

LAKELAND TOPS LIST OF HOTTEST HOUSING MARKETS IN THE U.S.

Miami also ranks in Top Ten

BY ANTHONY SANFILIPPO

People have different reasons for wanting to buy a home in a certain city or town, or even as specific as a community or a neighborhood.

Maybe they want to live close to where they work, so they can have a short commute. Maybe they want to live nearby family and friends. Maybe it has to do with schools for their kids or for those without children, maybe the attraction of entertainment and lifestyle plays a part.

Or maybe folks just want to find somewhere affordable.

Whatever the reason, finding the right place to live is important for a would-be homeowner, but it's also not the easiest task.

Home prices and mortgage rates are expected to rise this year and the available housing supply within a buyer's parameters may shrink.

But some markets are better than others. Realtor.com recently released their hottest markets list for 2019.

Topping that list was Lakeland, Fla. Additionally, The Sunshine state had Miami making the top 10 list at No. 9.

Economists for the website continuously track home prices, availability and how quickly homes will sell. To make this list, they combine that data with markets that are hotbeds for job growth, are experiencing an influx of new construction and are flush with millennials – the generation making up a majority of buyers in the U.S.

ABOUT LAKELAND

Lakeland tops the list because economists feel it brings the best of all worlds together into one place. Jobs are on the rise in Lakeland and it boasts a vibrant entertainment and nightlife scene with a bevy of restaurants, while still offering neighborhoods with comfortably-sized homes and space for kids to play.

The median forecasted price of a home in Lakeland is \$161,757 – nearly \$100,000 less than the national average, making it an incredibly affordable city to live in, especially for young professionals and families who might be on a budget.

Public schools in Lakeland are also considered some of the best in the state according to GreatSchools.org.

Economists project a growth of 5 percent in home sales in Lakeland in 2019, well ahead of the national projection of minus-2 percent.

Additionally, Lakeland is forecasted to see a price growth of 7.4 percent in 2019, more than triple the national projection (2.2 percent).

WHY MIAMI?

Miami may come as a bit of a surprise because of its size, however for a city so large and so attractive to Northern snowbirds, it's actually expected to be a robust market for home sales in 2019. Economists project that 152,000 homes will be sold in Miami in 2019, more than any other metropolitan city on this list.

Miami has always been a tourist destination, but what makes it an attractive city to live full-time is its diverse community. Yes, there are a lot of retirees in Miami, there are also a lot of young families.

The city is also very vibrant and colorful with a lot of Cuban influence, offering much in the way of nightlife and entertainment options.

And while Miami nights can be full of fun and energy, its days under the sun are more tranquil. It's easy to fall in love with its white sand beaches, the frequent sun and the mild winters.

Economists forecast a 3.3 percent increase in home sales in Miami and a 5 percent increase in price growth, both well ahead of the national averages.

Rounding out the Top 10 list of housing markets in 2019 are Grand Rapids, Mich. (No. 2), El Paso Texas (No. 3), Chattanooga, Tenn. (No. 4), Phoenix, Ariz. (No. 5), Bridgeport, Conn. (No. 6), Las Vegas, Nev. (No. 7), Boise, Idaho (No. 8) and Boston, Mass. (No. 10).



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