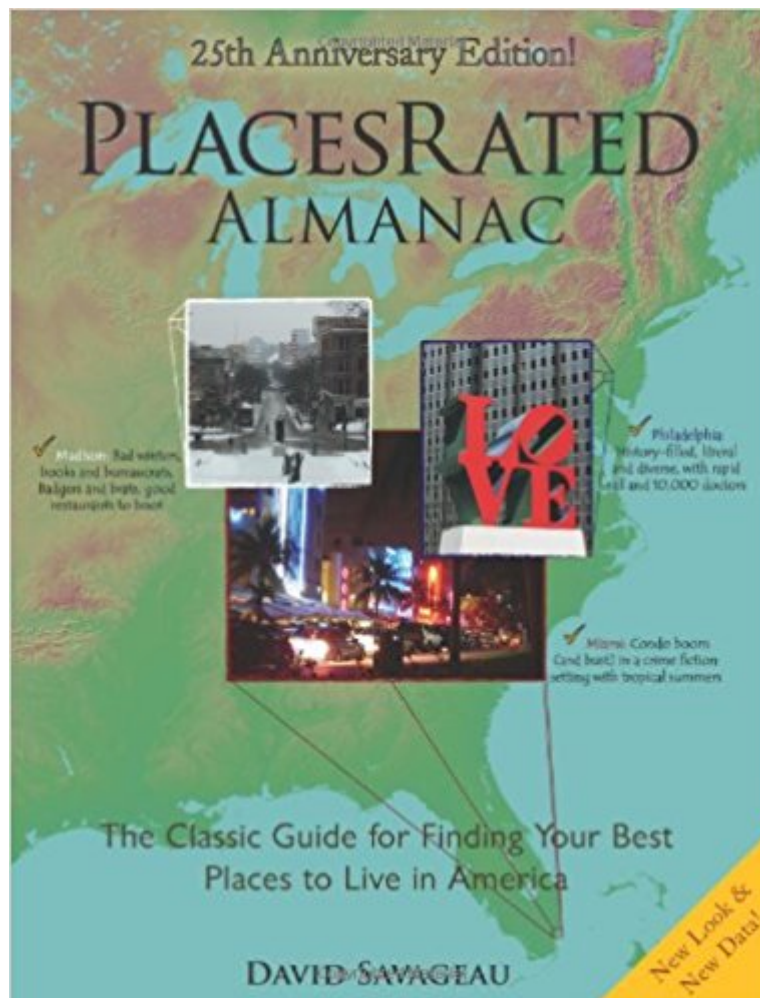




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Places Rated Almanac: The Classic Guide For Finding Your Best Places To Live In America



Synopsis

In this unique reference, every one of America's 379 metropolitan areas is rated by factors that are important to anyone considering a move. Divided into nine thoroughly researched main topics, this guide derives its information as much from private sources as government sources, providing a well-rounded description of all that each metro area has to offer: ambience, housing, jobs, crime, transportation, education, health care, recreation, and climate. With a personalized quiz to help determine the most important factors of an area, this ratings sourcebook provides a wealth of information for those looking to move and the armchair traveler alike.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Looking to live somewhere where houses are cheap? Head to Waterloo-Cedar Falls, Iowa, where the average home costs \$75,700, and annual property taxes for that home are about \$960. Perhaps a good job market is a higher priority. In that case, pick Phoenix, Arizona; Las Vegas, Nevada; or Riverside, California, as they top the list of places projected to have the highest-percentage increase in new jobs by 2005. Most of those jobs, by the way, are expected to have above-average pay. This and other detailed information can be found in the sixth edition of Places Rated Almanac, a helpful resource for people thinking of relocating as well as those with a desire to learn about cities and towns. Metropolitan areas are rated in nine categories: costs of living, job outlook, transportation, education, health care, crime, the arts, recreation, and climate. But don't go looking for statistics on Podunk--the focus remains on 354 metro areas, metro defined as a city or urbanized

population of at least 50,000, located in a county with a total population of at least 100,000. Places Rated is laced with intelligent and, unexpectedly, witty writing. The whole concept of judging places, the author notes, may seem the utmost of brass. "Yet everyone does it, privately. Some suspect that culture in Omaha or Des Moines or Saskatoon is a contradiction. Others surmise that daily life in Miami consists of surviving drug-trade shoot-outs..." Organized intelligently, Places Rated acknowledges that "livability" and "quality of life" are moving targets. Livable for whom? The artist who wants mountain vistas? The entrepreneur who wants low taxes and no red tape? With these limitations in mind, the book ends with a chapter titled "Putting It All Together," where the reader is invited to rate cities with a customized list of priorities. Arriving at your customized list, however, requires answering 72 questions that force you to decide once and for all what you value most--a low cost of living or good school districts or mild winters or some other criterion. And should you find that climate matters most, head for Santa Barbara, California, where winters and summers are mild and natural hazards are few, and stay away from Rochester, Minnesota, unless you're willing to endure 35 days when it's 0 degrees Fahrenheit, and 165 days of 32 degrees Fahrenheit, annually.

