

Retirement at Its Best

Retire to a community you love by ensuring it matches your interests.



Deciding where to retire takes more consideration than opening a map, closing your eyes, and letting your finger be your guide. But no matter where you end up, your destination should put a smile on your face and a gleam in your eye, says Steve Gurney, founder of *The Guide to Retirement Living SourceBook*. “And the way to get that is by having a purpose in life,” he says. “Where we live should be a tool to make it easier to engage in this purposeful activity.”

Here are 10 factors that could turn a city, town, or suburb into a retirement destination that meets your unique needs.

LOCATION

If taking your pick of retiring anywhere sounds daunting, find comfort knowing there’s likely a *Life Care Services*™ community close-by, whether it’s in an urban, rural, or resort setting. Some *Life Care Services* communities are even located in cities that made the *Forbes* “25 Best Places to Retire in 2012” list, including Austin, Texas; Columbia, South Carolina; and Phoenix, Arizona.

CLIMATE

Do you dream of donating your winter coat or keeping it in the closet? Warm-weather destinations are often top retirement spots, but four-season states are also options. “The weather must support the lifestyle you desire, whether it is snow-skiing, boating, or golf,” says Thomas Wetzel, president of the Retirement Living Information Center.

COST OF LIVING

The nest egg you’ve worked hard to build can stretch further, depending on where you live. To determine how far your dollar will go in different cities, Wetzel suggests visiting bestplaces.net.

HEALTH CARE

When deciding where to retire, look into communities that are short distances from affordable, quality health care. In the event you need a doctor, it is important that you’re able to reach one quickly. To compare state health care stats, visit the Kaiser Family Foundation’s statehealthfacts.org.

TAXES

Keep more of your money in your pocket by researching taxes before deciding where to retire. “While federal taxes are fairly consistent, there is a huge variation in state and local taxes,” Wetzel says. “Some states tax pension income or Social Security; others do not. Some give special tax breaks to seniors.” Find tax data by state at retirementliving.com.

RECREATION

Staying active is essential to healthy aging, so choose a locale that allows you to pursue the activities you love. If you’re a golfer, Pinehurst, North Carolina, may be your destination. Here, residents can become members at the Legendary Pinehurst golf resort, a perk that helped earn the community a spot on the *CNN Money Magazine* “25 Best Places to Retire” list.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Who says your college days are over? Relocating near a university can provide opportunities for continuing education. Plus, Wetzel points out that colleges attract a diverse assortment of amenities to an area, from restaurants to shops to venues for lectures, sporting events, and performances.

TRANSPORTATION

If you enjoy getting out and about, consider retiring to an area where your errands are an easy commute away or you can take care of them on foot. Also research the public transportation options. “As you get older, there is a chance you might not want to drive or be able to drive,” Gurney says. A nearby airport, cruise port, or train station might be appealing to travel lovers.

CULTURAL OFFERINGS

Imagine an ideal day after retirement. If you picture strolling through museums or catching a show at the theater, look for a location with rich cultural offerings. One option might include Raleigh, North Carolina. The historic capital is noted for its numerous museums, which helped it make *Smithsonian* magazine’s “Guide to Cultured Retirement.”

PERSONAL PREFERENCE

For some, proximity to grandchildren outweighs cost of living. For others, escaping city life trumps being close to sports arenas. In the end, it’s best to retire to a place that feels like home, whether it’s 30 minutes or 3,000 miles away. ■

Moving Made Easy

Once you’ve determined where you’ll live after retirement, you’ll need to decide how you’ll get there. Luckily, *Life Care Services* provides support to help make moves as stress-free as possible.

Take Trillium Woods*, for example. Currently in pre-sales, the community is already offering services to help ease the burden of moving for future residents. With around 70 percent of its residences reserved, the community offers its Resident First™ Moving Advantage Program to help with the move.

PREPARING FOR THE PHYSICAL MOVE

Trillium Woods is working with Moving Station’s® Moving Made Easy program to help residents relocate. “Each future resident will be assigned a moving coordinator,” says Katie Kubinski, marketing director for Trillium Woods. “The coordinator helps with all aspects of moving.” Some of these services include working with real estate agents, coordinating with moving companies, scheduling packers, and even helping residents find interim housing while they’re waiting to move into Trillium Woods.

MAKING THE MENTAL MOVE EASIER

Trillium Woods’ Resident First Moving Advantage Program helps take the worry out of moving for future residents. “Part of the benefit is that the Moving Made Easy program contracts with certain agencies that provide the services, so there is accountability,” Kubinski says. Knowing that credible companies are handling their valuables offers residents peace of mind. “Residents know that Moving Made Easy will follow through to make sure everything is done on the up and up,” Kubinski says.

*Trillium Woods is a future *Life Care Services* community in Plymouth, Minnesota.