



Growing up in Florida, I knew very little about California. I assumed it was much like Florida with beaches, tourists and theme parks. I had never traveled farther west than Louisiana and had barely seen a mountain.

That all changed in 1999 when I visited San Diego in late July. Imagine my surprise when I discovered a place that looked similar to Florida but had a lot less bugs and WAY less humidity. To be able to walk around in late July and not be pouring sweat was an amazing experience. Eating outside near the water and not getting attacked by mosquitoes was something I didn't know could be possible. The ocean was freezing compared to Florida but I didn't mind.



**Debbie Mest is a Digital Marketing Consultant and lives in San Diego with her husband & 2 kids.**

*“California definitely feels like my home.”*

In 2001, my husband and I relocated to San Diego. Many of our friends thought we were crazy. They would say “what about the earthquakes?” In nearly 20 years of living in San Diego, I’ve really barely experienced an earthquake. The first time I felt one, I didn’t even know it was an earthquake. And while I realize some earthquakes can cause a lot of destruction and be very scary, I’ll take the risk of an earthquake over Florida’s hurricane season any day. I do not miss living in fear for days or weeks wondering which direction a storm was heading and dealing with panicked shoppers and power outages caused by storms.

When people say they might leave California for Florida, I always say, don’t make that decision until you’ve spent time in Orlando in August. It’s miserable! I still visit Florida occasionally to see family and friends but couldn’t imagine moving back. I’ll always be a Bucs fan but I have more of an allegiance to the Padres than the Rays. California definitely feels like my home.

## 5 THINGS I DON’T MISS ABOUT FLORIDA

1



2



3



4



5

