



# **The Top Gay Retirement (Or Not) Communities**

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***On the Gay Horizon***

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A Note to the Reader:

This report is offered as a first step in your search to find a GLBT community, whether that be for retirement or for tomorrow. Every effort has been made to make the information as accurate and up-to-date as possible. However, it is always your responsibility to verify any information on which you intend to base any decisions.

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# **The Top Gay Retirement (Or Not) Communities**

## **Introduction**

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If they build it, will we come?

We wondered that ourselves, so when we began this report, we decided to focus on communities that are already inhabited. And we're pleased to be able to tell you that we found six.

Each one is completely different from the others and represents real choices for us as we contemplate launching ourselves into the next phase of our lives. We also began this project under the mistaken assumption that we were researching retirement communities. Not even close! Many of the residents are retired but more and more of the vacancies are being filled by those far younger. They want to live there now!

The communities are all over the country, in different climates, different environments, offering different levels and kinds of services. What's your dream? A log home in the mountains? A thriving, extremely social community in south Florida? Want to live in the San Francisco bay area? How about a casita in the Pecos Wilderness or a first class resort in Santa Fe?

What is not different is that they all share a core commitment to creating communities where the residents can live in an open, supportive and safe environment.

It hasn't been easy for the developers of these communities. For most, it has taken years to navigate through all the obstacles and road blocks to finally make a reality of what was once nothing more than a dream. We owe them a debt of gratitude for taking this next step along our journey. And, because of them, there are more developments on the drawing board and in construction.

As more communities open their doors, we will update and revise this report. To make sure that you always have the most current information, visit [www.onthegayhorizon.com](http://www.onthegayhorizon.com) and provide us with your email address. As soon as an update is available, we will make sure that you receive it.

Finally, we would like to thank the developers and managers of the communities that we met with and who were so generous with their time. This report would not have been possible without their input. And, we came away with some new friends.

As GLBT baby boomers, we've come a long way --- and this is just the beginning.....



## **THE RESORT ON CAREFREE BOULEVARD**

300 Carefree Boulevard  
Fort Myers, Florida 33917  
(239) 731-6366  
[www.resortoncb.com](http://www.resortoncb.com)

### **🔵 What kind of housing is offered?**

Encompassing 50 acres of tropical preserves and freshwater lakes The Resort on Carefree Cove combines Southwest Florida sunshine and lesbian camaraderie. The Resort consists of a gated community of small, privately owned lots, zoned for single-family homes and RVs.

During the winter season (November 1 - April 30), 400-500 residents call it home. Off-season, the number drops to approximately 150.

A few lots remain for sale. Existing houses enter the market periodically. Many folks begin with an RV lot and later build their home on it.

Rentals (usually seasonal) are also available.

### ● **Cost?**

The single-family lots begin at \$75,000. Home prices range from \$125,000 to \$480,000.

Other Fees: The Resort on Carefree Boulevard Association fee for 2007 was \$224 per quarter. This covered lawn mowing, streets, lights, trash removal and environmental and grounds responsibilities for the conservation areas. The Carefree Clubhouse Corporation (private club) fee was \$279 per quarter. Total monthly fees were approximately \$169 for 2007.

### ● **What is the age-range of the community members?**

The community does not restrict age. Currently, ages range from 40-80 years old.

It should be noted that this community is completely female but not by design. It has just turned out this way.

### ● **Is the community open to both retired and working people?**

Yes. The Resort on Carefree Boulevard considers itself a family community. Grandchildren visit often and nearly everyone seems to have a pet or two or three.

### ● **What kind of and how far away are medical facilities and services? And are the providers gay-friendly?**

The closest hospital and doctor offices are approximately 7 miles from the neighborhood. Also, the local hospice serves the community on-site.

[Lee Memorial Health System](#)

To date, no problems have been reported with any health providers.

### ● **What cultural activities does the community participate in?**

The Fort Myers area provides a full range of cultural options from museums and theatre to symphonies and concerts. Residents also travel to the Tampa - St. Petersburg area for outings, renting a small bus for excursions to games and concerts. [USA Today City Guide: Tampa - St. Petersburg](#)

### ● **What are the recreational activities are available?**

The in-house activities at The Resort on Carefree Boulevard take place in their own, very large recreational facility, which includes separate rooms for lectures, dances, concerts, poker and bridge tournaments, an art studio including a kiln and gallery, yoga, a fitness room and a library. In the winter, entertainers from the Olivia Cruises who tour the state when their ship docks, perform at the center.

The actual activity calendar is completely resident-driven. For example, since some retired paramedics and other health-care workers moved in, the community has become a certified First Responder unit in accordance with the office of Homeland Security requirements.

The Recreation Center also includes a professional kitchen equipped to produce meals on-site for dinner parties and to facilitate caterers hired for other occasions.

Steps from the Recreational Center, residents enjoy the outdoor pool and Jacuzzi.

Adjacent to the pool area, it's a short walk to a butterfly and meditation garden, complete with lakeside bench.

