

Between the ocean and the mountains is Santa Barbara

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This month, [Village Properties](#) marks its 25th Anniversary as Santa Barbara's leading locally-owned independent brokerage.

It's been an upward trajectory for the company since it was founded in 1996. In 2020, Village properties had a sales volume of \$1.8 billion and a 16% market share. That's quite an uptick compared to 1997, Village's first full year in business, when sales volume reached \$101 million and a 5% market share.

Village Properties, which holds the listing for this \$72.5-million compound, has sold more than \$1.8 ... [+] billion in real estate in 2020.

Village Properties

The brokerage was [recently recognized](#) by [Real Estate Almanac's](#) T3 Mega 1000 report in the "Highest Average Sales Price By Brokerage" top five national rankings with an average 2020 sales price of \$2.2 million. The brokerage's [Riskin Partners Estate Group](#) is the number one team by production in Montecito/Santa Barbara. The group also held the number two spot in the U.S. in production for a "small team."

Renee Grubb, broker and owner of Village Properties, recently shared her insights on today's luxury market and how business has changed. When Grubb entered the business 38 years ago, agents hauled around hard copy MLS (Multiple Listing Service) listing books the size of a major city's phone directory. It was their bible. "Agents have changed the profession as they have become so much more service orientated. It really is providing soup-to-nuts service to be successful today," Renee reflects. "I thought I was a good agent when it came to service, yet I didn't do what agents do today."

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In 1996, the residential real estate business had barely been touched by technology. "Now you can do everything from your phone. When the local Association of Realtors announced it was getting rid of the MLS book, I remember agents protesting around town," Grubb said.

The culture at Village Properties is steeped in supporting its 180 agents that service Montecito, Santa Barbara, and Santa Ynez. Today, Village Properties offers them the latest in technology, marketing, CRM software, social media assistance, and agent development. "It's very hard for agents to keep up with all you must do to be successful in this business today," admits Grubb, who encourages agents to share news and topics with an internal team that handles social media for them.

The Riskin Partners Estate Group at Village Properties was ranked as Montecito/Santa Barbara's No.1 ... [+] team by production last year. Among the group's listings is this \$33.5 million sanctuary in Montecito.

Village Properties

Strong market analytics and in-depth research provide Village Properties' agents and clients with real-time market knowledge [disseminated in monthly reports](#). This is especially important in today's competitive Santa Barbara market, which often sees multiple offers and bidding wars due to inventory constraints.

In addition to a host of vetted tech and software components, the company continues to invest in tools aimed at giving its agents an edge. This year, Grubb enlisted Portland-based creative branding agency 1000 Watt to create a new graphic identity. The modernization of the brand included a revamping of its core messaging; marketing materials and collateral further reflect both company culture and the Santa Barbara community.

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Grubb says the company has a strong agent retention rate, with several agents who have been there since the start. "It truly is about our company culture. We have to be the right fit for an agent. We explain before we hire agents that we are truly all in this together. We care about each other and have a great deal of community involvement," Grubb confides. In the highly competitive environment of luxury residential sales, the caring factor isn't a given. Just catch one of Bravo's reality real estate shows to see how highly competitive the business is.

The company also takes a community-first approach. Village Properties' non-profit [Teacher's Fund](#), started in 2002 by Grubb, has granted over \$1.7 million to local teachers for much-needed school supplies, so they don't have to reach into their own pockets.

Don't expect to see a slowdown in Santa Barbara real estate. Grubb expects that low inventory will ... [+] continue to drive a red-hot market.

Village Properties

As 2021 moves into the fourth quarter, Grubb expects it to be another record year. "It looks as if we will have even better numbers for 2021 than we did last year. Our top producers that set records for 2020 will do so again this year." Moving into 2022, Grubb, who has seen numerous market cycles throughout her career, expects it "to be a good year in my eyes."

Considering the Santa Barbara region is locked in by the ocean, mountains and strict development regulations, expect to see steady sales with increasing prices, at least for the near term.

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*Village Properties is a founding member of [Forbes Global Properties](#), a consumer marketplace and membership network of elite brokerages selling the world's most luxurious homes.*

Source: [Village Properties Marks Its 25th Anniversary As The Top Independent Brokerage In Santa Barbara's Luxury Market](#)