

BEST PLACES TO LIVE

Best Places to Live: Top 100

For this year's list we focused on smaller places that offered the best combination of economic opportunity, good schools, safe streets, things to do and a real sense of community.

By Kate Ashford, Andrea Bartz, Jeff Cox, Asa Fitch, Stephen Gandel, Josh Hyatt, Rob Kelley, Kathleen Knight, Joe Light, Ismat Sarah Mangla, Sarah Max, Jennifer Merritt, Brad Nelson, Donna Rosato, Ingrid Tharasook

◀ [BACK](#)

[NEXT](#) ▶

4 of 100

4. Lake Mary, Fla.

Population: 13,200

Median home price (2006): \$321,173

Average property taxes (2005): \$2,419

Pros: Big-economy jobs, small-town feel, no income tax

Cons: Florida summers, Florida hurricanes

Lake Mary may be only 30 minutes from Orlando and 45 from Daytona Beach, but residents have plenty of shopping, restaurants and events in their own backyard. There are lakes for boating and fishing, and the Timacuan golf course lies in the center of town. Recreation is one thing, but jobs keep Lake Mary humming. On weekdays the population rockets from less than 14,000 to more than 35,000 as commuters arrive.

Housing prices have been on the rise, but a four-bedroom, three-bath house can still be had for \$300,000. Of course, there's always the weather to worry about. In 2004 the town spent more than \$2 million cleaning up after hurricanes.

[See complete data and interactive map for Lake Mary](#)

[Find homes for sale in Lake Mary](#)



COURTESY: LAKE MARY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Timacuan golf course runs through the town's center.