



# Harry's Take

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## Interesting Cities in the South Deemed Best for Retirement

I saw an article in GOBankingRates on the best hidden gems in the south for retirement. And that means the southeast, not the southwest which is also obviously a popular region for retirees. The article listed 30, but I decided to focus on the top 20 of those. This chart shows these cities in order of the highest livability rating at 90 going down to 78, and also shows the percent of the population 65 or over, so you know how many retirees closer your age reside there.

### Top 20 Hidden Gem Cities That Are Best for Retirement

	Livability Score	% 65+
The Woodlands, TX	90	13.34%
Cary, NC	90	12.46%
Lexington, KY	86	13.50%
St. Petersburg, FL	86	19.28%
Richardson, TX	86	13.47%
Raleigh, NC	84	13.21%
Metairie, LA	83	20.93%
Norman, OK	83	12.68%
Virginia Beach, VA	82	14.32%
Pembroke Pines, FL	82	17.81%

	Livability Score	% 65+
Pearland, TX	81	10.93%
College Station, TX	81	6.27%
Huntsville, AL	81	16.21%
Clearwater, FL	81	23.01%
Tampa, FL	80	12.83%
El Paso, TX	80	13.10%
Frisco, TX	80	9.14%
Savannah, GA	79	13.62%
Miramar, FL	79	11.47%
Coral Springs, FL	78	11.65%

Source: <https://www.gobankingrates.com/retirement/planning/southern-hidden-gem-cities-for-retirees/>

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First note, no surprise that 11 of the original top 30 were in Florida, with Texas coming in a close second with 9. In the top 20 here, 6 are in Florida and 6 in Texas. North Carolina has 2.

There is also a wide range in size of cities with Tampa, Raleigh and St. Petersburg being the larger ones. Tampa and St. Pete are in the same larger metro area sharing the same international airport – which is a very nice and modern one at that. I know as I lived in Tampa for 12 years up until 2016. These two cities work best for people like me that still like to retire in a large city in a good climate for more amenities and services, not too small a town. Although, Sarasota is just south of St. Petersburg and is a great retirement city. The reason it didn't make this list is that it is much more expensive to buy homes there.

The Woodlands, rated #1, is well north of Houston, and that is the best large restaurant city in Texas, with Austin being the best medium-sized city that is now around 2 million, so on the large size now. And Austin would be tops on my list, but it has gotten much more expensive due to its stellar restaurant and music scene. The “Great Crash Ahead” should bring that more down to reality as it has bubbled the most.

My wife went to Savannah with some friends recently and she was really impressed. That would be the most “old-south” of all of these cities. And my research assistant, Stephanie Gerardot, found Frisco, TX many years ago and has been happy there. I also have had my best friends in Puerto Rico move back to Florida for medical reasons, and they are looking at settling down in Cape Coral. I have been there a lot as my wife had family there, and it is truly one of the last affordable nice retirement areas. And Huntsville, AL has been an up-and-coming city for decades not only for retirement but for attracting good manufacturing companies for creating a bustling economy as well.

The other 10 cities in the article were in order: Miramar FL, Coral Springs FL, Brownsville TX, Cape Coral FL, Charleston SC, McAllen TX, Hialeah FL, Laredo TX, Palm Bay FL and Port Saint Lucie FL.

Harry

Got a question or comment? You can reach us at [info@hsdent.com](mailto:info@hsdent.com).

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