To see the current activity schedule, visit [Carefree Clubhouse](#)

### ● **What is the local weather?**

The Fort Myers area enjoys two seasons: rainy and dry. The dry season is its mild winter, with daytime temperatures in the 70-80s, and very little rain. Summers bring lots of humidity, afternoon thunderstorms, and heat in 90s every day. [Current conditions.](#)

### ● **What is the local transportation system? Is a car necessary?**

Although bus service to the Fort Myers area is provided by the Lee County Transportation System, a car is necessary. Many residents drive golf carts within the community, but to date, none are allowed on the public roadways.

● **Detail the local economy, including income tax and cost of living.**

Florida has no state income tax which makes it attractive to retirees. Local taxes consist of property tax (currently assessed at 90% of purchase price) which is mitigated by a homestead exemption. Renters pay an 11% tax.

The local economy is very similar to other parts of the country, except for gasoline taxes. Generally, they are higher in Florida because the deficit created by not collecting state income taxes is filled by snowbird's gas tanks as they pass through the area.

● **How gay-friendly is the area in general?**

The immediate area is well aware that the community is primarily a lesbian community and accepts it. Vendors especially welcome the well-organized, on-time bill-paying nature of the association and deliver services promptly.

● **Are there gay-owned or specifically gay-friendly bars and restaurants nearby?**

None that are known as such, but to date, no problems with area bars or restaurants have been reported. Tampa/St. Petersburg hosts many gay-owned bars and restaurants.

● **Where is the nearest international airport?**

The Southwest Florida International Airport (RSW) is a 35 minute drive from the community. Taxis and shuttles are available, but often neighbors drive one another. [Airport Information](#)

● **Is there a wait-list?**

During season, for rentals, yes.

● **What is the website address?**

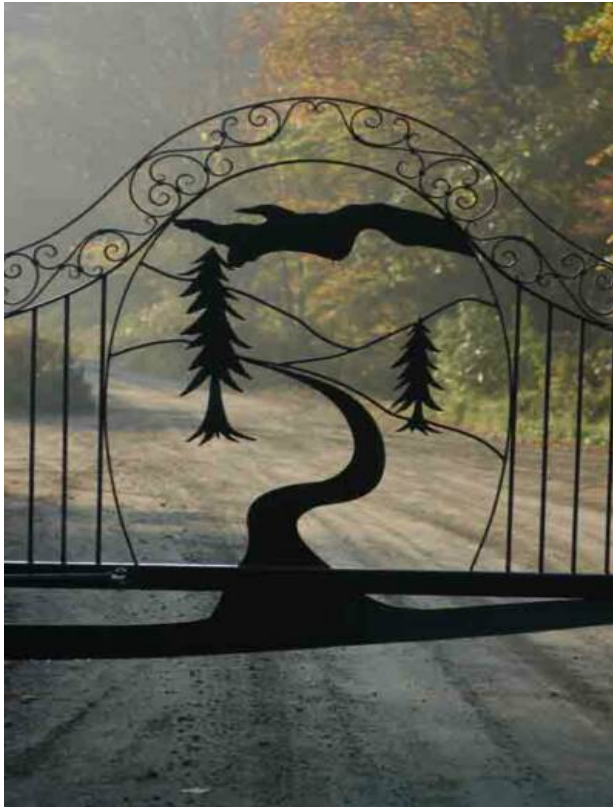
[www.resortoncb.com](http://www.resortoncb.com)

Sales office: (239)731-6366

[sales@resortoncb.com](mailto:sales@resortoncb.com)

Rental office: [www.carefreerental.com](http://www.carefreerental.com)





## **CAREFREE COVE**

160 Carefree Cove Road

Zionville, NC 28698

336 385-1136 office

[www.carefreecove.homestead.com](http://www.carefreecove.homestead.com)

### **● What kind of housing is offered?**

Carefree Cove is a true mountain community set in the beautiful North Carolina high county. Residents enjoy a mature, hardwood forest, breathtaking views, abundant wildlife, streams, wildflowers and a spectacular star-studded night sky.

This is a planned subdivision consisting of 165 acres; sold as 88 single-family lots, with an average size of one acre. Many people buy a lot to build a vacation home on now, with the intention of retiring here later.

Some houses are available as rentals, but this is usually short-term and seasonal. See the [website](#) for availability.

### **● Cost?**

The lots cost between \$66,000 and \$192,000. The most expensive lot comes with an expensive driveway and gorgeous long-range views. In fact, only a couple of the long-range view lots remain. The roads, underground utilities to your lot, and shared water wells are already in place with a waterline to each lot line, and included in the price.

Each builder will need to install a septic system appropriate for the home size.

You will pay an additional \$250/quarter in community fees which cover the cost of the clubhouse and maintenance of the roads.

The property has deed restrictions. See website for details. But generally speaking, they protect the property's value, such as a requirement that houses must be built of wood, log, and/or stone to fit the rustic upscale nature of the community.

### **● What is the age-range of the community members?**

The community does not restrict age. The majority of members are in their 50s, but the ages range from late 30s to early 70s.

