

SANTA CRUZ NORTEÑO TATTOOS


The following local photographs represent
Norteño criminal street gangs in Santa Cruz:

- North Side Santa Cruz
- West Side Santa Cruz/ West Side Chicos

GANG-RELATED TATTOOS

It should be noted that any and all gang related tattoos must be earned prior to and authorized by the respective gang.

One can earn a tattoo by a variety of ways that include but are not limited to “putting in work” or committing a violent act against another person especially a rival gang member or associate.

A close-up photograph of a person's left forearm showing a tattoo of the letters 'NOR' in a stylized, blocky font. The 'N' is at the top, 'O' is in the middle, and 'R' is at the bottom. The tattoo is inked in a dark color.

The left arm has NOR tattooed
and the right arm has CAL
tattooed which stands for
Northern California.

Northern California is in
reference to Norteño criminal
street gangs.



NORTHSIDE is tattooed on the upper back with 1 tattooed on the back of the left arm and the 4 tattooed on the back of the right arm.



The lower back has NORTE tattooed which is the Spanish word for north.



NORTHSIDE, 14, and NORTE are symbols utilized by the Norteño gangs.



The tattoo below shows
Santa Cruz with a star on each side.



The northern star is a symbol for the
Norteños. Note the stars and the words
“Santa Cruz” are partially in red.



The photographs on this page depict four dots near the left eye, near the elbow and wrist.



The four dots is another symbol utilized by the Norteño gang to show their affiliation.



The Mayan symbol for the number 14 is tattooed here.
*Each bar represents the number 5 and each dot represents
the number 1. Added together it makes 14.*



It is very common for gang members to tattoo their gang affiliation on their legs and arms as seen in the left picture – number “14.”



“NSSC” in the right picture represents North Side Santa Cruz.



The letters “ENE” represent the Spanish letter “N.”
It is a very common tattoo for Norteños.





The California bear is also a symbol used by Norteños to represent their gang affiliation.

TATTOO REMOVAL

Catholic Charities Tattoo Removal Program
(formerly Dominican Hospital Tattoo Removal Program)

831-316-9121

610 Frederick Street, Santa Cruz

Required: 20 hours of community service, must complete an interview

Minimum \$20/session or sliding scale

Since October 1997, thousands of treatments have been given by the Tattoo Removal Program. The majority of clients are between 14 and 50 years old. More than 75% of those in the program had been tattooed for gang identification--and wanted out.



For more information:

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