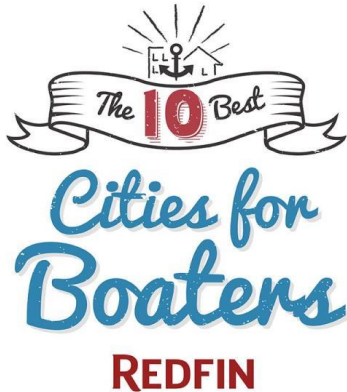


# The 10 Best Cities for Boaters

by <http://blog.discoverboating.com/>



- 1 Miami
- 2 Tampa
- 3 Minneapolis
- 4 Virginia Beach
- 5 Providence
- 6 Long Island
- 7 Annapolis
- 8 Chicago
- 9 Seattle
- 10 Austin

## 1. [South Florida](#) – Miami, Fort Lauderdale and West Palm Beach Metropolitan Area

- Portion of Listings on Waterfront: 32.1%
- Median Sale Price of a Waterfront Home: \$295,500
- Months with Mean Temperature of 60+: 12
- # of Boat Dealers in State per 100,000 Residents: 6.16
- Recreational Boat Registrations in State per 100,000 Residents: 7,324
- Areas with Most Waterfront Property: [Hillsboro Beach](#), [Highland Beach](#), [Bal Harbour](#)

In addition to the Atlantic Ocean, cities in South Florida have canals and lakes that increase the amount of waterfront property available. With so much water and warm weather year round, it makes sense that residents would take up boating as a hobby.

“Boating is life here in Florida; people of all backgrounds own a boat, and everyone loves to go out on the weekends,” said John DePhillipo, a [Redfin real estate agent in West Palm Beach](#). “The ocean and lakes are popular for sailing and motorboating, and on the smaller bodies of water you’ll see people kayaking and paddleboarding. There’s a lot of waterfront property available thanks to the rivers and lakes, but the homes on deep canals, inlet waterways or the ocean will fetch a premium price. The sea life is great here; sometimes manatees will jump out right on your dock, and you can see dolphins in the waterways. Florida has so much to offer for boaters!”

## 2. [Tampa, Florida](#), Metropolitan Area

- Portion of Listings on Waterfront: 14.1%
- Median Sale Price of a Waterfront Home: \$260,000
- Months with Mean Temperature of 60+: 12
- # of Boat Dealers in State per 100,000 Residents: 6.16
- Recreational Boat Registrations in State per 100,000 Residents: 7,324
- Areas with Most Waterfront Property: [Indian Shores](#), [North Redington Beach](#), [Redington Shores](#)

With great weather, an avid boating community and plenty of coastlines, Tampa came in a close second to the Miami area as a great city for boaters. The city has fewer canals and lakes, reducing the amount of waterfront property available, but there are still plenty of options.

“The Tampa–St. Petersburg area has a lot of great places to boat, including the Gulf of Mexico, Tampa Bay and Caladesi Island. You’ll always see sailboats and motorboats in the water when you’re hanging out at the beach,” said Wendy Peterson, a [Redfin real estate agent in Tampa](#). “There are a lot of homes on canals, so many people store their boat on a private dock, or if that’s not an option, they keep it at one of the many yacht clubs or dry dock marinas. One thing to consider when buying waterfront property here is the cost of flood insurance; now that private companies are offering insurance, it has become a little less cost prohibitive, but it’s definitely something you need to research beforehand.”

## 3. [Minneapolis, Minnesota](#), Metropolitan Area

- Portion of Listings on Waterfront: 6.8%
- Median Sale Price of a Waterfront Home: \$359,650
- Months with Mean Temperature of 60+: 4
- # of Boat Dealers in State per 100,000 Residents: 4.52
- Recreational Boat Registrations in State per 100,000 Residents: 24,164
- Areas with Most Waterfront Property: [Mound](#), [Annandale](#), [Maple Lake](#)

Minneapolis has a short boating season, but the residents don’t seem to mind. The percentage of people who own a boat in Minnesota is more than three times that of Florida. The city has many small lakes and rivers that allow for a lot of waterfront property in the city, and of course the Great Lakes are only a few hours away.

“Minnesota is the Land of 10,000 Lakes, and whether you have a canoe or a Cabin Cruiser, there’s a lake that is just perfect for you. Minnesota has the largest number of boat owners in the country and per capita there is one boat for every six residents,” said Chris Prescott, a [Redfin real estate agent in Minneapolis](#). “The boating season is not as long as we would like it to be, so for the other six months of the year you’ll need to find a place to keep your boat. Many people use their third garage stall for boat storage, or maybe a parking pad next to the garage if the city allows it. If you’re not interested in the hassles of boat ownership, boat clubs are becoming very popular. Twin Cities recreational boaters tend to love the Lake Minnetonka area and the homes around the lake have always been and should continue to be in high demand.”

