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The 25 Best Places To Enjoy Your Retirement In 2022

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I cover personal finance, taxes, retirement, nonprofits, scandals and other stuff

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Forbes screened more than 500 locatio everything from climate change risk to availability of doctors to crime. We then compared those that made the cut for what they offered in the way of leisure pursuits–from the arts, learning and fine dining to hiking, skiing, sailing and golf.

When they were ready to retire, Karen and David Griffiths sold their Spanish-style Los Angeles home and moved 700 miles north to a 134-year-old Eastlake Victorian in Ashland, Ore., with 11-foot ceilings, bay windows, a covered porch and views of the surrounding mountains. Karen, now 69, a neonatal intensive care nurse, and David, 70, an investment banker turned software CEO, turned screenwriter and producer, had long known they wanted to settle in a smaller, scenic locale. What drew them to Ashland was the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, which stages nine months a year of productions ranging from the Tempest to modern musicals and is located just 300 yards from their home. Thanks to its famed theater complex, the town of 22,000 also punches above its weight when it comes to art galleries and fine dining—a priority for the Griffiths. “It was a good fit for us,” says David.

As it turns out, Ashland and the two other finalists in the Griffiths’ search, Santa Fe, N.M., and Boulder, Colo., all earned spots on Forbes’ new list of the 25 Best Places To Enjoy Your Retirement. There are several compelling reasons to make a long distance move in retirement: to be closer to family, to cut costs, to enjoy better weather. Another good one is to pursue your avocational passions. After all, Americans 65 years and older spend an average of about seven hours a day on leisure and sports, compared to the five or fewer hours for those of prime working age.

To that end, Forbes has identified 25 top places to follow seven leisure interests in retirement: arts/culture, fine dining, lifelong learning, volunteering, outdoor activities on water, outdoor activities on land, and a special subset, golf. Our choices span all four continental time zones and 16 states. Most are good for multiple passions, and one—Austin, Tex.—hits all seven. While our flagship annual best retirement places list identifies locales offering good retirement bang for the buck, this list seeks out value for the soul. That means high living costs or taxes aren’t in themselves disqualifiers—though notably, more than a fourth of our picks have housing costs near or below the current national median of $404,000.

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We do take into account a variety of quality-of-life metrics, ranging from air quality and availability of doctors to the crime rate and a town’s walkability. One factor we now consider disqualifying is a very high susceptibility to climate change and natural hazards as measured by the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s new National Risk Index, which looks at 18 natural hazard risks, plus communities’ preparation for and ability to cope with them. That’s why a number of otherwise appealing choices, including New York City, didn’t make the cut. You can read more about our data sources and selection methodology and how the Griffiths found their retirement bliss, here.

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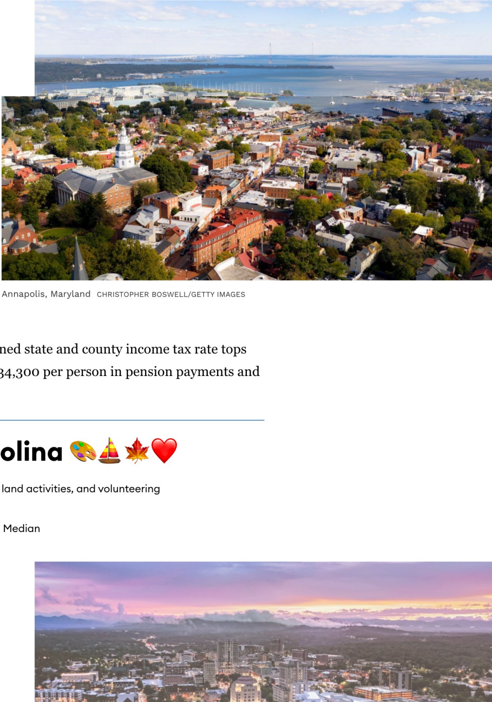
2022 categories

Arts/culture 🎨 | Fine dining 🍴 | Lifelong learning 🎓 | Volunteering ❤️ | Outdoor water activities ⛵ | Outdoor land activities 🍁 | Golf ⛳