### **● Is the community open to both retired and working people?**

Definitely. People already live and work from their homes at Carefree Cove.

### **● What kind of and how far away are medical facilities and services? And are the providers gay-friendly?**

The nearest large hospital is located in Boone, 18 miles away. Most doctors are also located in Boone. Although Carefree Cove has no care facilities on-site, the emergency medical center is located in Mountain Center, only 10 miles away.

To date, no problems have been reported with any health providers.

### **• What cultural activities does the community participate in?**

The Appalachian State University campus in nearby Boone provides a year-round venue for performing and visual arts programs. The town of Blowing Rock also has an active theatre and musical performances. The annual Scottish Highlands Festival takes place nearby.

For more urban tastes, Asheville is just over a two hour drive, while Charlotte and Knoxville are each three hours by car.

### **• What are the recreational activities available?**

Work has begun laying the foundation for The Clubhouse which will be the heart of the community. Included will be a social hall for functions such as dances and dinners, an indoor exercise pool, large, stone fireplace, professional kitchen, hobby room and well-equipped exercise room. Outside, plans include a patio, fireplace, deck, seating area, fire pit, hot tub and a gorgeous view.

The community has several hiking trails on its grounds. These range from moderate to difficult and can also be used for cross-country skiing in the winter.

Off-site, the area is full of outdoor recreational opportunities, including whitewater rafting and kayaking of all degrees, riverside parks, camping, fishing, waterfalls, biking, golf, and in the winter, skiing and snowboarding.

The surrounding area also supports local farmers, with an active farmers' market in Boone including enough quality and variety to satisfy any gourmet.

### **• What is the local weather?**

The area enjoys four relatively mild seasons. Summer is comfortable with warm days and often the need for a sweater at night. Fall brings a full palette of colors as the leaves change. At its coldest, in January and February, temperatures may plunge to 20 degrees at night, but will be

around 50 during the day. And spring in the mountains is green and lush. For more information check [BooneWeather.com](http://BooneWeather.com) or the [Weather Channel](http://Weather Channel).

● **What is the local transportation system? Is a car necessary?**

In Boone, it is called Applectart and consists of buses.

No public transportation exists between Carefree Cove and any town. Car service to the Tri-State airport is available. Transportation often takes the form of carpools, but you will need a car.

● **Detail the local economy, including income tax and cost of living.**

Residents say the cost of living is quite low, even lower than it is in Florida. North Carolina does have a state income tax with a range of 6-8%. Certain types of retirement income, including Social Security are exempt. Property taxes are \$5 per \$1,000 assessed value; the assessed value will be 60-80% of market value.

● **How gay-friendly is the area in general?**

Generally speaking, the area is very open to gay residents. All the neighbors are fully aware of Carefree Cove, and the property is very “out.”

● **Are there gay-owned or specifically gay-friendly bars and restaurants nearby?**

Appalachian University in Boone has gay clubs, but the owners are not aware of specific restaurants or gay-bars in town because they hate to leave Carefree Cove!

● **Where is the nearest international airport?**

The closest would be either Charlotte or Greensboro. But the owners like to use nearby [Tri-cities Regional Airport](http://Tri-cities Regional Airport) in Tennessee (just over the border) to link with the international sites. It is a quiet, 6-gate airport with practically no waiting, and its aircraft fly to all major hubs. Car service is available from Carefree Cove.

• **Is there a wait-list?**

No. But only six lots remain in the current phase of development. The final phase will begin soon, and it will contain the very last 14 lots.

• **What is the website address?**

[www.CGRdevelopment.com](http://www.CGRdevelopment.com)

Sales office: (336) 385-1136

Email: [Cathy@cgrdevelopment.com](mailto:Cathy@cgrdevelopment.com)



## **RAINBOWVISION SANTA FE**

500 Rodeo Road

Santa Fe, NM 87505

(877) 795-7555

[www.rainbowvisionprop.com/santafe.html](http://www.rainbowvisionprop.com/santafe.html)

### **● What kind of housing is offered?**

Known as “the city different” for its historic beauty, blend of Native American, Hispanic and Anglo cultures and live and let live attitude, Santa Fe trails only San Francisco among U.S. metro areas in percentage of households headed by same-sex partners.

RainbowVision Santa Fe covers 13 acres with 147 units, including condominiums, Chelsea Village Club rentals (one and two bedrooms) and the Castro Assisted Living Suites.

All buildings are designed in the southwestern stucco style and finished with desert colors. Units can be customized with options such as rain-style showerheads, granite countertops, skylights, wall color and carpet choices.

The Castro consists of 26 assisted living suites --- studios, 1 bedroom/1 bath and 2 bedroom/2 baths. Being located above the El Centro Clubhouse allows assisted living members to participate in community activities.

Designed around the health care needs of gays and lesbians who often face the senior years without the help of family, RainbowVision Santa Fe makes it possible for residents to live here independently or opt for

assisted-living units, including the option to have most meals prepared for them in the dining hall and delivered to their home.

