

IMMIGRANT DREAMS

Are immigrants happier in Texas or California? It's surprising

Despite seeming like polar opposites, the states provide similar satisfaction, poll says.

ANITA CHABRIA
IN SACRAMENTO

América Ramirez Lomeli, named for the Mexican soccer team, did everything right as an immigrant.

Growing up in California's capital, she excelled in school. She volunteered, racking up more than 2,000 hours of extracurriculars by the time she graduated. She collected toys for the children's hospital that helped her brother after he fell from a roof, and, at her mother's command, she stayed calm when police were nearby so they did not attract unwanted attention.

But none of it was enough. She didn't have papers.

When she graduated from UC Davis with a double degree this summer, she lacked the one thing she required for success — the legal right to work.

"I wanted to help my mom, I wanted to help my-

self, I wanted to help others, and I couldn't," she said of growing up undocumented in California. "I tried not to think about it too much because I knew there was nothing I could do. It always made me feel, I don't know how to say it in English, *impotente*."

California or Texas, which is better for immigrants?

To some who did not cross a border to be here, the answer may seem obvious: California, of course.

How could it not be, with a state Assembly speaker who grew up in farmworker housing, our sanctuary cities and our many laws meant to shield, aid and uplift the vulnerable among us?

Certainly, immigrants agree that California is the more welcoming state: 7 in 10 California immigrants said most people in the state welcome immigrants; only about 4 in 10 Texas immigrants said the same, according to a wide-ranging survey of immigrants conducted by KFF and the L.A. Times earlier this year.

But, despite stark political and social differences between the Lone Star and Golden states, the hundreds of immigrants interviewed for the survey reported strikingly similar experiences — and overall satisfaction — in both [See [Immigrants](#), A12]



FATIMA SHBAIR Associated Press

PALESTINIANS flee from their neighborhood in Khan Yunis, in the Gaza Strip, on Saturday. Heading warnings before Israeli missiles strike, they pack what belongings they can carry and get out of harm's way.

Palestinians wait to see if their homes will be struck



Photographs by MARCUS YAM Los Angeles Times

DESPITE being on opposite sides, Palestinian Bassam Alzaarir, left, and Israeli Malki Shem-Tov share the misfortunes of a long and bitter conflict.

COLUMN ONE

Two strangers tell the story of a region's pain

By Jeffrey Fleishman | REPORTING FROM JERUSALEM

The two men have never met — they come from different worlds in this troubled land — but they share in war's misery. Bassam Alzaarir is a Palestinian shepherd living with his family in a narrow valley of the West Bank, where on many nights Jewish settlers descend from hilltops, jamming rifles in the faces of his children, demanding that he leave his land. Malki Shem-Tov is an Israeli father whose son, Omer, was kidnapped and taken to Gaza when Hamas raided Israel on Oct. 7, changing the trajectory of a nation and lives on

both sides of a long and bitter conflict. "They constantly attack us," Alzaarir said of the settlers, who, since the start of Israel's war with the militant group Hamas, have become more violent and aggressive. "They've blocked us from all sides." Shem-Tov is menaced by different forces. Although more than 100 of some 240 hostages have been released during a cease-fire in recent days, his son remains captive, a young man believed to be trapped in a warren of Hamas tunnels. "I sleep two or three hours a night," Shem- [See [Pain](#), A4]



LUIS SINCO Los Angeles Times

"WHY water if you don't have to?" asks Mike Cirone, who's been farming on the Central Coast for 40 years.

Juicy apples are his dry-farming proof

Growing fruit without irrigation offers a tasty answer to water issues along Central Coast.

BY IAN JAMES

SAN LUIS OBISPO — Leaves rustled as Mike Cirone reached into a tree and gently picked an apple. The orchard was filled with a profusion of ripe fruit in shades from golden-green to pinkish-red. But unlike other crops that guzzle water from canals and wells, this bounty of apples grew on its own without irrigation. Cirone specializes in dry farming — applying little or no water, and relying on rainfall and the moisture stored in the ground. This is how farming has long been done in See Canyon near San Luis Obispo, where the orchards spread out beside a creek at the foot

of a steep ridge shaded by oak trees. Cirone has been farming here for 40 years, perfecting his growing techniques and cultivating dozens of varieties of apples. "It's the way it was always done here, and it worked," Cirone said. "Why water if you don't have to? But what you realize is that also, you have something that has a lot more flavor." The lack of watering concentrates the tartness and sweetness. And the apples come off the trees crisp and juicy. "They're dry farmed. There is a distinct flavor," he said. Pausing from picking, Cirone took a Fuji apple and sliced off a hunk with a knife. As juice dribbled, he took a bite. "Oh my God. It's good," he said. "I'm stoked at the quality of this fruit." Cirone has built a thriving business farming apples, [See [Dry farming](#), A9]

Cal State faculty ready to walk out

Thousands are poised to take part in a rolling strike at four campuses to call for a bigger pay increase. **CALIFORNIA, B1**

AI and the fall of iconic magazine

How did third-rate articles pumped out by artificial intelligence appear in Sports Illustrated? **BUSINESS, A8**

Weather
Partly sunny.
L.A. Basin: 75/55. **B6**



MIKE STEWART Associated Press

'BAMA HEARS NAME CALLED
Alabama receiver Jermaine Burton and the Crimson Tide were chosen over unbeaten Florida State for the College Football Playoff. **SPORTS, D1**

Where will they go next? It's a question many in Gaza ask as Israel ramps up strikes after truce collapsed.

BY NABIH BULOS,
WITH A TIMES SPECIAL
CORRESPONDENT

DEIR AL BALAH, Gaza Strip — Umm Walid Hissi sat by a cart loaded with hastily packed belongings, waiting for her home to be bombed.

Until Sunday morning, she lived in Hamad Town, a collection of residential towers in southern Gaza's Khan Yunis neighborhood. But on Saturday came the missiles, pounding down like a giant fist on one tower, then another, and another. A day later, word came to Hissi's neighbors that their tower would be struck as well.

"They told us we had an hour," Hissi said. "We honestly didn't believe it, so we stayed. But then the police came and urged us to take the threat seriously."

So she and more than two dozen family members fled, loading what they could in a donkey cart.

They managed to salvage mattresses, a few bags of flour, clothes. (Hissi was still angry about leaving behind the gas canister for cooking.) They wrangled their load to an area not too far from the towers to see whether the Israelis would carry out their threat but were warned to move farther away.

They waited to see whether their home, like so many others hit in Israeli strikes, would be reduced to rubble. And they started to wonder where they would go next.

It's a question being asked over and over in the Gaza Strip, with Israel ramping up its bombardment after the collapse of a temporary truce with Hamas, the militant group that rules Gaza. The fighting reached areas that had so far been relatively safe, as the Israeli military pursues what appears to be a new phase of a ground invasion in southern Gaza — where most of the territory's 2.3 million residents had gathered after Israel ordered people to evacuate from the north.

The latest war in Gaza began Oct. 7, when Hamas operatives attacked communities in southern Israel, [See [Homes](#), A6]



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