## 4. [Virginia Beach, Virginia](#), Metropolitan Area

- Portion of Listings on Waterfront: 11.9%
- Median Sale Price of a Waterfront Home: \$334,800
- Months with Mean Temperature of 60+: 6
- # of Boat Dealers in State per 100,000 Residents: 1.98
- Recreational Boat Registrations in State per 100,000 Residents: 4,534
- Areas with Most Waterfront Property: [Virginia Beach](#), [Suffolk](#), [Norfolk](#)

Virginia Beach had the third highest percentage of waterfront homes, thanks to the bays, lakes and ocean. There aren't as many boaters as Minneapolis, but there are a few more months of the year where temperatures are above 60 degrees. "With the ocean, bay, river, lakes and many other bodies of water, there are so many places to boat in the Hampton Roads area," said Alyssa Cokinos, a Redfin [real estate agent in Hampton Roads](#). "Some of the most popular are Lynnhaven Inlet, Rudee Inlet and Smithfield Station, where you can pull in for fuel and restaurants. You can find a boat parked in someone's driveway or yard in almost any neighborhood here, and there are neighborhoods such as Alanton in Virginia Beach that have their own neighborhood boat ramp and a waiting list to be able to dock your boat at the pier there."

#### 5. [Providence, Rhode Island](#), Metropolitan Area

- Portion of Listings on Waterfront: 4.6%
- Median Sale Price of a Waterfront Home: \$424,950
- Months with Mean Temperature of 60+: 4
- # of Boat Dealers in State per 100,000 Residents: 5.63
- Recreational Boat Registrations in State per 100,000 Residents: 5,995
- Areas with Most Waterfront Property: [Portsmouth](#), [Barrington](#), [Bristol](#)

Much like Minnesota, residents in Rhode Island don't mind braving colder weather to get out on the water. The state has a lot of registered boats and boat dealers, and there's a lot of waterfront property thanks to the river, ocean and bays. Because boating is so popular, boat slips are often sold for a premium; for example, there's one that is on the market for [\\$310,000](#).

"Boating is huge in Rhode Island! I think there are 12 or so high schools in the state with sailing programs," said Jeremy Krause, a Redfin [real estate agent in Providence](#). "Rhode Island is called the Ocean State for a reason; you can basically boat anywhere from Westerly all the way up to Providence and back down to Newport. The state has an amazing amount of waterfront property with direct access to the water, especially on Aquidneck Island. Other popular communities for boaters include Narragansett, East Greenwich, Warwick, Barrington and Bristol."

#### 6. [Long Island, New York](#)

- Portion of Listings on Waterfront: 7.5%
- Median Sale Price of a Waterfront Home: \$639,000
- Months with Mean Temperature of 60+: 5
- # of Boat Dealers in State per 100,000 Residents: 2.23
- Recreational Boat Registrations by State per 100,000 Residents: 3,685
- Areas with Most Waterfront Property: [Westhampton Beach](#), [Southold](#), [Mattituck](#)

Long Island lives up to its name, with water everywhere you look. However, the residents don't own as many boats as they do in other cities on the top 10 list, and there are fewer boat dealers as well.

"Long Island offers plenty of places to boat, including the Great South Bay, Long Island Sound, the Atlantic and multiple harbors," said Peggy Papazaharias, a Redfin [real estate agent in Long Island](#). "There's a lot of waterfront property, and many of the homes have bulkheads and docks where people store their boat. Some even have lifts for jet skis! Because boating is so popular here, having waterfront access and a place to store your boat would definitely increase the value of your property."

#### 7. [Baltimore/Annapolis, Maryland](#), Metropolitan Area

- Portion of Listings on Waterfront: 3.5%
- Median Sale Price of a Waterfront Home: \$629,900
- Months with Mean Temperature of 60+: 6
- # of Boat Dealers in State per 100,000 Residents: 3.19
- Recreational Boat Registrations by State per 100,000 Residents: 4,899
- Areas with Most Waterfront Property: [Grasonville](#), [Chester](#), [Stevensville](#)

There are a lot of people who own boats in and around the Chesapeake Bay area, particularly in Annapolis, but there's not as much waterfront property as other cities on the list, which means that homes on the water are a lot more expensive. The median sale price of homes that aren't on the waterfront is \$242,115, but that number jumps to \$629,900 for homes on the water – representing a 160 percent home price premium, the most of any city on the list.

"People who dream about living on the water have a lot of options in Maryland. From the posh waterfront condos in Baltimore's inner harbor, cliff-side homes along the Severn River, neighborhoods with community boat slips around Annapolis and quaint fishing towns on Kent Island, there are homes for sale at a variety of price points," said Kim Dixon, a Redfin [real estate agent in Annapolis](#). "Maryland's capital city of Annapolis is considered America's Sailing Capital. Annapolis is home to the U.S. Naval Academy where midshipmen in their crisp white uniforms are a common sight. From the Eastern Shore to the port of Baltimore, there is a vibrant boating, sailing and water-loving culture all along the shores of the Chesapeake Bay."

