

14 Reasons to Make the Move to Sarasota

Reason #1

Sarasota is Actually Affordable

Because residents benefit from no state income tax, low property taxes, a variety of budget-friendly housing options, and low energy costs, Sarasota can be a very affordable place to live. Compared to larger cities like Boston, New York City, Chicago or Washington D.C. the cost of living in Sarasota is a bargain. If you elect to make Florida your permanent state of residence you will also qualify for the Homestead Exemption which results in an extra annual \$25,000 property tax deduction.

Reason #2

Winterless Wonderland

Yes, it is hot and humid in the summer, but no hotter than a typical August day in Washington, DC. Happily, we live along the coastline that blesses us with a daily refreshing Gulf breeze and frequent afternoon rain showers that offer relief from the heat.

The reward for making it through the summer heat is the promise of no snow. So, trade in your scary tire chains, noisy snow blowers, ugly mittens, and sloppy galoshes for some much-needed sunblock, swimsuits, sporty convertibles, and flip flops.

Reason #3

Cultural Mecca

No matter what cultural and arts activities you enjoy, Sarasota has something for you year-round. Of course, the October thru May season in Sarasota offers the richest array of activities that include elegant Galas and Charity events, unforgettable Opera performances, a host of theatre options, musical entertainment, art walks and gallery showcases, a ten-day film festival, sand sculpting competition, and much, much more. Check out the [Thursday Ticket in the Sarasota Herald Tribune](#) as well as the multitude of social calendars available on line.

Reason #4

Award Winning White Sand Beaches

In 2011 Dr. Beach, a.k.a. Dr. Stephen P. Leatherman, yes he is a real doctor and director of FIU's highly respected Laboratory for Coastal Research, and considered America's Foremost Beach Expert awarded Siesta Key as America's Best Beach. The Intracoastal Waterway flows along the east side of the Key with

the Gulf along the west. Siesta Beach is renowned for its brilliantly white sugar fine crystal sand that consists of 99% pure quartz, keeping it magically cool under your feet. In addition to Siesta Beach, you can enjoy the sun and sand on Longboat Key, Lido with its public pool, Crescent, Turtle, Nokomis, and Venice beaches. All are free to the public.

Reason #5

Multiple Housing Options

Greater Sarasota offers a vast array of housing options — from villas to townhomes, to condominiums, to humble historic houses, to mansions, to large acreage estates. Whatever your heart desires, the Suncoast has it. A four bedroom, three bath home with a refreshing pool, located behind the gates of Turtle Rock in Prestancia is currently priced at approximately \$415,000, while a beachfront three bedroom, two bath condominium on Lido Key would cost around \$500,000, and a single-family home on 3 acres in Northport is priced just under \$300,000.

Reason #6

Best Place to Retire

You may be reading this book because you are considering Sarasota as your retirement home. If so, you're in agreement with the experts. In fact, Money Magazine ranks Sarasota 7th for "Top Places to Retire Young" as well as the "Nation's Best Small City" and one of the "Best Places to Retire".

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Reason #7

Excellent Healthcare...

Our four local hospital facilities provide exceptional healthcare services throughout the region, as numerous awards prove. Money Magazine rated Sarasota as one of the "Best Cities with the Best Healthcare Systems" and Sarasota Memorial Health Care System was rated within the "America's 50 Best Hospitals" by U.S. News & World Report as well as "10 of the Largest Safe Hospitals in the U.S." by Forbes.com.

Reason #8

Flourishing Business Climate...

We're open for business. Forbes ranks Sarasota 11th in "Best Cities for Jobs". Sarasota County consists of more than 20,000 businesses, of which 75 percent are considered small to medium size companies with fewer than 25 employees.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, Sarasota's unemployment rate in May, 2013 was 6.7 percent. That's an impressive recovery from the 2010 unemployment rate of 11.9 percent and the 2012 rate of 8.7 percent. The Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce, The Economic Development Corporation, as well as the The HuB counsel entrepreneurs in developing new ideas and creating new businesses in our area. Since its inception in 2009, the HuB has supported over two-hundred entrepreneurs, launched twenty businesses and twelve major campaigns to support creative change on the Suncoast.

Reason #9

Fantastic for Foodies

When it comes to great food, Sarasota delivers. Sarasota is home to more than fourteen hundred restaurants from elegant gourmet eateries to fantastic food trucks. No matter what you crave, you can find it or find the fixings to prepare it. We have multiple fresh food markets, boutique/specialty grocery stores, weekly farmer's markets, traditional butcher shops, fresh seafood vendors (of course) and Amish stores and restaurants.

