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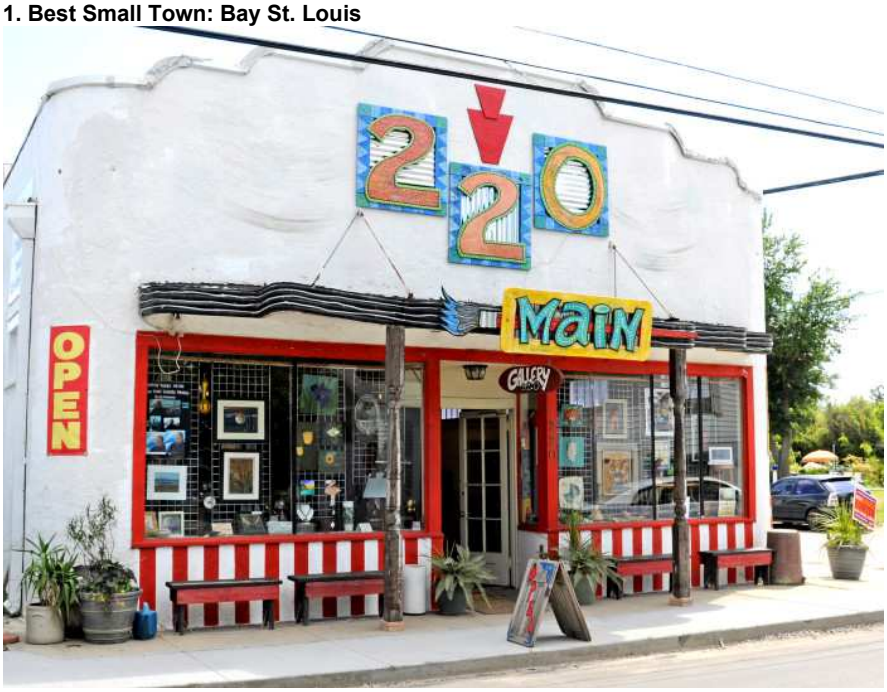
Posted in **Mississippi** | December 19, 2015 | by **Daniella DiRienzo**

Here Are The 10 Best Places To Live In Mississippi…And Why

Mississippi is a wonderful place to live. The state is filled with amazing cities that have topped national lists for things like livability, safety, job growth, and more. So, we decided to use these rankings and come up with a list of our own. From beautiful scenery to amenities that can't be beat, here are some of the best places to reside in Mississippi.

1. Best Small Town: Bay St. Louis



Kent Kanouse/Flickr

Named one of the "Coolest Small Towns in America" by Budget and Travel Magazine, Bay St. Louis has it all – oceanfront views, a small town vibe, and a hip Old Town area filled with great restaurants, galleries, and more. And as if it couldn't get any better, the art scene is really flourishing thanks to city's monthly "Second Saturday Artwalk." The one-day fest is filled with art shows, live entertainment, and local cuisine.

2. Best City for Education: Pass Christian

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U.S. News Best High Schools rankings for 2015 awarded 93 Mississippi schools bronze medals; however, there was one school in the state that stood out above the rest and earned a silver medal – Pass Christian High School, which is part of the Pass Christian School District. Nationally recognized due to student's high levels of achievement, this school district has achieved a number of noteworthy accolades. Three of the district's four schools have been recognized as No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon Schools by the U.S. Department of Education, the district has earned the highest academic performance rating, an "A," for five years in a row, and the Mississippi Department of Education has recognized the district for Outstanding Achievement and as an Exemplar for the Betterment of Education in all Schools Across the State of Mississippi.

3. Best Place to Raise a Family: Long Beach

Long Beach Community Development Association/Facebook

This coastal community is made up of the stuff families dream about. Aside from its gorgeous seaside location, Long Beach has an extremely low crime rate, great quality of life, and schooling advantages. The city's awesome attributes have earned it a number of accolades, including a spot on Movoto's list of the "10 Best Places to Live in Mississippi" and being named the best beach town for young families.

