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## Escaping the City: America's Hottest Neighborhoods of 2021

**Vacation towns and suburbs outside major coastal cities are on the rise as remote work drives Americans to seek out space, solitude and affordability during the coronavirus pandemic**

SEATTLE, Dec. 15, 2020 /PRNewswire/ -- (NASDAQ: RDFN) — Resort towns and suburbs like California's Lake Tahoe and New Jersey's Washington Township are gaining ground with homebuyers as major coastal cities like San Francisco and Philadelphia offer fewer benefits during the pandemic, according to a new [report](#) from Redfin ([redfin.com](#)), the technology-powered real estate brokerage. Redfin analyzed and ranked the 10 hottest neighborhoods of 2021, which all have one thing in common: they're offering American homebuyers respite from crowded, costly cities. The neighborhoods are:



1. Lake Tahoe, CA
2. Chester/Andover, VT
3. Big Bear, CA
4. Stratford, NJ
5. Sebago Lake, ME
6. Lakes Region, NH
7. Fall River, MA
8. Somerdale, NJ
9. Washington Township, NJ
10. Mountain House, CA

Each place on this year's list is located outside but within driving distance of at least one of the following coastal hubs: New York City, Boston, Philadelphia, San Francisco or Los Angeles. The majority of the top 10 neighborhoods have seen double-digit growth in home sales and housing values over the past year, and most are relatively affordable, with a median home price below the national level of \$336,000.

Redfin ranked U.S. zip codes by year-over-year growth in listing views on Redfin.com and Redfin Compete Score—a measure of how difficult it is to win a home based on factors including days on market, share of homes that sold above their listing prices and sale-to-list price ratio. In addition to the top 10, Redfin also named the hottest neighborhoods of 2021 in

each metro area.

A handful of places on the top 10 list, including California's Lake Tahoe and the Lakes Region of New Hampshire, were already popular vacation getaways that are now attracting affluent city dwellers who are working from home during the pandemic. Other locations in the ranking, such as Mountain House, California and Washington Township, NJ, are luring families who want backyards and extra bedrooms while staying relatively close to major metropolitan areas.

"Remote work is allowing Americans to live where they actually want to live. People are no longer tied to the cities where their offices are located," said Redfin Chief Economist Daryl Fairweather. "Some folks are buying second homes in resort towns while others are moving to family-friendly suburbs where they can get more bang for their buck."

The pandemic will eventually come to an end, but suburbs and vacation towns will likely remain popular among homebuyers, Fairweather added.

"You can't put the genie back in the bottle," Fairweather said. "Many Americans have learned that they can be productive working from home. If their employer asks them to return to the office in the city five days a week, they can find a new employer."

Below are Redfin's 10 hottest neighborhoods for 2021. All data represents October 2020.

### **1. Lake Tahoe, CA**

**Zip code:** 96145

**Median sale price:** \$945,000 (+28% YoY)

**Median days on market:** 48 (-25 days YoY)

**Change in home sales:** +87% YoY

**Change in median views per listing:** +280% YoY

**Share of homes that sold above list price** 36%

"The Lake Tahoe housing market is hotter than ever. People are coming from San Francisco in droves and they're bringing their Bay Area salaries with them—everyone here drives a Tesla now," said Redfin real estate agent Jaime Moore. "City folks have decided that if they have to work from home and shelter in place, they might as well do it in the mountains. In their mind, Lake Tahoe is affordable because they can buy a second home with three bedrooms and two bathrooms for \$750,000. In the Bay Area, they'd be lucky to find a one-bedroom condo for that price."

### **2. Chester/Andover, VT**

**Zip code:** 05143

**Median sale price:** \$281,250 (+34% YoY)

**Median days on market:** 83 (-42 days YoY)

**Change in home sales:** +60% YoY

**Change in median views per listing:** +267% YoY

**Share of homes that sold above list price** 15%

Founded in 1761, Chester is nestled in the mountains of southern Vermont. It's home to 3,144 residents, while the neighboring, rural village of Andover has a population of about 500. The area is surrounded by seven major ski resorts and offers access to dozens of

hiking, biking and snowmobiling trails. Chester's historic buildings are one of the village's main attractions, according to Town Manager Julie Hance, who said that Chester has seen an influx of new residents since the pandemic began.