Reason #10

An Abundance of High Quality Education Opportunities

We do a superb job educating our children. Our county has a higher percentage of high school graduates than the state of Florida and the nation. Over 90% of Sarasota County high school seniors graduate. Our dropout rate is just 2%.

Sarasota County has a variety of education options for children and adults from traditional public schools, to charter schools, private and Montessori settings, adult education facilities, technical and specialty schools as well as universities. Almost 30% of Sarasota residents have earned a bachelor's degree with science and engineering topping the field of study.

Reason #11

Parks and Wildlife

It's easy and fun to enjoy native wildlife in greater Sarasota whether you love bird watching, hiking, observing alligators or swimming with the fishes. We have over 120 parks and trails encompassing over 3,000 acres. Among our favorites is the ever-expanding Legacy Trail whose recreational walking and biking trail stretches over ten miles along the former CSX Railroad corridor. Another terrific outdoor experience is the venerable Myakka State Park, once part of Bertha Palmer's ranch. Its 60 square miles make it one of the largest parks in the state.

Reason #12

The Greatest Show on Earth and More

The circus goes way back to the 1920s in Sarasota history, when The Ringlings joined the Florida land boom and selected Sarasota as their winter residence. Ever since, we've been blessed with generations of circus performers making Sarasota their home. In 1949 a small high school gymnastics class evolved into the Sailor Circus, a youth training program for students 4th to 12th grades, which is still an active student program. Their newly renovated facility is just south of the Sarasota High School Campus. The Sailor Circus is now part of Circus Sarasota.

Don't think you've lost your mind if you hear the roars of the big cats while traveling out east or visiting the celery fields. You've just found The Big Cat Habitat and Gulf Coast Sanctuary, a non-profit safe haven for a menagerie of rescued exotic wildlife cared for by Kay Rosarie who comes from a rich circus heritage. The famous wirewalker Nik Wallenda also calls Sarasota home.

Reason #13

Amish & Mennonite Population

Many people are astonished when they discover Sarasota's flourishing Amish and Mennonite communities. Usually it occurs while driving down Bahia Vista Street and happening upon a cluster of bearded men and bonnet-capped women riding their three-wheel bicycles. We have been attracting Amish and Mennonite residents since the early 1920's.

Although they were originally attracted to the area for winter farming, many stayed as year-round residents, establishing churches, farmland, and local businesses that still thrive in the area today.

Reason #14

Endless Supply of Things to Do

Sarasotans are never at a loss for something to do. Here's just a tiny sampling of your options:

- Head to the ballpark and catch a Baltimore Orioles spring training game.
- Kayak through the mangroves surrounding our extensive coastline.
- Sip and savor the sunset on a booze cruise.
- Get your toes in the sand at a Summer Siesta Beach Run.
- View the masters at The Ringling Museum of Art.
- Learn about our marine life at Mote Marine Aquarium.
- Step back in time with a Sarasota History Alive tour.
- Kick off your shoes and enjoy a free concert at Van Wezel's Friday Fest.
- Have a beer or glass of wine while enjoying a film at Burns Court Cinema.
- Shop till you drop and dine till you pop at St. Armand's Circle...



Tracy Eisnaugle is a multi-talented professional with a strong design and marketing background. She is passionate about living in Sarasota, which has been her home since early childhood.

What's it like to live in Sarasota, FL?

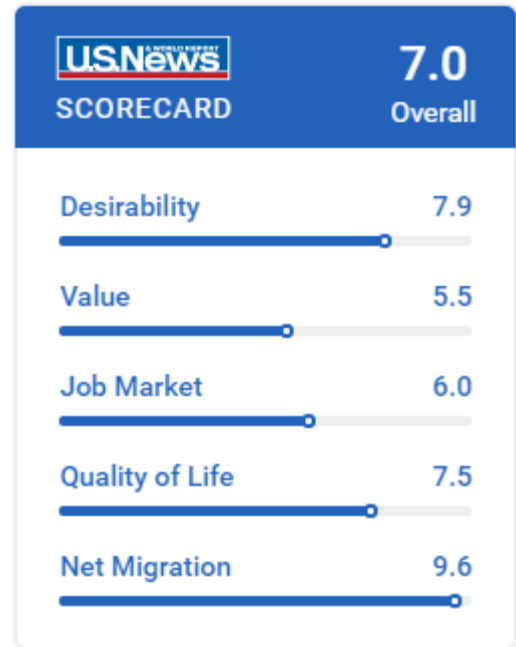
Warm temperatures year-round, award-winning beaches and a thriving arts and cultural scene have made Sarasota a go-to place for retirees and families, not to mention a handful of celebrities (including Stephen King and Brian Johnson). This southwest Florida city, which is about an hour from [Tampa](#) and two hours from [Orlando](#), continues to attract new residents with great restaurants and plenty of shopping options.