4. Best City Overall: Madison

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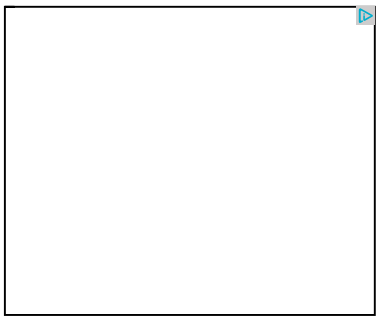
madisonthecitychamber.com

At one time, Madison was simply a small farming community but not anymore. As of today, the city is home to more than 25,000 residents and encourages continued growth by providing abundant resources for new business owners. Even with its considerable growth and close proximity to Jackson, Madison still maintains a small town vibe which is evident in the city's low crime rate - a statistic that can be attributed to a vigilant police force and the variety of safety programs that have been introduced. In addition to being loved by its residents, the town has been nationally recognized by a number of publications such as Family Circle, Southern Living Magazine, and U.S. News, earning top rankings in categories such as the most livable city in the state, the best town for families, one of the best places to retire, and the best place to live.

5. Best Mid-Sized City: Oxford

Matt Taylor/Crooked Letter Photography

Named by Forbes as "one of the fastest growing small towns," Oxford's population is expected to reach 44,000 by 2020, which shouldn't come as a surprise with all the city has to offer. Often referred to as the "Cultural Mecca of the South," Oxford is a place with a lot going on when it comes to the arts. The creative melting pot of a city has a robust literary history, thriving and diverse music scene, and a ton of museums and galleries. Aside from the arts, Oxford also offers award-winning restaurants, diverse shopping, and is, of course, home to the University of Mississippi, which earned Oxford the number six spot on USA Today's list of the best college towns in the country.



6. Safest City: Petal

cityofpetal.com

Nicknamed “The Friendly City,” it should come as no surprise that Petal is one of the safest in the state. Part of the Hattiesburg Metropolitan Area, Petal offers access to the amenities of a bigger city all while maintaining its small town appeal. Boasting an unusually low crime rate, the city’s residents can rest assured that they are safe in their home town. That sense of security can be attributed to the city’s extremely dedicated police department and their cooperation with attentive citizens.

7. Best Kept Secret: Snow Lake Shores

snowlakeshores.ms

It turns out this small town is just as beautiful as the name suggests. It was originally established as a private resort community with the promise of being a safe, family-friendly place for people to both vacation and live year round. It wasn’t until 1996 that Snow Lake Shores was incorporated as a town. Today, the current population is only about 300; however, that number normally triples during the summer months as seasonal residents and vacationers come to the community – and with such amazing scenery, who could blame them?

8. Best Place to Retire: Hattiesburg

city-data.com

Home to the University of Southern Mississippi, “retirement community” isn’t normally the first thing that comes to mind when thinking of Hattiesburg. The city has topped numerous “best places to retire” lists and is a Certified Retirement Community, which means it has met rigorous standards for health care facilities, housing, cultural opportunities, and a welcoming committee. Affordability and a close proximity to numerous doctor’s offices also make Hattiesburg a great place for retirees.

9. Best Seaside Town: Ocean Springs

Adrianna Battista/Flickr

Appropriately named a “Dream Town” by Coastal Living, Ocean Springs has a lot to offer. The “gem of the Gulf Coast” is the perfect mashup of independent shops, art galleries, and culinary treasures, most of which are located in a quaint historic district. At night the city comes alive thanks to a number of venues that feature live music on an almost a nightly basis. And for those looking for some rest and relaxation, Ocean Springs has got you covered in that aspect as well. The city is practically surrounded by the Gulf Islands National Seashore and is filled with cozy cottages, perfect for a much-needed beach getaway.