Members are assessed a monthly service fee which covers (from RainbowVision Santa Fe website):

- Executive Chef Created Meals – 3 Nutritious Meals Daily
- Concierge Services
- Housekeeping- Twice Weekly
- Daily Individual Care – As Determined in Member’s Care Plan
- 24-Hour Caregiver Staff and Medication Management
- Utilities and Comcast Basic Cable Service
- Central Heat and Air Conditioning
- Scheduled Activities and Events
- Monthly Blood Pressure Check-Ups
- Local Newspaper - Weekdays
- Two Annual Fitness Evaluations
- Scheduled Transportation
- Landscaping
- Security
- Georgia O’Keeffe Arts and Crafts Studio
- Common Areas for Activities and Personal Use
- Community Meeting Rooms
- Billie Jean King Fitness Center\*
- On-Site Spa Services\*
- On-Site Personal Trainer/Massage Therapist\*
- Salon Services in the Edward Scissorhands Image Center\*
- ATM On-Site and Weekly Banking Services
- Director of Wellness on call 24/7
- Assistance with activities of daily living, bathing, dressing, meals, escorts, personal care
- Medication management
- Nurses on floor days and weekends/medication technicians at other times
- Individualized service plans to meet members needs

*\*Additional charges apply for certain services.*

## **Cost?**

For current pricing information please contact:



RainbowVision Sales office: (877) 795-7555

[RainbowVisoin Santa Fe Sales Info](#)

● **What is the age-range of the community members?**

The community does not restrict based on age. Currently, ages of residents range from mid 40's to 90+.

● **Is community open to both retired and working people?**

Yes. RainbowVision Santa Fe does not consider itself a retirement community but rather a "Community for the Second Fifty Years" and foresees always having a mix of residents who are still working as well as those who have retired.

● **What kind of and how far away are medical facilities and services? And are the providers gay-friendly?**

The regional medical center for northern New Mexico is located in Santa Fe just 2 miles away, as well as the New Mexico Cancer Institute, and geriatric care centers. Santa Fe is also well-known as a center for alternative and holistic health practitioners.

To date, no problems have been reported with any health providers.

● **What cultural activities does the community participate in?**

Santa Fe ranks as the country's third largest art market with nearly 300 galleries and dealers. More than a dozen major museums showcasing collections of art, culture, history and traditions reside in Santa Fe. The world-class Santa Fe Opera thrives downtown.

● **What are the recreational activities are available?**

El Centro, the Clubhouse at Rainbow Vision, hosts just about everything you need: Garbo's, a members' restaurant, The Billy Jean King Fitness Center and Spa with a full-time personal trainer, the Edward Scissor Hands Salon, The Silver Starlight Lounge and Cabaret (so popular that *Out Magazine* ranked it in fall 2007 as one of the "Greatest Gay Bars in the



*World*”), the Truman Capote Library, the Oscar Wilde conference rooms, a mail center, ATM and private banking services, a member's concierge service, classes in everything from cooking (with visits by celebrity chefs), arts and crafts (in the common area's studio space) and organic gardening.

Field trips include visits to the nearby Santa Fe Opera House, and longer excursions in conjunction with Rosie O'Donnell's R Family Vacations.

Club membership gives you access to the above in-house Clubhouse amenities as well as a scheduled ride service, housekeeping, continental breakfast five days a week with the Breakfast Club and a monthly food and beverage allowance from Garbo's, the in-house restaurant. To see the current activity schedule, visit: [Clubhouse Schedule](#)

### ● **What is the local weather?**

Pleasant year-round, averaging 300 sunny days per year, low humidity and mild temperatures, with four seasons represented. Winter average ranges are 14F - 40°F in the winter, and summer temps range from a low of 55°F to a high of 86°F. Santa Fe receives 2-3 inches of rain per month in the summer and about 5 inches of snow per month in the winter.

[Current Santa Fe weather](#)

### ● **What is the local transportation system?**

The Santa Fe Trails Transit System provides bus service throughout Santa Fe, Monday through Friday, 6 am to 11 pm, 8 am to 8 pm on Saturdays and some limited service on Sundays. Fares are \$.50 per trip for those 60 and older, or \$1.00 for a day pass.

### ● **Detail the local economy, including income tax and cost of living.**

The City of Santa Fe's Living Wage Ordinance was adopted, effective January 1, 2008, to establish minimum hourly wage rates.

Santa Fe, a national leader in the Living Wage movement, has the highest broad-reaching Living Wage in the country. All profit and non-profit businesses with a business license or business registration issued by the City of Santa Fe, including part time and temporary employees as well as

city contractors, are required to pay their workers at least a minimum hourly wage of \$9.50. The law also calls for cost of living increases starting January 2009.

In New Mexico, taxpayers 65 and older may exempt up to \$8,000 (single), \$16,000 (joint) from any income source if their income is under \$28,500 (individual filers) or \$51,000 (married filing jointly).