Living in Sarasota has elements of what many consider paradise, mixed with some hints of reality. As the population grows, the city struggles to keep up with infrastructure needs. Traffic congestion is becoming more common. Those who live, work or visit downtown Sarasota will see their share of construction cranes as the city copes with an influx of residents and a record-breaking number of tourists.










However, as the Sarasota community flourishes, so does its economy. Sarasota offers a sizeable job market for those working in health care, small business and tourism.

Rankings

U.S. News analyzed 100 cities in the United States to find the best places to live based on quality of life and the job market in each city, as well as the value of living there and people's desire to live there. Sarasota ranks as #14 with an overall score of 7.0 out of 10.



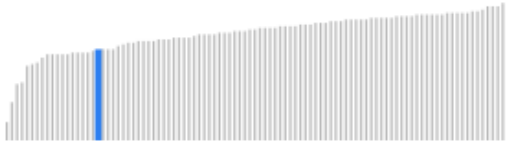
Sarasota, FL Quick Stats

 722,784 METRO POPULATION	 50.3 MEDIAN AGE	 4.4% UNEMPLOYMENT RATE
 \$39,960 AVERAGE ANNUAL SALARY	 \$226,750 MEDIAN HOME PRICE	 \$976 AVG MONTHLY RENT
 81.7° / 64.1° AVG HIGH/LOW TEMPS	 53.0 inches AVG ANNUAL RAINFALL	 23.0 minutes AVG COMMUTE TIME

What's the cost of living in Sarasota, FL?

Sarasota is relatively affordable compared to larger Florida cities like [Miami](#), though young families are finding it increasingly harder to buy a home at a reasonable cost. The continuing influx of wealthy residents has affected the cost of housing, as there has been more of a focus on upscale living.


Value Index











WORSE BETTER

Index Score: 5.5 /10

[How we calculate this.](#)

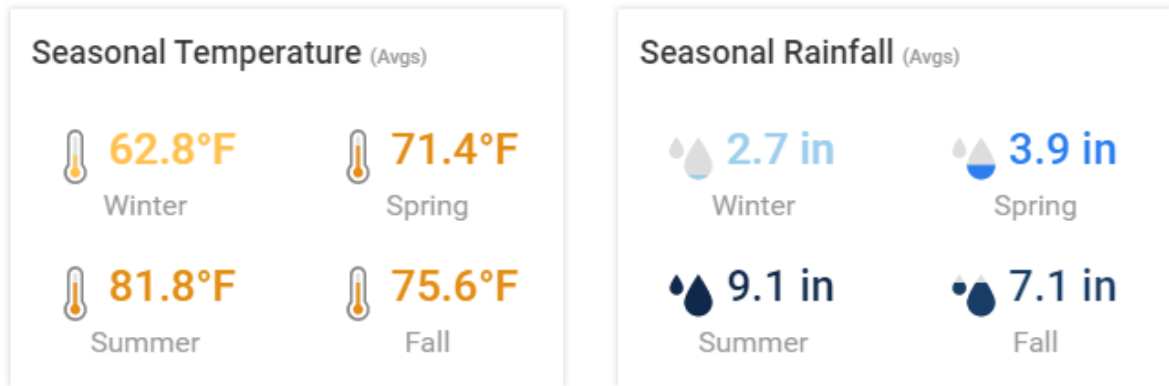
 **Sarasota offers a lower value than similarly sized cities when you compare housing costs to median household income.**

