

## Bend Makes List of Top Spots to Retire

by K\_Guice

Bend has long been touted by national publications as one of the best places to live, so it may not come as a surprise that Money Magazine has now ranked it as one of the top 100 places to retire.

The city ranked No. 86 out of 100. It was in good company with Beaverton at No. 79 and Hillsboro at No. 63. Places like Portland, Eugene, Springfield and Salem did not make the cut.

Top towns selected were chosen for their top-notch health care, loads of culture, lots of green space and taxes.

“The lifestyle here, having the open space around town, the city has everything along with a great medical center,” said Gregg Strome, real estate broker with John L. Scott

He has been in the Bend real estate market for 12 years and reports that town has been an attractive place to retirees for many years.

There are over 17,065 people over the age of 50 currently living in Bend. That is a 24.96 percent growth in the past year. Beaverton saw a 24.17 increase, while Hillsboro saw a 40.2 increase in the number of individuals over 50, according to the magazine.

The median housing price is \$270,000 with a 21.6 percent gain from 2004 to 2005. Beaverton’s median price is \$240,000, with a 13.2 percent gain in price. Hillsboro median home price is \$216,750. Their town saw a 14.1 percent home price gain from 2004 to 2005.

While housing prices are higher in Bend, the median household income was lower than the other cities. Bend's median income was listed at \$44,547. Beaverton's was said to be \$53,336 and Hillsboro's median household earning came in at \$57,159.

Crime in Bend got a score of 132. That is above the national average of 100 in property crime risk. Hillsboro scored 72, while Beaverton got a 98.

However all three cities actually came in below the national average for personal crime risk. Out of 100, Bend received a 37, Beaverton a 31 and Hillsboro was at 30.

Another good quality about Bend is the air. It had a 94.2 percent for the number of days it received a good air quality rating. Beaverton and Hillsboro both came in at 81.6 percent.

“It’s pretty easy to live outside in Bend year round because of the dry climate,” Strome said. “The heat is tolerable and the winters are bearable. You can’t even say that about places like Palm Springs.”

Other attributes that draw people include the seven ski resorts within 100 miles, 12 golf courses within 30 miles and 266 restaurants within 15 miles.

“For everyone it’s different,” Strome said. “In general people come here for the climate, the fresh air and they like that they’re not in the big city, but have all of the things big cities have. I love it here.”

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