Combined state, county and city sales tax are 7.938%. New Mexico has one of the lowest combined state and federal tax burdens, ranking 45<sup>th</sup>.

### ● **How gay-friendly is the area in general?**

Santa Fe is very gay-friendly. Each June, for the last several decades, the Plaza, Santa Fe's heart, plays host to Pride on the Plaza and the Santa Fe Gay Pride Celebration. The Santa Fe Human Rights Alliance is active year-round.

The city of Santa Fe itself is a leader in gay rights, offering domestic partnership benefits to its employees. If you doubt this, check out the official city motto, from the official [santafe.org](http://santafe.org) website: "*Our streets are narrow, our minds are not.*"

### ● **Are there gay-owned or specifically gay-friendly bars and restaurants nearby?**

Santa Fe has long been known as more of a destination for GLBT couples than a singles scene. Although exclusively gay bars haven't lasted for any length of time, almost all bars in the downtown area are gay-friendly. Santa Fe is also home to many popular gay-owned and gay-friendly restaurants such as [Geronimo's](#), [The Pink Adobe](#) and [The Coyote Cafe](#) as well as numerous hotels and Bed and Breakfasts.

### ● **Where is the nearest international airport?**

An hour's drive from Santa Fe, the [Albuquerque International Sunport](#), as the airport is officially known, is serviced by all of the major U.S. airlines.

● **Is there a wait-list?**

Yes, there is a wait-list for rentals but there are currently some resales available.

● **What is the website address?**

<http://www.rainbowvisionprop.com/santafe.html>

Sales office: (877) 795-7555

[RainbowVision Santa Fe Sales Info](#)



## **BIRDS OF A FEATHER**

11 White Hawk Trail

Pecos, NM 87552

(888) 425-3121 / (505) 757-2901

[www.flock2it.com](http://www.flock2it.com)

### **● What kind of housing is offered?**

According to the website, “Birds of a Feather was designed for active Gay and Lesbian adults looking for a place to live, play, belong and grow older with friends and neighbors... the community design concept will reflect a “spiritual journey” and reinforce connections: people to people, people to nature, and people to a specific place”

The developers envision a community designed to be complementary to the natural beauty of the surrounding area. Residents are encouraged to consider alternative building methods that are environmentally friendly.

In addition to custom designed single-family homes, there are [EcoNests](#), which normally range from 1,200 to 2,000 square feet and incorporate natural building techniques such as timber framing, straw/clay walls, earth plastering, and non-toxic finishes. Currently, there are two EcoNests completed and occupied.

Townhouse-style Casitas are single story units of approximately 1,620 square feet, on individual lots but sharing a driveway. Although there are

no common walls (the garage separates them), the units are mirror images of each other. Designed with a sustainable, conservation-focus, the casitas can be customized to include a large master bedroom, a second bedroom or office, two baths, fireplace, double garage, private courtyard and a wide range of finishes. Two finished Casitas are occupied and a third near completion.

One custom/conventional house is completed and occupied, a second close to completion and construction beginning on a third.

Plans for assisted living facilities are being considered but are not definite.

### **● Cost?**

In Phase I, lot sizes from one-fourth to approximately one acre in this 140-acre community ranged between \$60,000 and \$110,000. Custom homes prices per square foot were from \$170 to \$250, and pre-designed 1,620 square-foot casitas began under \$300,000 (lot prices not included). Due to the fluctuation in building costs, the developer was reluctant to quote Phase II prices for this report. For current cost information: [birds@flock2it.com](mailto:birds@flock2it.com)

### **● What is the age-range of the community members?**

Currently, ages range from 45-65 years old.

This community has a mixed population of men and women. Although, at this time it is 100% GLBT, Birds of a Feather does not restrict based on sexual orientation, age, race, color, religion, national origin, sex, handicap or familial status .

### **● Is the community open to both retired and working people?**

Yes. According to founder, Bonnie McGowan, "The lot owners in our community have come together even before they have begun the building process; some have purchased or rented homes in the Pecos area while building and designing homes; some fly in for social gatherings such as labor day picnics and activities or for our annual HOA meeting. We have also started a Yahoo group called "Flock News" where lot/home owners can post pictures, updates of their building process and dates that they will be

coming to visit the community. As the developer of Birds of a Feather, I found the property and created the infrastructure improvements, but it is the people that really make our community. We are very fortunate to have a fabulous group of women and men interested in really becoming great friends and neighbors!!”

Future plans include a private guest facility for women, Las Alas, "The Wings". The intention is to provide a place for weekend getaways or vacations.

**• What kind of and how far away are medical facilities and services? And are the providers gay-friendly?**

In nearby Pecos, there is ambulance service and the Pecos Valley Medical Center, a 10-minute drive from the community, offering routine care, physical exams, lab work, pharmacy and dental care. Emergency care is available during office hours only. Approximately 30 minutes away, [St. Vincent Hospital](#) in Santa Fe provides First Care and 24-hour emergency care and is the largest medical center in Northern New Mexico. Albuquerque, an 80-minute drive, has several state of the art health care facilities.

