



The Top Golf-Home Markets (by region)

By Peter Finch - Golf Digest Magazine - June 2006

1. Scottsdale

Thirteen--count them, 13--Scottsdale courses make Golf Digest's Best in State list, more than any other community. The highest ranked is The Estancia Club, a Tom Fazio design on the northern slope of landmark Pinnacle Peak. Here, overlooking a course that ranked 76th on Golf Digest's list of America's 100 Greatest Courses, homes sell for \$1.2 million and up. But for sheer volume of quality golf, it's hard to top Desert Mountain, home to six Jack Nicklaus courses, each with its own clubhouse, and almost 1,300 homes. Prices range from \$1.5 million to more than \$7 million.

As its name suggests, the Whisper Rock Golf Club appeals to deep-pocketed buyers who want a quieter vibe. It has one course co-designed by Phil Mickelson and another by Tom Fazio. Homes in Whisper Rock Estates, none occupying less than an acre, sell for \$2.6 million to \$5.4 million. Older, more established Desert Highlands is a favorite spot at the base of Pinnacle Peak, with lots starting at \$500,000. At venerable Troon North, you can find nice two-bedroom villas for about \$700,000.

The top golf-home markets, by region				
Area	Golf score (out of 50)	Nongolf score (out of 50)	Cost of living (out of 14)	Playable days
West				
1 Scottsdale	35.9	29.5	5.7	289
2 Las Vegas	37.1	28.2	7.6	281
3 Palm Springs	36.7	26.9	2.8	321
4 Maui	35.9	25.1	2.2	350
5 San Diego	34.2	26.6	1.4	353
6 Hawaii (Big Island)	34.8	25.2	2.4	350
7 St. George, Utah/ Mesquite, Nev.	29.6	28.6	7.4	275
8 Bend/Sunriver, Ore.	28.5	29.2	7.2	264
9 Tucson	29.8	27.5	6.8	269
10 Coos Bay, Ore.	26.8	28.4	7.5	260

Communities appear in order of combined Golf and Nongolf scores. **GOLF SCORE** includes number and quality of courses, golf days per year and course congestion. **NONGOLF SCORE** includes crime rates, airport access, off-course amenities and cost of living. **COST OF LIVING** is based on home prices, taxes and other variables. A higher score indicates a lower cost of living.

The Full List of Top Golf-Home Markets, by region:

West: Scottsdale

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Southwest: Austin

This area has so much else going for it--lush, rolling topography; an outdoors-friendly climate; multiple lakes for boating and fishing; a vibrant downtown--it's easy to forget all the great golf.

Mountain West: Denver

You don't have to drive far from the Mile High City's downtown to find some extraordinary golf-course developments.

Midwest: Sheboygan, Wis.

Halfway between Milwaukee and Green Bay, about two hours north of Chicago, Sheboygan might not automatically come to mind when you think of great second-home markets.

Northeast/Mid-Atlantic: Eastern Long Island, N.Y.

The Hamptons, Eastern Long Island's famous getaway for the wealthy and glamorous, has an unparalleled collection of golf courses, starting with the Big Three of Shinnecock Hills, the National and Maidstone.

Southeast: Myrtle Beach, S.C.

The "Grand Strand" is literally jammed with great courses. Seven make Golf Digest's Best in State rankings, and an incredible 28 carry player ratings of 4 1/2 stars or more in the *Best Places to Play* guide.

South: North Atlanta (Cherokee County)

Thick pine forests, rolling countryside and panoramic views of the foothills are a big part of the appeal here, about an hour north of downtown Atlanta.

Florida: North of Tampa

Once a sleepy, overlooked corner of the Sunshine State, the area north of Tampa has been booming. Pasco and Hernando counties, in particular, have "exploded with development" lately.