Annapolis, Maryland ⛵❤️

PASSIONS: Great for outdoors water activities and volunteering
POPULATION: 41,000
MEDIAN HOME PRICE: $562,000, 39% Above National Median
COST OF LIVING: 26% Above National Average

Surrounded by water, most notably the Chesapeake Bay, this quaint state capital 30 miles east of Washington, D.C., is a mecca for sailors, powerboaters, kayakers and fishermen, with about a dozen boating schools and a generally comfortable climate. Plus, there’s a solid volunteering culture. At an elevation of 40 feet, Annapolis is also a somewhat walkable and very bikeable town with good air quality, and a surprisingly low natural hazards risk. One downside: a serious crime rate above the national average. Another: The state has both an inheritance and estate tax and the combined state and county income tax rate tops 8%, although Social Security benefits and $34,300 per person in pension payments and 401(k) withdrawals are exempt.

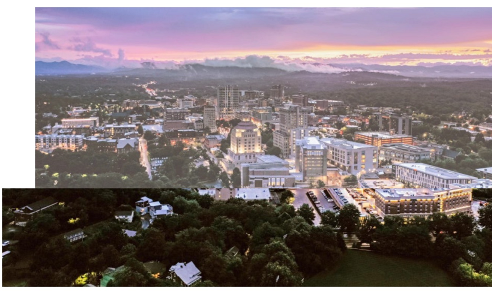


Annapolis, Maryland CHRISTOPHER BOSWELL/GETTY IMAGES

Asheville, North Carolina 🎨⛵🍁❤️

PASSIONS: Great for arts/culture, outdoor water and land activities, and volunteering
POPULATION: 97,000
MEDIAN HOME PRICE: $439,000, 9% Above National Median
COST OF LIVING: 6% Above National Average

Outdoor experiences—forests, parks, hiking terrain and whitewater paddling—and in-town culture abound around this scenic city in the Blue Ridge Mountains region of western North Carolina. Doctors are abundant. Air quality is good. The city is somewhat bikeable, although not all that walkable. Elevation of 2,100 feet makes most summers non-sweltering. There is a high rate of volunteering. The state income tax rate is a flat 4.99% for 2022, but Social Security income is exempt and there’s no state estate tax. Asheville is at moderate risk for natural hazards. The serious crime rate is above the national average.



Asheville, North Carolina PAWEL GAUL/GETTY IMAGES

Ashland, Oregon 🎨🍴🎓🍁

PASSIONS: Great for arts/culture, fine dining, lifelong learning and outdoor land activities
POPULATION: 22,000
MEDIAN HOME PRICE: $599,000, 48% Above National Median
COST OF LIVING: 26% Above National Average

Located 285 miles south of Portland, this artsy outpost offers galleries, a vibrant restaurant scene and the acclaimed nine-month-a-year Oregon Shakespeare Festival, all set amid scenic mountains and forests. Southern Oregon University hosts a lifelong learning institute and allows free auditing of college classes. The highly walkable downtown (elevation: 1,950 feet) is set in a comfortable climate with little snow, good air quality, a low serious crime rate and a high number of doctors per capita. Nature trails are just outside town. Ashland is at moderate risk for natural hazards. Oregon has no sales tax but makes up for that with an income tax rate that hits 8.75% at just $18,400 of income for joint filers (with Social Security excluded) and tops out at 9.9% for taxable income above $250,000. There is also a state estate tax.

Ashland, Oregon MITH DIAMOND/GETTY IMAGES

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Austin, Texas 🎨🍴🎓⛵🍁⛳❤️

PASSIONS: Great for arts/culture, fine dining, lifelong learning, outdoor water and land activities, golf and volunteering

POPULATION: 1.03 MILLION

MEDIAN HOME PRICE: $661,000, 64% Above National Median

COST OF LIVING: 19% Above National Average

The capital of Texas hits all the leisure passions we rate. It features a big music and dining scene as well as free senior citizen tuition for six credits a semester at the University of Texas at Austin. There’s a plethora of outdoor water and land activities, including dozens of nearby golf courses. The city boasts a high number of physicians per capita, good air quality and high marks for volunteering. Austin is very bikeable and somewhat walkable. Climate is warm but pleasant. Elevation is 300 feet. There is no state income or estate tax. Among the downsides: Austin has a relatively high (but not very high) risk for natural hazards and a serious crime rate above the national average.

