro Center for the Arts at Castle Hill hosts spring classes in painting, drawing, printmaking, sculpture, and poetry; [provincetowntourismoffice.org](http://provincetowntourismoffice.org).

### **Todos Santos, Baja California Sur, Mexico**

With its picture-perfect setting between the Sierra de la Laguna mountains and the Pacific, it's no wonder artists seek out this small town. An hour north of Cabo San Lucas, it has 15 galleries, including the Charles Stewart Gallery (owned by the founder of this art colony) and Galería de Todos Santos. Visitors find works by local and expatriate painters and other craftsmen. The city celebrates its culture with an art festival each February; [todossantos.cc](http://todossantos.cc).

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