Housing Costs this Year

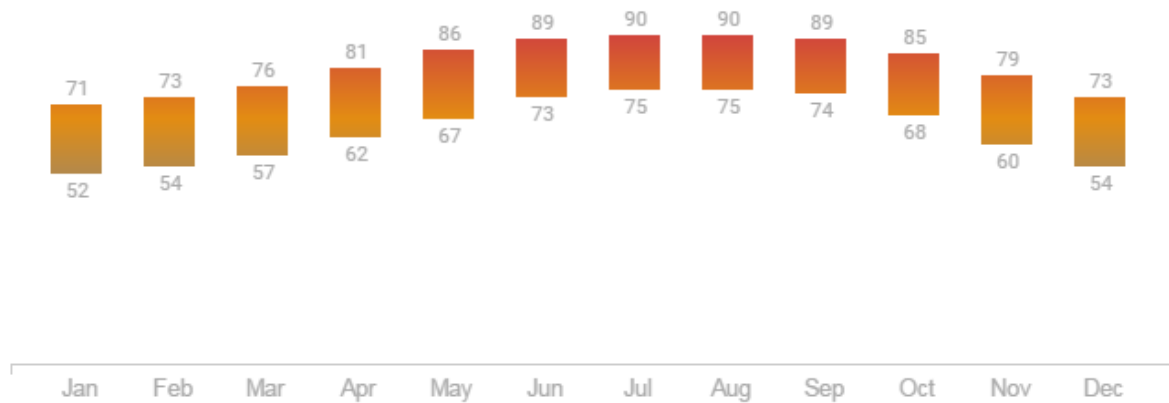
   	   
Sarasota \$226,750	USA \$218,867

What's the weather like in Sarasota, FL?

Although heat and humidity are a regular part of life in South Florida, that doesn't stop many people from enjoying the area's outdoor activities, such as golfing, boating and fishing. Still, residents know to keep their umbrellas handy for the fierce rain storms that usually pass through from April to October.



Monthly High and Low Temperatures (°F)



Data sourced from the National Climatic Data Center.

What's the best way to get around Sarasota, FL?

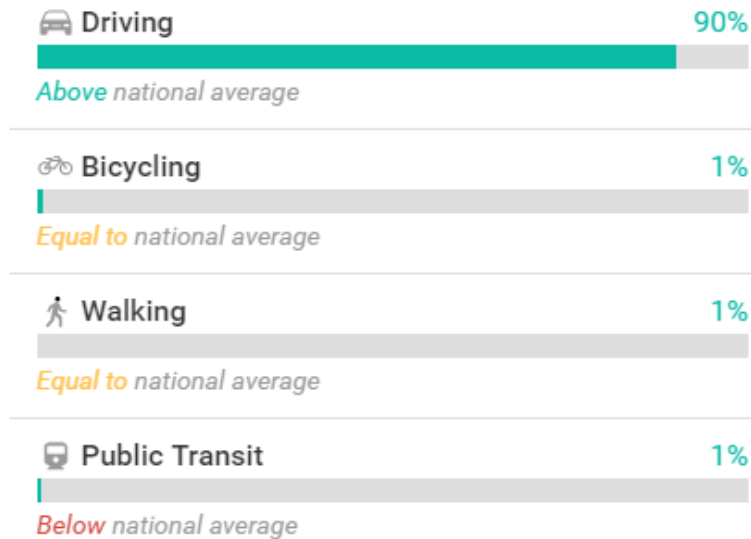
The majority of people in Sarasota get around by car, and traffic is becoming more of an issue as new residents and visitors come to town. Year-round residents will tell you it can take almost twice as long to get places during the winter tourist season.

The city has a bus system, SCAT, which is seeing an increasing number of users. The bus system is fairly extensive, but heavy traffic can cause schedule delays. Sarasota has some neighborhoods that are particularly pedestrian-friendly, such as downtown, the Rosemary district, St. Armand's Circle and Southside Village.

The Sarasota-Bradenton International Airport connects residents to destinations in the U.S. and abroad. Residents also have access to intercity bus service provided by Greyhound.

Commuting in Sarasota, FL

Means of Transportation



Average Commute Time



23.0 minutes

👍 2.5 minutes less than national average

Who lives in Sarasota, FL?

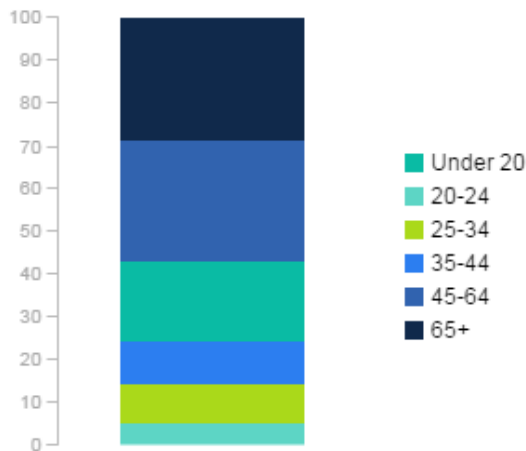
The percentage of Sarasota residents over age 65 is predicted to increase from 30 to 40 percent by the year 2030, and a silver boom is pretty evident as you make your way around town. A retiree in Sarasota likely has a busier social calendar than someone half his or her age, as the area caters to its older residents by offering lots of activities, such as shopping and golf. This is especially true during the “in season” from October to April when snowbirds from colder climates come to enjoy Florida's more temperate weather.