Austin, Texas GETTY IMAGES

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Bend, Oregon ⛵🍁⛳

PASSIONS: Great for outdoor water and land activities, and golf

POPULATION: 104,000

MEDIAN HOME PRICE: $780,000, 91% Above National Median

COST OF LIVING: 24% Above National Average

Bend is a scenic outdoor playground, 160 miles southeast of Portland. Pursuits at an elevation of 3,600 feet around the north-flowing Deschutes River include downhill and cross-country skiing, fishing, tubing, hiking, rock climbing, bicycling, paragliding and, except in the dead of winter, golf on nearly two dozen nearby courses. Other pluses include good air quality, a low serious crime rate and a high number of doctors per capita. Oregon has no sales tax but makes up for that with an income tax rate that hits 8.75% at just $18,400 of income for joint filers (with Social Security excluded) and tops out at 9.9% for taxable income above $250,000. There is also a state estate tax. The town is bikeable but not all that walkable and has a low natural hazard risk.

Bend, Oregon GETTY IMAGES

Boise, Idaho 🎓⛵🍁⛳

PASSIONS: Great for lifelong learning, outdoor water and land activities and golf

POPULATION: 242,000

MEDIAN HOME PRICE: $526,000, 30% Above National Median

COST OF LIVING: 4% Above National Average

A surprisingly mild climate in Idaho's capital city is conducive to outdoor activities, while Boise State University offers discounted tuition for seniors. Other pluses include a high number of physicians per capita, a low serious crime rate, good air quality and a good economy. At an elevation of 2,700 feet, the city is very bikeable, though not as walkable. Idaho’s graduated state income tax rate hits a top rate of 6% at just $15,878 of income for married couples. But there is no state income tax on Social Security benefits and no state estate tax. FEMA ranks Boise relatively low in natural hazard risk.

Boise, Idaho DARWIN FAN/GETTY IMAGES

Boston, Massachusetts 🎨🍴🎓❤️⛵🍁

PASSIONS: Great for arts/culture, fine dining, lifelong learning, volunteering, and outdoor water and land activities

POPULATION: 693,000

MEDIAN HOME PRICE: $743,000, 84% Above National Median

COST OF LIVING: 62% Above National Average

This energetic historic coastal state capital can feed a variety of passions, particularly lifelong learning, given its more than 50 area colleges. Arts/culture and fine dining are considered tops and there are ample opportunities for outdoor water and land activities. Boston has good air quality and abundant doctors per capita. Winters can be cold. Elevation is 140 feet. The city is both highly walkable and bikeable and gets high marks for volunteering. FEMA rates the natural hazards risk as moderate, which is the middle ranking. The state income tax rate is a flat 5%. There’s no state income tax on Social Security earnings, but there is a state estate tax. Another downside: a higher-than-average serious crime rate.

Boston, Massachusetts ANDREY DENISYUK/GETTY IMAGES

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Boulder, Colorado 🎨🍴🎓🍁❤️

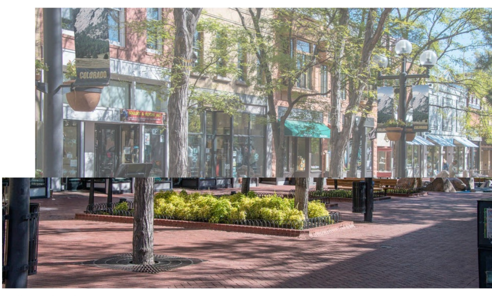
PASSIONS: Great for arts/culture, fine dining, lifelong learning, outdoor land activities and volunteering

POPULATION: 104,000

MEDIAN HOME PRICE: $1.11 Million, 175% Above National Median

COST OF LIVING: 67% Above National Average

In its own world 30 miles northwest of Denver, Boulder is the center of a large recreational open space abutting the Rockies at an elevation of 5,400 feet. Extensive outdoor activities include hiking, climbing, biking and fishing. Boulder is also the home the University of Colorado, which nurtures a big arts/culture and fine dining scene and allows seniors to audit courses at minimal cost. Boulder itself is very walkable and bikeable with a low serious crime rate, good air quality and abundant doctors. Volunteering is a way of life. The state income tax is a flat 4.55%, but it now excludes Social Security benefits and up to $24,000 of other retirement income. There is no state estate tax. Boulder has a favorable relatively low risk for natural hazards.