"Young families are buying homes and moving here because parents can work remotely and it's just safer than the city. ... Our kids still ride their bikes to school without their parents," said Hance, who noted that Chester tends to attract homebuyers from New York and Connecticut. "People are buying properties sight-unseen right now, which is not usually the case here."

### **3. Big Bear, CA**

**Zip code:** 92386

**Median sale price:** \$220,000 (+9% YoY)

**Median days on market:** 35 (-34 days YoY)

**Change in home sales:** +79% YoY

**Change in median views per listing:** +255% YoY

**Share of homes that sold above list price** 50%

"Big Bear is a sleepy mountain town about two hours east of Los Angeles. It has a lot of biker bars, quaint shops, little restaurants and log cabins," said Redfin agent Tara Huston. "It's a fun place to rent an Airbnb, have a family get together and play in the snow. There's also a lake, which attracts vacationers in the summer."

### **4. Stratford, NJ**

**Zip code:** 08084

**Median sale price:** \$200,500 (+8% YoY)

**Median days on market:** 19 (-35 days YoY)

**Change in home sales:** +17% YoY

**Change in median views per listing:** +254% YoY

**Share of homes that sold above list price** 41%

"Stratford is a cute little area bordering Gloucester Township, which is a half-hour drive to Philly and minutes from the Atlantic City Expressway that goes to the Jersey Shore," said Redfin agent Jackie Imperato. "The neighborhood is full of affordable homes that are great for first-time buyers. Flippers have been buying up Stratford's outdated houses and rehabilitating them, so young couples are getting 90-year-old homes that feel brand new for less than what they were paying for rent in the city."

### **5. Sebago Lake, ME**

**Zip code:** 04084

**Median sale price:** \$324,895 (+18% YoY)

**Median days on market:** 8 (-21 days YoY)

**Change in home sales:** +32% YoY

**Change in median views per listing:** +254% YoY

**Share of homes that sold above list price** 44%

"Sebago Lake is quintessential, beautiful New England. There's gorgeous hiking and foliage, and mountains all around the lake. In the winter, people ice fish," said Redfin agent Megan McShane. "Out-of-state money is pouring in. I'm seeing a lot of buyers from Boston, New York and Connecticut. These are folks who always liked the idea of having a second home,

but it wasn't feasible until now because they were always tied to the office."

McShane continued: "I've never seen the market for lake houses this competitive. One of my clients missed out on two homes with five other bids after offering \$50,000 over the asking price and waiving the appraisal and inspection contingencies. Another client went under contract for a \$620,000 home that the owners had purchased for \$400,000 in January and put no additional work into. Sellers are price gouging because buyers are paying. Buyers know the homes are overpriced, but they just want one so bad."

## **6. Lakes Region, NH**

**Zip code:** 03253

**Median sale price:** \$500,000 (+33% YoY)

**Median days on market:** 49 (-36 days YoY)

**Change in home sales:** +11% YoY

**Change in median views per listing:** +234% YoY

**Share of homes that sold above list price** 44%

"Normally, a lot of New England families leave the area when they go on vacation. This year, they're sticking around and vacationing in the Lakes Region instead. They'll spend a week at Lake Winnepesaukee and love it so much that they'll put in an offer on a home," said Redfin agent Julia Martinage. "The Lakes Region has always been a hotspot, but it's even hotter this year because no one can travel far. There are a lot of really quaint towns with cute ice cream shops and proximity to ski resorts. And in the summer, there's hiking, paddleboarding, boating and kayaking."