That said, families also feel at home in Sarasota, and there are plenty of good schools, clean parks and local attractions for them to enjoy. About 20 percent of households include children under the age of 18.

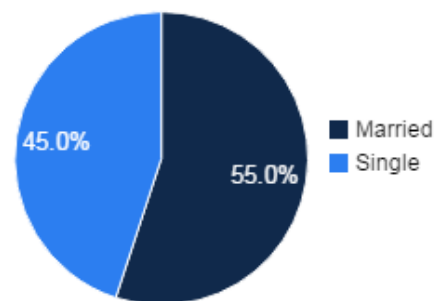
Young single people won't have the diversity or nightlife available as they would in a city like [Miami](#). This could be advantageous for someone who likes things a little more low-key, and there still are millennials who take over Sarasota's nighttime scene at local bars, clubs, restaurants and craft breweries.

People drawn to Sarasota tend to be more politically conservative, but they also are not as religious as in more rural parts of the state.

Age Distribution

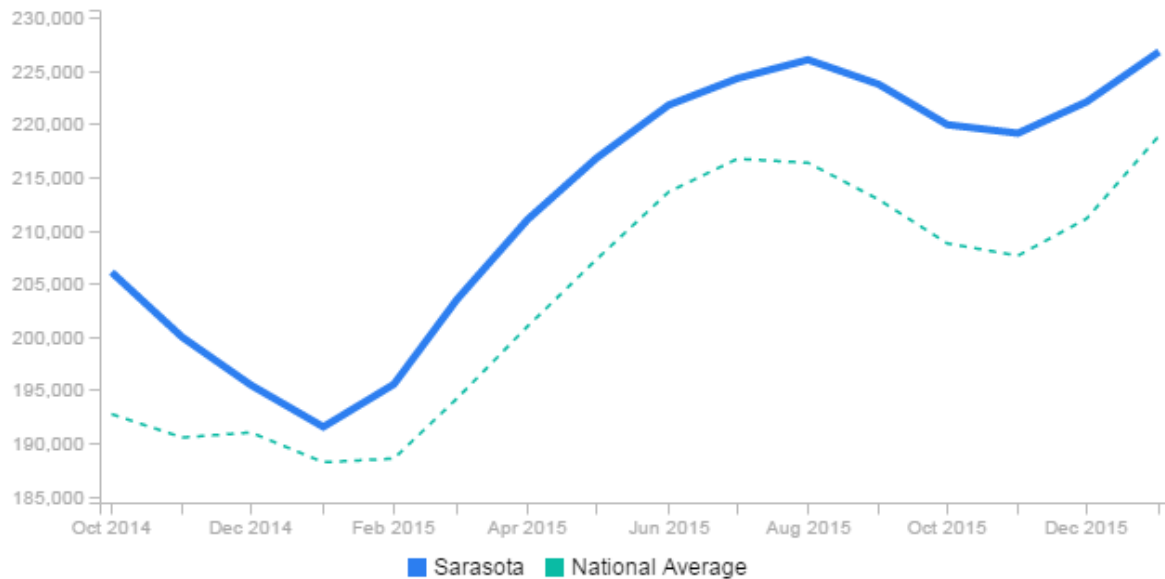


Marital Status Breakdown



Fewer single people in Sarasota than national average

Housing Costs Over Time



Data sourced from Zillow median home sale price data series. Additional data provided by the Austin Board of Realtors, Houston Association of Realtors, Intermountain MLS, Omaha Area Board of Realtors, San Antonio Board of Realtors, and the Salt Lake Board of Realtors.

Buying or Selling a Home in Sarasota, FL

Finding the right real estate agent or realtor is key when it comes to buying or selling a home in Sarasota.

Sarasota's rising home sales prices coincide with the city's population growth: More and more people are headed to this Florida Gulf Coast city in search of sun and surf. Prices vary drastically throughout the Sarasota metro area, so it's important to find a real estate agent who's familiar with your desired neighborhood and has experience buying or selling homes in your price range. You wouldn't want to hire someone who specializes in purchasing \$200,000 homes in Arlington Park if you're trying to sell your Lido Key property for \$700,000.