To date, no problems have been reported with any health providers.

**• What cultural activities does the community participate in?**

Nearby Santa Fe has long been a center for arts and culture. It ranks as the country's third largest art market with nearly 300 galleries and dealers. There also are more than a dozen major museums showcasing collections of art, culture, history and traditions, as well the world-class Santa Fe Opera.

**• What recreational activities are available?**

The surrounding Pecos Wilderness, the second largest wilderness region in New Mexico, offers limitless opportunities for hiking, horseback riding, camping, bird watching, fishing, boating, kayaking, backpacking, mountain climbing, cross-country or downhill skiing, white water rafting, wind surfing and hot air balloon rides.

Pending financing and county and state approval, a Community Center is planned as part of the second phase. This will include a small convenience store, exercise facilities, hobby rooms, small theater room for watching movies, lectures and classes, library, meeting rooms, kitchen, dining room and a swimming pool.

Other planned community amenities include "pocket" parks, RV storage facilities, community gardens, trails, a dog park, custom street signs, an electronic entrance gate for security and the possibility of a healing center or spa.

### • **What is the local weather?**

Four distinct seasons and over 300 days of sunshine per year. The temperatures in the summer are in the mid-50s at night to the low 90s during the day. Winter highs are in the mid-50s and the lows are in the mid-20s. Relative humidity is very low at 40 percent. The low humidity and clear skies make the climate one of the most healthful in the United States. Annual snowfall: 32 inches Annual rainfall: 14 inches. [Current Conditions](#).

### • **What is the local transportation system? Is a car necessary?**

This is a rural location with no sort of public transportation. A car is necessary.

### • **Detail the local economy, including income tax and cost of living.**

New Mexico ranks 26<sup>th</sup> in cost of living based on a state to state comparison. Taxpayers 65 and older may exempt up to \$8,000 (single), \$16,000 (joint) from any income source if their income is under \$28,500 (individual filers) or \$51,000 (married filing jointly). Combined state, county and city sales tax of 7.938%. New Mexico has one of the lowest combined state and federal tax burdens, ranking 45<sup>th</sup>.

### • **How gay-friendly is the area in general?**

Nearby Santa Fe is very gay-friendly. Each June for the last several decades the heart of Santa Fe, the Plaza, plays host to Pride on the Plaza, the Santa

Fe Gay Pride Celebration and the Santa Fe Human Rights Alliance is active year around. The city of Santa Fe itself is a leader in gay rights, offering domestic partnership benefits to its employees. From the official [City of Santa Fe website](#), “*Our streets are narrow, our minds are not*”.

● **Are there gay-owned or specifically gay-friendly bars and restaurants nearby?**

According to the developers, there are gay-friendly establishments nearby. And, of course, there is all that Santa Fe has to offer.

● **Where is the nearest international airport?**

Approximately an hour and a half away, the [Albuquerque International Sunport](#), as the airport is officially known, is serviced by all of the major U.S. airlines.

● **Is there a wait-list?**

There are currently no rental homes in the community and there is a wait-list for new sales.

● **What is the website address?**

[www.birdsofafaether.com](http://www.birdsofafaether.com)

For sales or other information: (505) 757-2901

[birds@flock2it.com](mailto:birds@flock2it.com)





## **PALMS OF MANASOTA**

P.O. Box 460

Palmetto, FL 34220

(941) 722-5858

(941) 224-1921

[www.palmsofmanasota.com](http://www.palmsofmanasota.com)

### **● What kind of housing is offered?**

The Palms is a small subdivision of single story villa homes, in clusters of two, with shared interior walls. The homes are built of stucco over concrete block on slab foundations, and surround a small lake, so each home has a water view. Phase I was 21 single family homes and is sold out.

Phase II is composed of 32 villas (condos) and they are currently for sale. Each lakefront villa is 2-bedrooms, 2-baths, with a 2-car garage.

The villa package includes appliances, some ceramic tile, kitchen cabinetry, automatic garage door, and the pre-wiring for security system, ceiling fans, home theatre, phones and internet.

Once the villas are sold-out, Phase III, the Community center and pool, will begin construction.

An assisted living facility is still being planned for the future. The community is actively looking for a builder and a management company.

## ● **Cost?**

Phase II is now available starting at \$259-279,000 depending on square footage and upgrades.

Other Fees: the Association Maintenance Fee of \$170 per month covers:

- Outdoor areas, including the mowing, trimming, edging, exterior pest control, irrigation, fertilizing of lawns and common elements.
- Maintenance of all lakes, ponds, and retention areas.
- Maintenance, repair, and replacement of common elements.
- Maintenance, replacement, and repair of all of home exteriors including painting, stucco, and roofs.
- All taxes due upon the common area property.
- All insurance on all the common area property.
- Basic Cable television.
- Mailboxes
- Repair, maintenance and replacement of roads, walkways, easements, and common elements.
- Common area electricity and lighting fixtures.

