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**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

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**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.



COURTESY: LAKE MARY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
**The Timacuan golf course runs through the town's center.**

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](#)



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Source: OnBoard

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**BEST PLACES TO LIVE**



**Best Places to Live: Full list**

Middleton, Wis., is this year's winner. See if your hometown made the cut. [\(more\)](#)



**25 top-earning towns**

Wondering where the wealth is? Residents of these 25 places have the highest median household incomes in the country. [\(more\)](#)



**Where homes are affordable**

Residents who buy real estate in these 25 towns see their incomes go the furthest. [\(more\)](#)

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\* : Time reflects local markets trading time. † - Intraday data delayed 15 minutes for Nasdaq, and 20 minutes for other exchanges. Disclaimer

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