Martinage continued: "Folks from Boston, New Jersey and New York are also buying second homes in the Lakes Region so they can escape the city for the weekend and eventually retire here. But there's very little inventory, especially for lake homes. If you're looking for water frontage, it will likely cost you at least \$1 million, unless it's a condo. And million-dollar homes are getting multiple offers—sometimes as many as six or more. Most successful buyers are waiving every contingency."

## **7. Fall River, MA**

**Zip code:** 02723

**Median sale price:** \$315,000 (+17% YoY)

**Median days on market:** 23 (-32 days YoY)

**Change in home sales:** +6% YoY

**Change in median views per listing:** +242% YoY

**Share of homes that sold above list price** 67%

"Fall River is definitely an up-and-coming city. A lot of investors are buying homes here because the local transportation authority is building a train line that will go directly into Boston," said Redfin agent Alysandra Nemeth. "The area is full of big, old, colonial homes that have been converted into three-unit apartments. Oftentimes, owners will live in one of the units and rent out the other two to help pay their mortgage."

Nemeth continued: "Almost all of my buyers are coming from Boston. Everyone is trying to get out of the city, and they can get more for their money in Fall River. Each offer I write for a client competes with a minimum of three other bids, and homes are selling for at least the asking price, if not a little more. This is partly because inventory is so low—there are way

more buyers than listings."

#### **8. Somerdale, NJ**

**Zip code:** 08083

**Median sale price:** \$220,000 (+25% YoY)

**Median days on market:** 18 (-37 days YoY)

**Change in home sales:** +24% YoY

**Change in median views per listing:** +244% YoY

**Share of homes that sold above list price** 52%

"Somerdale, like Stratford, borders Gloucester Township. People come to this area because they can get a lot of bang for their buck—\$300,000 will buy a beautiful 4-bedroom, 2.5-bathroom home with a basement. The area has shopping, restaurants, decent schools, and proximity to Philly and the Jersey Shore," said Redfin agent Jackie Imperato. "I'm seeing buyers move here from Philly because they're tired of not being able to find parking and paying \$400,000 for a tiny two-by-four apartment. They're looking for an affordable spot that's no more than 20 minutes from the city in case they need to start commuting to work again. And then you have the locals who grew up here, love being in New Jersey and have parents here, so they're buying houses here too."

#### **9. Washington Township, NJ**

**Zip code:** 08012

**Median sale price:** \$215,000 (+14% YoY)

**Median days on market:** 20 (-42 days YoY)

**Change in home sales:** +14% YoY

**Change in median views per listing:** +241% YoY

**Share of homes that sold above list price** 51%

"Any home that goes on the market in Washington Township is getting seven to 10 offers within hours. We're seeing such an influx of people coming from North Jersey and Philadelphia," said Redfin agent Jackie Imperato. "It's a very friendly, affordable suburb with great school districts. It's also home to the Jefferson Washington Township Hospital, a major employer in the area that's continuing to expand and bring on more doctors and nurses."

#### **10. Mountain House, CA**

**Zip code:** 95391

**Median sale price:** \$712,500 (+23% YoY)

**Median days on market:** 6 (-42 days YoY)

**Change in home sales:** -15% YoY

**Change in median views per listing:** +265% YoY

**Share of homes that sold above list price** 79%

Mountain House is a planned community in California's Central Valley, roughly 60 miles east of San Francisco. It's divided into a dozen "villages" that have their own K-8 schools and unique architectural styles. The school district, known as one of the most highly rated in the area, is the main draw for most families, according to Redfin agent Ali Schneider.

"Mountain House was hot before the pandemic, and now it's even hotter," she said. "People were already moving out here because of the highly rated schools, and now we're seeing even more families relocate to the area because Silicon Valley is shut down. They want

more space and a backyard, and Mountain House offers that for a much better price. Plus, everything is new and modern; the local high school looks like a college."

To view the full report, including a list of the hottest neighborhoods in each metro area, please visit: <https://www.redfin.com/news/hottest-neighborhoods-2021>

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