An additional fee of \$230 per month covers the Hurricane and Flood Insurance mandated by the State of Florida

TOTAL: \$400 per month

## ● **What is the age-range of the community members?**

The community does not restrict age. Currently ages range from 28 to 80, with the average being 60. Residents are both gay and lesbian, with approximately a 50/50 ratio.

## ● **Is the community open to both retired and working people?**

Palms of Manasota is open to retirees and to those still working.

## ● **What kind of and how far away are medical facilities and services? And are the providers gay-friendly?**

[Manatee Memorial Hospital](#) is ten miles away in Bradenton and the nearby town of Ellington offers hospice care. The local fire department is a block

and a half away and houses an EMS. Most of the area doctors are in Bradenton

To date, no problems have been reported with any health providers.

### ● **What cultural activities does the community participate in?**

Nearby cities of Tampa, St. Petersburg and Sarasota provide a full range of opera, ballet, theatres, and galleries to choose from. Many women in the community belong to the [Silver Threads](#) and the men belong to [Prime Timers](#). Often these organizations plan group entertainment activities. [USA Today City Guide: Tampa - St. Petersburg](#)

### ● **What recreational activities are available?**

While the community hasn't yet built its own pool and center, it hasn't stopped residents from celebrating their good fortune.

"You buy one house, but you live in all of them," said Judy Newdom, 57, who with her partner, Val Filipski, 53, moved to Palmetto from Sharon, Massachusetts in 2000.

According to the residents, not a birthday goes by without a party. [Community Calendar](#).

Each spring, the community holds their annual motorized boat race on the main lake. Members looking for a pool, tennis, a fitness center or golf, join the nearby country club.

And anyone looking for yoga or other fitness activities can go to Bradenton or St. Petersburg.

An entire coastline of beaches is only a 20 minute drive from the community. For example, Anna Maria Island is due west, and the Fort DeSoto State Park is 20 minutes to the north. Drive just a bit further north, and you'll find St. Petersburg Beach.

### ● **What is the local weather?**

This area of Florida has two basic seasons: rainy and dry. The dry season is its mild winter, with daytime temperatures in the 70-80s, and very little rain. Summers bring lots of humidity, afternoon thunderstorms, and heat in the 90s every day. [Current conditions.](#)

### ● **What is the local transportation system? Is a car necessary?**

Community transportation takes the form of carpools. Ask anyone for a ride somewhere and you've got it.

A city bus stop is nearby but you really need a car.

### ● **Detail the local economy, including income tax and cost of living.**

Florida has no state income tax making it attractive to retirees. Residents report the local economy seems slower than the previous year and is similar to other parts of the country, except for gasoline taxes. Generally, they are higher in Florida. Real estate taxes have gone down and currently a 1,429 square foot villa is assessed at \$3600 for the year.

### ● **How gay-friendly is the area in general?**

Although this is not a gated community, the Palms of Manasota has rarely experienced any sort of problems. The neighbors appreciate the fact that the development has increased their property value.

### ● **Are there gay-owned or specifically gay-friendly bars and restaurants nearby?**

Tampa, St. Petersburg and Sarasota all offer gay dining and nightlife opportunities.

### ● **Where is the nearest international airport?**

[Sarasota Bradenton International Airport](#) (12 miles)...[Tampa International Airport](#) (41 miles)...[Saint Petersburg-Clearwater International](#) (33 miles)

● **Is there a wait-list?**

Currently, there is not a wait-list.

● **What is the website address?**

[www.palmsofmanasota.com](http://www.palmsofmanasota.com)

Sales Info: [Info@PalmsOfManasota.com](mailto:Info@PalmsOfManasota.com)

Community Website: [www.palmsofmanasota.org](http://www.palmsofmanasota.org)



## **BARBARY LANE COMMUNITY**

**1800 Madison Street**

**Oakland, CA 94612**

**(510) 903-3600**

**(866) 450-5428**

**[www.barbarylansenior.com](http://www.barbarylansenior.com)**

### **• What kind of housing is offered?**

Set on Lake Merritt and located in Lake Merritt Hotel, a first class hotel, in a renovated 1927 art deco building on the lake, Barbary Lane Community offers studio or parlor suites (one floor plan), and one bedroom suites (two floor plans). The 46 units range from 506 square feet to 705 square feet, with 9 foot ceilings, crown molding, granite countertops and updated, full-size kitchens. Almost all units have skyline or lake views, walk-in closets, or alcoves. Pet are permitted.

Interestingly, the community and many of the amenities are named after characters and places in Armistead Maupin's famed novels *Tales of the City*.

The hotel also houses an on-site restaurant named for Maupin's character, Anna Madrigal. [Madrigal's Terrace Room](#) is known for its use of local, seasonal produce and locally grown and vinted organic wines.

Limited on-site parking is available.