Boulder, Colorado ED FREEMAN/GETTY IMAGES

Charleston, South Carolina 🎨🍴🎓⛵⛳

PASSIONS: Great for arts/culture, fine dining, lifelong learning, outdoor water activities and golf
POPULATION: 157,000
MEDIAN HOME PRICE: $525,000, 30% Above National Median
COST OF LIVING: 12% Above National Average

Charleston, South Carolina PETER UNGER/GETTY IMAGES

Quaintly historic coastal city offers fine dining, a big arts scene, outdoor water activities and golf (with 39 courses in the area). The College of Charleston exempts senior citizens from tuition. At an elevation of 20 feet, Charleston is moderately walkable and very bikeable. The city enjoys a higher number of doctors per capita and good air quality. One downside: Charleston has a relatively high (but not very high) risk rating for natural hazards from FEMA. Another: A 6.5% state income tax kicks in for couples at just $16,040 of taxable income. But there's no estate tax or tax on Social Security benefits and there's an income tax break for pension income.

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Coeur d'Alene, Idaho ⛵🍁

PASSIONS: Great for outdoor water and land activities
POPULATION: 57,000
MEDIAN HOME PRICE: $495,000, 23% Above National Median
COST OF LIVING: 6% Above National Average

Coeur dAlene, Idaho IMAGES USA / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

Mountains and water, including 25-mile-long Lake Coeur d'Alene, make this city 300 miles east of Seattle a hot spot for fishing, boating, swimming, hiking and skiing. Coeur d'Alene has a high number of physicians per capita, good air quality, and a low serious crime rate. The city is very bikeable, although not very walkable. Elevation is 2,200 feet. Idaho's graduated state income tax rate hits a top rate of 6% at just $15,878 of income for married couples. But Social Security benefits are exempt and there's no state estate tax. FEMA rates Coeur d'Alene as at a very low risk for natural hazards. Winters are cold.

Fayetteville, Arkansas 🎓⛵🍁⛳

PASSIONS: Great for lifelong learning, outdoor land and water activities, and golf
POPULATION: 98,000
MEDIAN HOME PRICE: $335,000, 17% Below National Median
COST OF LIVING: 7% Below National Average

Fayetteville, Arkansas WESLEY HITT/GETTY IMAGES

The University of Arkansas offers free tuition and fee waivers to senior citizens at its flagship campus in this Ozarks city 200 miles northwest of Little Rock. The scenic area has extensive parks and waterways conducive to hiking, fishing and boating, plus 21 golf courses. The city is very bikeable, but not so walkable. Elevation is 1,400 feet and air quality is good. The top state income tax rate (on taxable income over $39,700) is 5.5%, dropping to 5.3% next year. There is no state income tax on Social Security benefits or a portion of pension income, and no state estate tax. Fayetteville has a moderate natural hazard risk, but the serious crime rate is above the national average.

Flagstaff, Arizona 🍁

PASSIONS: Great for outdoor land activities
POPULATION: 77,000
MEDIAN HOME PRICE: $669,000, 66% Above National Median
COST OF LIVING: 17% Above National Average

Flagstaff, Arizona JAMES SCHAEDIG / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

Route 66 provides the historic backdrop for this outdoors-oriented town at an elevation of 7,000 feet, 145 miles north of Phoenix near the Grand Canyon. Amid dramatic scenery, activities include skiing, hiking, climbing and biking. The four seasons include cold winters. City is very bikeable but not so walkable. There are adequate physicians per capita and good air quality. A confusing state income tax structure tops out at 4.5% on high earners but is scheduled to drop to 2.5% in future years. Social Security benefits are exempt and there's no state estate tax. Flagstaff has a relatively high (but not very high) risk of natural hazards, according to FEMA. Another downside: Serious crime is above the national average.

