

When, Where, Why and How:
10 Steps to Your Retirement Eden

8 Northeast Havens:
Colonial Charm Within Big-City Reach

Roads to Retirement:
Georgia's Lakes, Forests

Where to Retire

The Authority on Retirement Relocation

July/August 2013

50 THE SHORT LIST

50 BEST MASTER-PLANNED COMMUNITIES IN THE U.S.

The Short List: 50 Best Master-Planned Communities in the United States

BY VAN SHERIDAN

Residents of the master-planned communities on Where to Retire's top 50 list speak of "a sense of belonging" and "a wonderful lifestyle change" when describing what they love about their neighborhoods. One says: "Healthwise and socially, I've never been better." Profiled in the coming pages are developments that daily earn such compliments from their residents. Our eighth biennial edition dedicated to the best-of-the-best in these communities is the result of painstaking work, interviews and research by Where to Retire staffers, who evaluated hundreds of developments to come up with these 50, in 17 states, from coast to coast. Keep reading for short profiles on all 50, complete with interviews from residents, who enjoy touting why there's no place like *their* home.

These active adults utilize the neighborhoods' physical health boosters, from swimming pools and golf courses to walking trails, tennis courts, spas and exercise rooms. But the brain has its own need for nurture, and for that, the residents are joining groups that take art or cooking classes, explore historic sites and enjoy concerts on the community lawn — all fodder for spice-of-life friendships.

More demands for well-rounded, healthy living is a trend, leading these communities to offer more diverse options. Once defined almost solely by golf and clubhouses, developments today provide amenities ranging from energy-saving homes to dog parks to easy access to mass transit. Homebuyers' interests "differ from one person to the next, so one size no longer fits all," says Amber Martin, the active-adult brand director for the Valencia communities in Florida.

Some developments simulate a small-town ambience by adopting the new urbanism philosophy of "live-work-play" — mixing homes, recreation and commercial businesses within their gates, allowing retirees to find part-time employment in their neighborhood. Many who live in Utah's Daybreak, for example, earn extra money at the medical center on the grounds.

Behind all the trends is a renewed optimism about housing and the economy. About 1,000 people attended the recent grand opening of Valencia Cove, an active-adult neighborhood in Boynton Beach, FL. In two hours, developer GL Homes had 72 contracts. To avoid a bidding war, it held a lottery to see who would get first picks.

"There is a pent-up demand, and homes are moving quickly," says Bob Rademacher, vice president of Kolter Homes, which is planning its fourth active-adult community.

Other notes about our 50 Best list: Because you asked for it, this report for the first time includes homeowners association fees. We've given the range of base home prices, but they're subject to change. The handy chart on pages 84 and 85 shows how each stacks up with popular amenities. And on page 86, we showcase five longtime honorees in the Hall of Fame.





BRUNSWICK FOREST

LELAND, NORTH CAROLINA



> **THE LURE** Sidewalks and trails connect neighborhoods and weave alongside rivers and through forests in Brunswick Forest, located about 10 minutes from historic Wilmington, NC, and 30 minutes from Atlantic beaches. Situated on the Cape Fear coast, this verdant community offers such options as quaint cottages with low-maintenance exteriors and contemporary, three-bedroom brick homes. Take your pick of views; homes are available that overlook parks, lakes, woodlands and golf fairways. The 18-hole Cape Fear National course is a big draw, along with a regional medical center nearby

a retail complex — all inside the grounds. There are fishing and boating facilities as well as courts for tennis, basketball, pickleball and bocce.

> **WHAT RESIDENTS SAY** "It's a neighborhood that likes to have fun," says Greg Darrow, 62, who moved from New York in 2007 with wife Marilyn, 58. "Tonight, we're having a '50s night, and they have great drink prices. There is karaoke night, along with a slew of holiday and family events, like a miniature boat regatta, the Easter egg hunt and the Christmas bazaar, where Santa arrived on a fire truck with his elves." Marilyn gets together with a group of women to watch the TV show "The Bachelorette." "I think it's just an excuse for merlot and chardonnay," Greg says.

> **PRICES** \$240,000s-\$600,000s for duplexes, townhomes and single-family homes.

> **QUARTERLY HOMEOWNER FEES** \$270-\$1,155.

> **STATUS** 780 homes built of 8,900 planned on 4,855 acres.

> **AGE-RESTRICTED** No.

> **INFORMATION** Brunswick Forest, 1007 Evangeline Drive, Leland, NC 28451, (888) 371-2434 or BrunswickForest.com.

Where to Retire

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July 1, 2013

Ms. Brandy Marshall, Director of Communications
Brunswick Forest
1007 Evangeline Drive
Leland, NC 28451

Dear Ms. Marshall:

I am pleased to inform you that *Where to Retire* magazine has designated Brunswick Forest as one of the 50 Best Master-Planned Communities in the United States. Congratulations!

During a nine-month selection process, our editors reviewed several hundred candidates across the country. Your community is among an elite group of developments that offer today's retirees a well-rounded, active lifestyle.

Where to Retire applauds the positive impact that each of our 50 Best is making on the economic health of the towns and cities in which they are located. All of the communities are leaders in providing a high quality of life to those who are embarking on new adventures in retirement.

We extend our heartiest congratulations to you, your employees and your residents, and we wish you continued success.

Sincerely,



Karen Northridge
Publisher, *Where to Retire*