## **Cost?**

Rents are \$3,295-\$4700 per month and include (from website):

- Friendly, Attentive, and Uniquely Trained Staff
- 24 Hour Front Desk attendant
- All utilities usage including Electrical, gas, heating, water
- Individual Apartment home controlled Steam Heat
- Fabulous Restaurant Dining Choices and Meal Program
- Terrace Dining with “Residents First Priority Service”
- Concierge Services Including assistance with Travel and Personal Appointments
- 32 Channel Satellite Cable TV Service
- Weekly Housekeeping and Bed Make-up Service
- Weekly Bed Linen and Bath Laundry Service
- Washer and dryer for resident use
- In-home electronic safe
- Private use of The Barbary Spa Retreat Center
- Community Newspaper Service
- Community Movie Nights
- Everyday Group Fitness Program
- Community Gardening Programs
- Scheduled Transportation to shopping and healthcare appointments in our private accessible community van
- Scheduled Computer Support Services
- Community Events Activities & Entertainment
- Complimentary and Priority Access to all Barbary Lane Community Events
- Weekly Educational Activities and Brain Fit Program™
- Complimentary Annual Health and Wellness Portfolio Planning

Many other [optional amenities and services](#) are available. On-site parking incurs an additional fee.

● **What is the age-range of the community members?**

Unable to verify this information at time of publishing.

● **Is the community open to both retired and working people?**

Unable to verify this information at time of publishing.

● **What kind of and how far away are medical facilities and services? And are the providers gay-friendly?**

[The Alta Bates Summit Medical Center](#) in Oakland is just minutes away. It is the East Bay area's largest private not-for-profit medical center, ranked in the top 5% in the nation for overall clinical care.

[Kaiser Permanente Medical Center](#) is also nearby in Oakland with 324 beds and a commitment to GLBT sensitivity.

The community also collaborates with the [Pacific Institute on Aging](#) and the [Institute on Aging](#) to bring the community programs that support emotional well-being.

To date, no problems have been reported with any health providers.

● **What cultural activities does the community participate in?**

Limited only by members' imagination, activities include: trips to the annual GLBT film festival, the annual Gay Pride Parade, the Symphony at the gorgeous Paramount Theatre just blocks away, the annual Queer Film Festival, the Oakland Museum of California and the nearby Public Library.

Accommodating even the most diverse tastes, the community hosts speakers on GLBT relevant topics, Scrabble night by the fireplace in the family room, wine-tasting and Texas Hold 'em poker. Available are a computer center with free email and internet access, use of the community town car and van for local outings (like the nearby Tuesday night bowling league), 24-hour concierge, a community garden which practices water conservation and pesticide-free methods.

Plus there are neighborhood galleries, bookstores, latte shops, Starbucks, Whole Foods, three weekly farmer's markets, the Gourmet Ghetto and the famous 114-year-old Oakland landmark, Fenton's Creamery.



And, of course, just across the Bay --- San Francisco!

### ● **What recreational activities are available?**

An on-site fitness facility includes exercise area, yoga and ta'i chi classes, and cardio and balance equipment. Gondola rides and boat rentals are available on Lake Merritt; you can find public tennis courts nearby; biking, walking, and running trails around the lake; picnicking at the lake which is surrounded by acres of park (Lake Merritt was named America's first wildlife sanctuary in 1869 and the bird watching is first rate), Berkeley Bowl, and the City Center Pedestrian Mall.

All that San Francisco offers sits across the bay. And the Pacific Ocean is within driving distance.

You can also take classes at Laney Community College and use the in-house [Brain Fitness Program](#).

### ● **What is the local weather?**

Mild summers (60's) and cool winters (50's). September is the warmest month with an average maximum daytime temperature of 74 degrees. January checks in with the coldest average minimum temperature at 44 degrees. It rains only enough to bring about 23 inches of precipitation per yr. [Historical Data and Current Conditions](#).

### ● **What is the local transportation system? Is a car necessary?**

[BART](#) (Bay Area Rapid Transit) is the public transportation system connecting the Bay Area. But this is California, so a car is an advantage. The community does provide access to a car and a community van for outings, which is included in the monthly rental fee.

### ● **Detail the local economy, including income tax and cost of living.**

California does charge a state income tax which currently is 9.3% per year for the highest income bracket, and 1.0% for the lowest. The median family

income is \$50,702. The local sales tax is 8.80%. And the median home price is \$551,431.

● **How gay-friendly is the area in general?**

Very. According to census figures, the Bay Area is the number one metropolitan area for gay and lesbian couples in the nation; they make up 2.04 percent of all couples which is about twice the national rate. Oakland is ranked as #3 for its combined gay and lesbian population among the nation's top 50 cities

● **Are there gay-owned or specifically gay-friendly bars and restaurants nearby?**

In Oakland: Bench and Bar; Cabel's Reef; White Horse; In nearby Hayward: Rainbow Room and Turf Club. Also many others nearby, particularly in San Francisco. [GayCities](#)

● **Where is the nearest international airport?**

Barbary Lane is only a 20 minute drive from [Oakland International Airport](#).

● **Is there a wait-list?**

Unable to verify this information at time of publishing.

● **What is the website address?**

[www.barbarylanesenior.com](http://www.barbarylanesenior.com)

For Sales or Tour Information:

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