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Gainesville, Florida 🎓🍁

PASSIONS: Great for lifelong learning and outdoor land activities
POPULATION: 140,000
MEDIAN HOME PRICE: $286,000, 29% Below National Median
COST OF LIVING: 10% Below National Average

Gainesville, Florida SEAN PAVONE / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

The University of Florida provides a number of lifelong learning opportunities, including no tuition for auditing courses, in this inland college town 115 miles northwest of Orlando. Plenty of parks and outdoors areas offer hundreds of miles of trails for hiking and biking. A city with a large infrastructure for retirees, Gainesville has abundant doctors and good air quality. It is very bikeable, although not as walkable. Elevation is 150 feet. Florida has no state income or estate tax. Gainesville has a moderate rating on the FEMA National Risk Index, especially favorable compared with some other Florida locations. A downside: The serious crime rate is above the national average.

Hilton Head, South Carolina ⛵🍁⛳

PASSIONS: Great for outdoor water and land activities, and golf
POPULATION: 38,000
MEDIAN HOME PRICE: $761,000, 88% Above National Median
COST OF LIVING: 22% Above National Average

Hilton Head, South Carolina PHOTOVIEW PLUS/GETTY IMAGES

Named for a 17th century ship captain, this Atlantic Ocean barrier island sits near 67 golf courses and affords all kinds of outdoor recreation opportunities on land and water, including hiking, fishing, kayaking and boating. Hilton Head has good air quality, an adequate number of physicians and a low serious crime rate. The island is somewhat bikeable but not all that walkable. A stiff 7% state income tax kicks in at $16,040 of taxable income, but there is no state income tax on Social Security earnings and there's a state income tax break for pension income. Plus, there's no state estate tax. Despite an elevation of just 10 feet, Hilton Head has a moderate FEMA rating for natural hazard risk.

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Naples, Florida 🎨 ⛵ ⛳

PASSIONS: Great for arts/culture, outdoor water activities and golf
POPULATION: 20,000
MEDIAN HOME PRICE: $619,000, 53% Above National Median
COST OF LIVING: 12% Above National Average

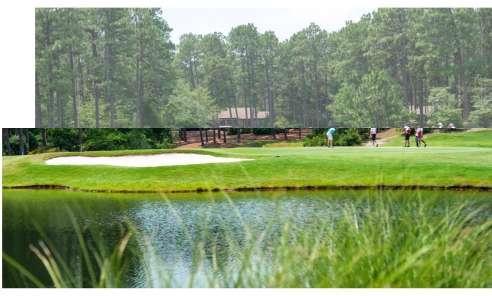
Gulf Coast resort 170 miles south of Tampa boasts 100 area golf courses, plus extensive shoreline for outdoor water pursuits and a big arts scene. Naples has good weather and air quality, an adequate number of physicians per capita and a very low serious crime rate. The town is somewhat bikeable, but not all that walkable. Florida has no state income or estate tax. Elevation is 3 feet. Naples has a relatively high (but not very high) risk rating on FEMA's National Risk Index and somewhat less hurricane exposure than certain other Florida coastal towns.

Naples, Florida TERRY J ALCORN/GETTY IMAGES

Pinehurst, North Carolina ⛳

PASSIONS: Great for golf
POPULATION: 21,000
MEDIAN HOME PRICE: $465,000, 15% Above National Median
COST OF LIVING: 3% Above National Average

Led by famous century-old Pinehurst Resort, some 40 golf courses plus golf schools surround this idyllic village with a temperate climate, 90 miles east of Charlotte. The ratio of doctors per capita is high, the air quality is good, and the serious crime rate is very low. Elevation is 560 feet. The state income tax rate is a flat 4.99%, but Social Security income goes untaxed at the state level, and there is no state estate tax. FEMA rates Pinehurst as having a relatively moderate natural hazard risk.