#### 8. [Chicago, Illinois](#), Metropolitan Area

- Portion of Listings on Waterfront: 4.9%
- Median Sale Price of a Waterfront Home: \$265,350
- Months with Mean Temperature of 60+: 5
- # of Boat Dealers in State per 100,000 Residents: 1.68
- Recreational Boat Registrations by State per 100,000 Residents: 4,537
- Areas with Most Waterfront Property: [Fox Lake](#), [Wilmington](#), [Lake Barrington](#)

The only thing preventing more people from owning a boat in Chicago may be the cold fall and winter months. During the summer, Chicago residents have plenty of lakes to choose from, including the fifth largest in the world, Lake Michigan. "Between the Chain O' Lakes and Lake Michigan, there's a lot of waterfront property and places to boat in the Chicago area. Some people here have been boating all of their life and have

inherited a boat from their family,” said Glenn Rickel, a Redfin [real estate agent in Lake County](#). “There are definitely people willing to pay extra to live next to the water and be part of a boating community. Homes on the waterfront can be anywhere from a few hundred thousand to a million dollars depending on how big the lot is, but right across the street the homes can be a third of the price because they’re not right on the water. Because the lake freezes over and we have such a short boating season, people usually keep their boats in a storage yard for the winter, or for smaller boats, they’ll keep them in a garage.”

#### 9. [Seattle, Washington](#), Metropolitan Area

- Portion of Listings on Waterfront: 3.9%
- Median Sale Price of a Waterfront Home: \$498,000
- Months with Mean Temperature of 60+: 4
- # of Boat Dealers in State per 100,000 Residents: 3.48
- Recreational Boat Registrations by State per 100,000 Residents: 5,214
- Areas with Most Waterfront Property: [Vashon, Mercer Island, Kirkland](#)

Seattleites aren’t going to let a little rain get in their way of the water. Many neighborhoods are walking distance to a lake or Puget Sound, making it easy to find a great spot for any type of boat.

“We’re surrounded by water, so it’s only natural that there are a lot of boaters! In addition to the Puget Sound, there a ton of lakes and waterways where you can canoe, kayak, sail, crew, jet ski, paddleboard, kiteboard, you name it,” said Allie Howard, a Redfin [real estate agent in Seattle](#). “There are a lot of waterfront homes, and most neighborhoods have access to water in just a few short minutes. For events like Seafair and the Fourth of July, everyone makes a point to go out on the water and celebrate together. If you’re a boating fan, Seattle is a great place to live.”

#### 10. [Austin, Texas](#), Metropolitan Area

- Portion of Listings on Waterfront: 3.1%
- Median Sale Price of a Waterfront Home: \$455,000
- Months with Mean Temperature of 60+: 9
- # of Boat Dealers in State per 100,000 Residents: 2.03
- Recreational Boat Registrations by State per 100,000 Residents: 3,528
- Areas with Most Waterfront Property: [Spicewood, Lago Vista, Downtown Austin](#)

Austin doesn’t have as many waterfront homes as other cities on the list, but it does have warm weather nearly year-round, making boating a favorite pastime for residents. On hot days people will cool off by kayaking on the river, or they’ll take their boat to the lakes nearby.

“People in Austin love to go boating on Lake Travis and Lake Austin. There are a lot of waterfront homes on both lakes, which are really expensive because they’re in high demand,” said Cyndy Stewart, a Redfin [real estate agent in Austin](#). “Those who can’t afford to live right on the water often join boat clubs, where you can have access to a boat for a fee, but don’t have

to worry about the storage and maintenance of it. Steiner Ranch is a popular place to live for those who like to boat, because it’s right in between both lakes, and has a private boat launch into Lake Austin. Lakeway is another popular spot for boaters; it used to be where many people had vacation homes, but now it has become a place where people want to live full time.”

*Helpful Hint: To find homes for sale on the waterfront in your area, search for your city on Redfin.com, select the “more options” link, and then check the “waterfront” box. That will narrow down the search results to homes on the water.*

#### Methodology

Redfin data scientists evaluated 35 major metropolitan areas for this report. To find the percentage of waterfront property in each region, we looked at home sales from July 2011 through June 2014, and compared the number of waterfront listings with the number of listings not on the water. We also pulled sales information during that timeframe to find the median sale price of waterfront homes. [Discover Boating](#), a public awareness effort managed by the National Marine Manufacturers Association, provided the data on boat registrations and dealers by state. We also collected information on the mean temperatures per month from [The Weather Channel](#). Each of these elements was given a score of 1-10 and then the cities were ranked based on an average of that score.