

GROWING Up IN
RANCHO SANTA FE!

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Being a fifth generation Angelino, I had always dreamed of country life. In Los Angeles, feeding chickens, cows, and horses, was something done in books. Only Jess Parker and Roy Rodgers could own a horse, and the only barns were owned by the Cartwrights on channel six.

When I heard that my family was moving to Rancho Santa Fe, I was in Utah. Every year I went there with my cousins. There I'd sit, green with envy, and watch their country life.

As we drove into Rancho Santa Fe, it was like a dream come true. I was Cinderella in the prince's castle, or Peter Pan exploring Never-Never Land. The old Spanish town wasn't even as big as one awful block back in the city. It was beautiful!

Our house was on a great old street called Mimulus, named for a kind of flowering shrub. At the top of the driveway there were palm trees and lion statues welcoming us.

As I stepped out of the car I took a deep, relieved breath, but something was wrong. I thought to myself, and then laughed, I wasn't breathing.

in smoke and gas. Instead, a sweet smell of orange blossoms filled my lungs. Eucalyptus leaves were fresh and wet with mist, flowers were coming up everywhere, and the slight chatter of the birds was beautiful.

I have now lived in this heavenly place for six years. My family has two horses, a dog, a cat. We have recently been raising peacocks, I am also taking care of two baby sparrows. I don't know of anywhere else I'd rather live, and I wouldn't move back to Los Angeles for anything. I worry a lot though. Will it always be so pretty? It has grown up a lot since I've been here, and it will probably keep growing. If there is nothing we can do to stop it, we can at least try to slow it down, and preserve this beautiful happy place that I've grown up in.