

FALL TRAVEL: 3 GREAT DEALS

Money

No. 1
CARMEL
INDIANA

America's Best Places *to Live*

WHAT *NOT* TO
TELL THE KIDS
ABOUT YOUR \$\$\$

HOW TO PLAY
THE HOUSING
REBOUND

STOCKS:
WHEN TO HOLD,
WHEN TO FOLD



THE
PATTERSON
FAMILY IN
No. 1 CARMEL

The Top 100

INCLUDING 2. MCKINNEY, TEXAS 3. EDEN PRAIRIE, MINN.
4. NEWTON, MASS. 5. REDMOND, WASH. 6. IRVINE, CALIF.

Where does *your* town rank?



Distance from city



16 MILES
from Indianapolis

Population



79,200

Price of a typical
single-family house



\$221,800

Estimated annual
property taxes



\$4,200

City unemployment
rate



4.5%



PROS: Booming economy, affordable homes, low taxes, great schools, bike paths everywhere, plenty of arts



CONS: No public transportation, not much racial diversity



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CARMEL INDIANA

FIVE YEARS AGO Carmel was a quiet, upscale bedroom community that offered an easy 20-minute commute to downtown Indianapolis. How times change. While some once-top-notch towns on the Best Places list lagged during the recession, this formerly sleepy burb—which clocked in at No. 14 on our list two years ago—has transformed itself into the ideal place to work and play.

How? First, the employment outlook: Thanks to midsize health care and tech firms and large companies like Delta Faucet and Conseco Insurance, Carmel's business district now has the second-largest concentration of office workers in Indiana and an unemployment rate that's a little more than half the national average. In 2010 the city welcomed the Indiana Design Center, 82,000 square feet of facilities for design professionals and showrooms open to the public.

As for play, there's the new performing arts center, part of a development with a 1,600-seat concert hall and a 500-seat multiuse theater, made possible by about \$500 million in private investment and \$175 million of city money through new commercial tax funding. "We don't have the Pacific or mountain views," says the fifth-term mayor, James Brainard, "so we have to work a bit harder on cultural amenities."

Carmel also has excellent schools, a big sports and recreation center, roundabouts to keep traffic flowing, wide bike lanes, and an off-street bike path with a direct route through the center of town. All that, plus a variety of housing options ranging from older homes to new subdivisions, and you have an irresistible draw for families. Jeff and Deanna Gilbert, 49 and 55, moved with their kids from a neighboring suburb in 2010. "My family and I were already driving to Carmel for the water park, restaurants, concerts—pretty much everything," says Jeff, the president of a software company.

All too often, great places and



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Homes on the west side of town; high school freshman practice football at Carmel Stadium; the Gilberts enjoy lunch at Bub's Burgers & Ice Cream; the new Center for the Performing Arts



great expenses go hand in hand. Not so with Carmel. Thanks to the sizable commercial tax base the town has built, taxes have stayed low. That fact wasn't lost on Larry and Theresa Patterson, both 44, who moved to Carmel when their eldest child, Emily, now 20, was in kindergarten (kids Nick and Olivia are 16; Jake is 14). "We could get the right amount of house for our money," says Larry, an executive at a popcorn company. Adds Theresa, a nurse: "We fell in love with a little neighborhood, and now it's a world-class destination."

FIVE
GREAT
PLACES
TO...

...GET A BRAND- NEW JOB

The county rate of
unemployment (May)



1 BISMARCK, N.D.
2.3%

2 FARGO, N.D.
2.8%

3 GRAND FORKS, N.D.
3.2%

4 ARLINGTON, VA.
3.3%

5 IOWA CITY, IOWA
3.6%

NOTES: Unemployment rates are
limited to one place per county.
SOURCE: Bureau of Labor Statistics



THE SEARCH FOR NO. 1

HOW MONEY FINDS
THE BEST PLACES
TO LIVE IN AMERICA

START with data provided by
OnBoard Informatics on all
U.S. towns with populations of
50,000 to 300,000.



744

SCREEN OUT PLACES with a
median family income of more
than 200% or less than 85%
of the state average; those
with more than 95% of one
race; and those with poor
education and crime scores.



401

**EXCLUDE RETIREMENT
COMMUNITIES AND TOWNS
WITH MAJOR JOB LOSSES.**

Rank the rest based on job
growth, home affordability,
safety, school quality,
health care, arts and leisure,
diversity, and several
ease-of-living criteria.



360

FACTOR IN MORE DATA on the
economy (including the fiscal
strength of state and local
governments), plus jobs,
housing, health care, and
happiness. Give the most
weight to economic data.



100

**VISIT TOWNS AND INTERVIEW
RESIDENTS;** assess traffic,
parks, and gathering places;
and consider intangibles like
community spirit.



29

SELECT THE WINNER based
on the data and reporting.



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Carmel, Indiana

Highly Qualified Professional Workforce

- Education for those 25 years and older:
 - 97.5% - High school diploma or higher
 - 63.4% - Bachelors degree or higher
- More than 40 business headquarters including high tech firms and financial leaders such as ADESA, ChaCha, CNO, Delta Faucet, Ingersoll Rand, ITT Educational Services, Midwest ISO, Monstor.com, Software Engineering Professionals and St. Vincent Health

Excellent Education System

- Award-winning public library adjacent to high school, undergrad and graduate course facilities
- All Carmel Clay Schools earned “Exemplary Progress”
- Advanced Placement Honor Roll
- 96% of students graduate high school
- 50 National Merit Semifinalists

Safe Streets

- The addition of more than 75 roundabouts have reduced injury accidents by about 80%

Vibrant Arts and Culture

- The Carmel Arts & Design District is home to more than 100 businesses including unique galleries, boutiques and restaurants for all palettes
- The Indiana Design Center is the Midwest's premier destination for interior design
- The Center for the Performing Arts with the 1,600 seat Palladium concert hall, 500 seat Tarkington Theater and the 200 seat Studio Theater brings world-class entertainment and quality local productions to central Indiana

Parks and Trails

- Central Park, located in the heart of Carmel, features a community center with indoor and outdoor pools and water parks, indoor fitness center and a 4-mile trail
- Parkland has increased from 40 to 800 acres in the past 15 years
- There are approximately 125 miles of multi-use trails and paths throughout the city and 14 parks provide a wide variety of recreational options



Mayor Jim Brainard · City of Carmel

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