10. Best Place for Business and Careers: Jackson

Visit Mississippi/Flickr

The state capitol has nabbed spots on a number of Forbes' lists for qualities such as a favorable cost of doing business, excellent job growth, and was most recently included in the list of the "Best Places for Business and Careers" – a nationwide ranking of 200 cities. In addition to being a great place for business, Jackson has a cost of living that is 2.4% below the national average, earning it the 3rd spot on Forbes' list of the best "Bang For Your Buck" cities. With an unemployment rate lower than the national average and the rate of job growth expected to increase substantially within the next year, Jackson definitely has a lot to offer to career-minded individuals.

Been to any of the cities listed above? What city/category would you add to the list? Tell us in the comments section below.

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Daniella DiRienzo

Even though she was born in New York, Daniella has lived in the south pretty much her entire life. The self-proclaimed southerner graduated from the University of Southern Mississippi in 2011. Since graduation, she has worked as a freelance writer for several websites and opened a clothing consignment shop in her town of Picayune, MS.

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Kevin Magee · Magee, Mississippi
I think Magee should have been on the list
Like · Reply · Dec 19, 2015 10:23am

Jerald P. Everett · Univ of Southern Mississippi
Certainly, Clinton, Ms belongs on this list , we have very strong academic Schools as established by test scores and home of MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE . A strong academic College.
on what basis were these selections made. ??
Like · Reply · 3 · Dec 20, 2015 12:46pm

Francine Andrews
Much more so than Jackson, where the crime rate is thru the roof. That alone makes me disregard this article, there are some nice towns on here, but Jackson doesn't belong on here. Jackson murder rate way up over the year before.
Like · Reply · 4 · Dec 21, 2015 11:40am

Raymond Braud
Diamondhead is now a city. Best kept secret I. The country!
Like · Reply · 2 · Dec 20, 2015 12:55pm

Robert Ashley
Jackson, Ms. should not be on the best of anything list unless it is best place to get killed.
Like · Reply · 15 · Dec 20, 2015 1:39pm

Jerald P. Everett · Univ of Southern Mississippi
Robert , My thoughts exactly.
Like · Reply · 1 · Dec 20, 2015 5:09pm

MrsTina Jordan-Robinson · Jackson, Mississippi
so true
Moving here from Starkville(should be on list) was a culture shock... Every morning my husband and I wake up to 5am news reporting nothing but murders and robberies. Sometimes I feel like I'm in the movie the Purge ... Trying to make it out of Jackson before 5:30 or before the fun goes down.
Like · Reply · 3 · Dec 21, 2015 7:15am

Francine Andrews
MrsTina Jordan-Robinson not safe there be careful. I was glad when my son moved out of Jackson I worried all the time.
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Betty Holden
New Albany or tupelo
Like · Reply · 1 · Dec 20, 2015 5:13pm

Francine Andrews
So much better than central MS, Jackson area. Tupelo is safe and clean town so is New Albany. I used to live up that way and sincerely regret moving to central MS. The crime here is awful.
Like · Reply · Dec 21, 2015 11:42am

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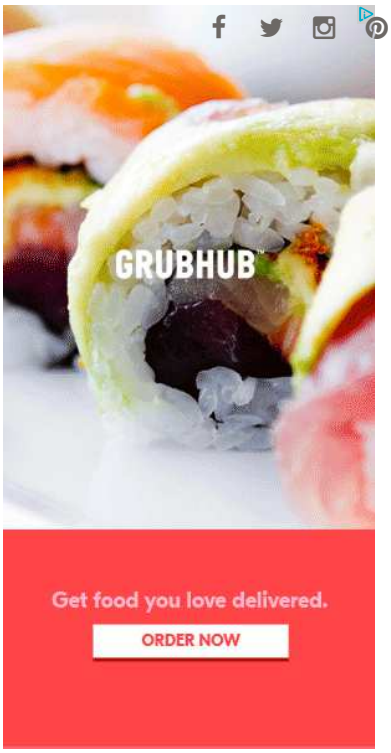
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