Pinehurst, North Carolina TIMOTHY L HALE/ZUMA PRESS NEWSCOM

Portland, Maine 🍴 ⛵ 🍁

PASSIONS: Great for fine dining, and outdoor water and land activities
POPULATION: 69,000
MEDIAN HOME PRICE: $506,000, 25% Above National Median
COST OF LIVING: 8% Above National Average

This Atlantic Ocean city 100 miles north of Boston offers a wide variety of water and land recreation, including boating, kayaking, rafting, cross-country snow skiing, hiking and bicycling. The restaurant scene is robust. There is a low serious crime rate, a very high ratio of doctors per capita and good air quality. The city is very walkable and bikeable. Elevation is 60 feet. The Maine state income tax tops out at a hefty 7.15% on taxable income for a couple above $108,900. But there is no state income tax on Social Security earnings and there's no state estate tax. FEMA rates Portland as having a relatively low natural hazard risk.

Portland, Maine DENIS TANGNEY JR/GETTY IMAGES

Portland, Oregon 🎨 🍴 ❤️ 🎓 🍁 ⛳

PASSIONS: Great for arts/culture, fine dining, lifelong learning, volunteering, outdoor land activities and golf
POPULATION: 666,000
MEDIAN HOME PRICE: $595,000, 47% Above National Median
COST OF LIVING: 31% Above National Average

Despite getting some bad press, Oregon's largest city has a lot going for it. This haven for foodies has a big arts/culture scene, more than 60 area golf courses, lots of other outdoors activities, a culture of volunteering and free senior citizen auditing of classes at Portland State University. The scenic city is very walkable and bikeable and has a high ratio of doctors per capita, plus good air quality. Elevation is 50 feet. Oregon has no sales tax but makes up for that with an income tax rate that hits 8.75% at just $18,400 of taxable income for a couple (with Social Security excluded). There is also a state estate tax. Serious crime rate is higher than national average. Portland has a relatively high (but not very high) risk for natural hazards, according to FEMA.

Portland, Oregon VIKTOR POSNOV/GETTY IMAGES

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San Francisco, California 🎨 🍴 🎓 ⛵ 🍁

PASSIONS: Great for arts/culture, fine dining, lifelong learning, and outdoor land and water activities
POPULATION: 815,000
MEDIAN HOME PRICE: $1.58 Million, 291% Above National Median
COST OF LIVING: 163% Above National Average

Some of the street scenes of the homeless can be daunting, but this hilly, scenic city offers much in the way of arts/culture, fine dining (dozens of Michelin-starred restaurants) and outdoor land and water activities. There's an Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at San Francisco State, a high ratio of doctors per capita and good air quality. With an elevation of 50 feet, the city is very walkable and bikeable. There's no estate tax or tax on Social Security benefit, but the state income tax rate is a hefty 8% on taxable income above $96,870 per couple and goes up to 13.3% for the very wealthy. Other downsides: San Francisco's serious crime rate is higher than the national average and it has a relatively high (but not very high) natural hazard risk, according to FEMA.

San Francisco, California JIM SMITHSON/GETTY IMAGES

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Santa Fe, New Mexico 🎨 🍴 🍁

PASSIONS: Great for arts/culture, fine dining and outdoor land activities
POPULATION: 91,000
MEDIAN HOME PRICE: $584,000, 45% Above National Median
COST OF LIVING: 15% Above National Average

This 422-year-old scenic state capital mountain town, 60 miles north of Albuquerque, punches above its population weight. It bristles with dozens of art galleries, fine restaurants and museums, plus world-class skiing and other outdoor land activities. Santa Fe has a high number of doctors per capita, good air quality and a low serious crime rate. Elevation is 7,200 feet. The city is very bikeable and somewhat walkable. The state income tax rate for most couples is 4.9% on taxable income that includes Social Security benefits, but tops out at 5.9% for couples with taxable income above $315,000. There is no state estate tax. Santa Fe has a favorable moderate natural hazard risk rating from FEMA.

