

Advice on Sampling Lifestyles  
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8 Tempting Tourist Towns:  
Putting Down Roots Permanently

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# Where to Retire

The Authority on Retirement Relocation

July/August 2015



**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 BRENT STOLLER WITH INTRODUCTION BY ANNETTE FULLER

**WELCOME** to our ninth biennial issue profiling the best master-planned communities across the country. Every other year in our July-August issue, we bring our readers a comprehensive look at the best of the best. The developments are in 16 states, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, in towns beautified by beaches, mountains, dry climates, rolling hills and other earthly assets.

We evaluated hundreds to get here. Many attractive communities are not on this list, but we held our criteria to established neighborhoods that have enough acreage to build at least a year's supply of homes.

The concept of master-planned communities, beginning as homes built around a golf course, has evolved to feature more amenities so that residents have plenty of options for enriched and healthy living.

Many find that the combination of full or semiretirement — plus access to exercise equipment, walking trails and other ways to keep fit — means the ubiquitous New Year's resolution of healthier living becomes an easy reality. "Quite frankly, we have been more active physically and socially in the past five months here than we were the five years in Michigan," says Jeff Hill, who recently moved with his wife to Cummings Cove in Hendersonville, NC.

Another trend is community gardens, as the local food movement continues to grow. Retirees report that friendships take root when digging, planting and harvesting alongside others.

Inventive home designs range from cottage to ranch to plantation-style. Some have a guest suite feature, allowing both visitor and host their privacy. Many plans have substantial front porches, encouraging neighborly chats.

A good number also have support systems, some of which are formal, such as the Support Network at Penn National, nicknamed Snap, in Fayetteville, PA. Members help each other with light household tasks and share expertise in technology, gardening and more.

But even if a neighborhood doesn't have a formal program, help still arrives courtesy of a strong sense of community. Rich Rattell, who moved to Heritage Shores in Bridgeville, DE, told us that when a neighbor was readying for heart surgery, seven people showed up to shovel snow off his driveway.

These developments are so deeply appreciated that they're even part of celebratory toasts. Gathering together with neighbors for her first Thanksgiving dinner at Robson Ranch Arizona in Eloy, Charlene Rule raised her glass and proclaimed: "We left our respective

homes, only to find that our new family is here."

Where to Retire would like to make a toast, too, honoring these 50 for their excellence in master-planned living. Here's hoping you find a superlative community that matches your essence, and nurtures and challenges you in all the right ways.

## **A quick preface to this feature:**

Each community has a short description, including interviews with retirees who live there. A databox provides housing prices, contact information and more. Note that home sales and prices fluctuate; use these numbers as a guide. We also indicate the developer — a new feature this issue. Lastly, the chart on pages 92 and 93 lists all 50, categorized by state as well as a rundown of amenities, making comparisons easy.





## FAIRFIELD GLADE

FAIRFIELD GLADE, TENNESSEE

> **THE LURE** At an elevation of about 2,000 feet, Fairfield Glade accommodates year-round outdoor adventure. The main attraction is 90 holes of golf, which are as diverse as they are beautiful. When residents aren't kayaking and canoeing, they're casting for catfish on one of 11 lakes — two of which feature a beach and marina, where boats are available for rent. Though its main campus is 10 miles away, Cumberland Medical Center has two facilities on the property for primary care, lab services and physical therapy.

> **WHAT RESIDENTS SAY** "We're very active people," says Margi Johnson, 63, who relocated in 2013 from outside Atlanta with husband Doug, 67. "Doug plays golf twice a week; I play tennis twice a week. We play pickleball. And now we're doing couples

golf." Giving back in their retirement, the couple engage in the development's philanthropic efforts. "You go from working 50 to 60 hours a week, and all of a sudden, you've got a lot more time," says Doug, who drives fellow residents to medical appointments. They also appreciate their varied collection of neighbors, including some from their home state of Wisconsin. "There are a lot of (Green Bay) Packer backers," Margi says with a chuckle. "Everybody is very friendly. They're just happy to be here and happy to have a great place to retire."

> **DEVELOPER** Fairfield Homes (Wyndham Vacation Ownership)

> **PRICES** \$230,000s-\$400,000s for attached townhomes and

single-family homes

> **MONTHLY HOMEOWNER FEE** \$52

> **STATUS** 5,300 homes built of 7,500 planned on 12,000 acres

> **AGE-RESTRICTED** No

> **INFORMATION** Fairfield Glade, 7012 Peavine Road, Fairfield Glade, TN 38558, (800) 383-7600 or FairfieldGlade.net.



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June 4, 2015

Ms. Misty Keyes, Vice President  
Fairfield Glade  
7012 Peavine Road  
Fairfield Glade, TN 38558

Dear Ms. Keyes:

I am pleased to inform you that *Where to Retire* magazine has named Fairfield Glade 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*