--John Russell --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"Part fodder for trivia contests, part handbook for people and businesses seeking new homes, this perennial best seller offers everything." *—The New York Times* "A ratings bible for companies and people looking to move to America's nicest cities." *—Denver Post* "[Rating places] goes back to the venerable Places Rated Almanac, which has surveyed metropolitan areas since 1981." *—Los Angeles Times* "The most famous of the 'quality of life' guidebooks." *—Orange County Register* "One of the most well-established and popular sources for measuring quality of life." *—Newsday* "Every two years the publication of Places Rated Almanac sets off a round of preening from mayors of winning cities and huffing and puffing from the losers." *—The Times* "A splendid compendium of facts about nearly every urban area in the United States. The armchair geographer can spend hours, perhaps days, browsing through this statistical smorgasbord and uncovering nuggets such as those mentioned here." *—Omaha World Herald* "Place ratings can be traced to the publication in the U.S. of Places Rated Almanac (1981). This best selling publication . . . appealed to companies interested in business or family moves." *—Urban Studies*

I purchased this book, and not for the first time, when my wife and I set off in January 2010 in an RV, looking for a new place to call home. The almanac's concept is a good one: It breaks down all

that make one city more "livable" than another, such as climate, housing costs, transportation, crime, and so on, then determines criteria in which to evaluate the different metropolitan areas around the United States. In some areas, the statistics are fairly cut and dried, in others, there's plenty of room for interpretation. If not for the crash of December 2007, this almanac would still be very valuable. But the changes have been so great in the last few years that the almanac is rendered useless in some areas. In the areas of climate, crime, health care, education and transportation, it is still pretty accurate. But the information that may matter most to you (it does to us!) about the outlook for job prospects and housing costs, have become nearly useless. For instance, the first statistic under housing is the increase in average home values between 1st quarter 2000 and 4th quarter 2006. You can imagine how useless this information is, since in the last five years, some areas have suffered a drastic loss in home values. If you are looking to relocate, I would still purchase this guide while keeping in mind the areas in which this guide is still relevant, and which areas it isn't. And consider other resources- some magazines will do a "Best Places to Live" article from time to time.

I am very well traveled and this book got good reviews but it leaves out important things like pollution and inversion for western mountain states and certain Western mountainous regions having a propensity for wildfires

If you are looking for a tool to teach you how to do the necessary research to find a good group of cities, then this is a good book for you. I just wish the data was a bit more up to date-- they don't publish these books as often as they need to-- especially since the "real estate boom & bust" in U. S. real estate. I would recommend, but with the cautions mentioned above. The data is very detailed and put into logical categories and the format is easy to understand. As I said, the book needs updating, but the research is always solid by this author.

Packed full of info.... crime, weather, education, health care, the arts, recreation and more. The book is big and will take a lot of going through, but the information is laid out good and is easily accessible. I really loved this book. I purchased other books along with this one for my husband and I as we start to plan our retirement (that is about 11 years away).... and although I know information might change, it gives us a starting point as to where we think we might want to spend our golden years.

It met my expectations as I've used this publication before; however, either I misunderstood or the publishing date was incorrect as I expected it to be more current and it's from '07

This book rates 354 metropolitan areas across the United States. It is an outstanding reference for municipal managers, planners, developers, or businesses to see how a given community stacks up against others around the nation. The authors rate a variety of community factors including crime, job growth, and education. Additionally, the book (although dated) can provide a quick "order of magnitude" estimate of the comparative size of various populated areas. Since a great deal of the information is census based, I anticipate another edition coming out in the next year or so. I find this book to be very helpful at putting the size and demographics of communities in perspective with the rest of the country.

The best resource that I know of to objectively compare the various metropolitan areas within the US. The comparison covers nine different areas: ambience, housing, jobs, recreation, transportation, health care, education, climate and crime. It also has a preference questionnaire, to enable the reader to determine the relative importance to the reader that each of these nine areas has. I am looking forward to purchasing an updated version of this almanac when it is available.

Want to make a big move in this beautiful country? Unsure which portion of the West Coast you would like to be? Does the weather mean more to you than the length of your commute? Do potential jobs matter more than sports teams? Then this is your tool!! I have moved cross country a number of times. I am looking to do it again in the next year. I want a good clue of what to expect without having to spend money on airline tickets and spending months on research of the local economy. This book has it all... How much will housing cost me? How bad is the crime? Will I be living with the heater on for 6 months and the a/c the other six months of the year? I would never plan a move again without these books (this is my third edition.)

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