Santa Fe, New Mexico DENIS TANGNEY JR/GETTY IMAGES

Sarasota, Florida 🎨 🍴 ⛵ ⛳

PASSIONS: Great for arts/culture, fine dining, outdoor water activities and golf
POPULATION: 55,000
MEDIAN HOME PRICE: $500,000, 24% Above National Median
COST OF LIVING: 3% Above National Average

Nearby beaches, fishing, boating, classy restaurants, a big arts/cultural scene and 30 golf courses dominate the appeal of this Gulf Coast city 60 miles south of Tampa. At an elevation of 16 feet, the area is very walkable and bikeable, with good air quality and an adequate number of physicians per capita. There is no state income or estate tax. Sarasota has a relatively high (but not very high) risk of natural hazards according to FEMA. Another negative: The serious crime rate is above the national average.

Sarasota, Florida JACK ELKA/GETTY IMAGES

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Seattle, Washington 🎨🍴🎓⛵🍁⛳

PASSIONS: Great for arts/culture, fine dining, lifelong learning, outdoor water and land activities, and golf

POPULATION: 773,000

MEDIAN HOME PRICE: $961,000, 138% Above National Median

COST OF LIVING: 72% Above National Average

Seattle, Washington THOMAS KURMEIER/GETTY IMAGES

This scenic city in the Pacific Northwest wedged between Puget Sound and Lake Washington offers a vibrant arts/culture scene, famous restaurants, and an Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the University of Washington. There's a wide variety of outdoor activities available on water and on land, including some 54 area golf courses. The city is extremely walkable and famously bikeable. Elevation is 500 feet. Other attributes include good air quality and a high ratio of doctors per capita. The winters are rainy but surprisingly temperate given the northern latitude. There is no state income tax, but there is a stiff state estate tax. Seattle has a relatively high (but not very high) natural hazard risk. Another downside: a serious crime rate above the national average.

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Tampa, Florida 🍴⛵⛳

PASSIONS: Great for fine dining, outdoor water activities and golf

POPULATION: 397,000

MEDIAN HOME PRICE: $416,000, 2% Above National Median

COST OF LIVING: At National Average

Tampa, Florida ROBBIE ROGERS/GETTY IMAGES

Nestled on Florida's Gulf Coast along Tampa Bay, this port city has a big restaurant scene, lots of water activities and 80 golf courses in the area. The city is pretty walkable and bikeable. Air quality is good, and there are adequate physicians per capita. There is no state income tax and no state estate tax. The serious crime rate is above the national average. FEMA rates Tampa as having a relatively high (but not very high) natural hazard risk. As with Naples, hurricane exposure is real, but less than some other coastal towns.

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Traverse City, Michigan 🎨🍴⛵⛳

PASSIONS: Great for arts/culture, fine dining, outdoor water activities and golf

POPULATION: 16,000

MEDIAN HOME PRICE: $428,000, 6% Above National Median

COST OF LIVING: 2% Below National Average

Traverse City, Michigan GETTY IMAGES

This center of tart cherry production 250 miles northwest of Detroit is near the famous Interlochen Center for the Arts, which hosts hundreds of yearly music performances. With frontage on an inlet of Lake Michigan, Traverse City also offers water sports, more than 30 area golf courses and a reputation as a top dining town. There are above-average doctors per capita and good air quality. The state income tax rate is a flat 4.25%, but it excludes Social Security income and some pension income and there's no state estate tax. At an elevation of 600 feet, Traverse City has a very low natural hazard risk, according to FEMA. Downsides: Winters are cold and the serious crime rate is above the national average.

Walla Walla, Washington 🍴🍁

PASSIONS: Great for fine dining and outdoor land activities

POPULATION: 34,000

MEDIAN HOME PRICE: $420,000, 4% Below National Median

COST OF LIVING: 7% Below National Average

Walla Walla, Washington TERRY EGGERS/GETTY IMAGES

With 120 nearby wineries, this quaint rural town 260 miles southeast of Seattle, boasts a surprisingly robust fine dining scene. The surrounding terrain is suitable for hiking and biking. There is a high ratio of doctors per capita, good air quality and a low serious crime rate. The city is very bikeable and somewhat walkable. Elevation is 950 feet. There is no state income tax, but there is a stiff state estate tax and a high sales tax. FEMA rates the natural hazard risk in Walla Walla as relatively low.