

Top 16 Countries Where Americans Buy Property Abroad

Americans look overseas to stretch retirement dollars, find investment opportunities or simply have fun. See if you agree with their top choices for buying property.

[Jim Gold](#) • May 2, 2018



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Whether you're seeking an exotic vacation getaway, a locale to stretch your retirement dollars, cultural enrichment or just a good investment opportunity, you might consider buying land outside the United States.

But how do you decide where?

“Economic, fiscal, political and cultural factors weigh just as much as price points,” says Angelo Cinel, CEO of [WIRE consulting](#), which specializes in international real estate investment services.

A recent WIRE survey revealed Americans' top picks for foreign countries and what made them appealing. Other analysts also have weighed in.

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Take a look and see if you find these destinations calling your name:

1. Mexico



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“This is the top place where Americans emigrate to, especially after retirement,” Cinel said.

Besides lower living costs, they find a familiar environment as English becomes a second language in Mexico and supermarkets stock their favorite brands.

Tourists stay for long periods, driving the need for rental properties. So you might buy a home for personal use or to rent out.

Where to look: Tulum, Cancun, Playa del Carmen, Cabo San Lucas, Acapulco and La Paz

2. Costa Rica



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Americans purchase holiday homes in this nation often with the prospect of living there after retirement, Cinel said.

They find the average cost of living lower than in the States. Costa Rica is close by and has good airline connections, a high-quality health care system and a crime rate lower than other parts of Central America, he said.

Where to look: Herradura Beach, Dominical, Uvita, Tamarindo Beach, the Papagayo Peninsula, and Escazu and Santa Ana, which are suburbs of the capital, San Jose

3. Canada



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Canada's familiarity, English-language use and proximity help make our northern neighbor a hit with Americans.

The country's real estate market and economy are growing, Cinel said. Although many buyers seek property as an investment, some look at areas neighboring ski resorts for personal use.

Where to look: Vancouver, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, Whistler

4. Philippines



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Lower living costs, properties available at reasonable prices and many English-speaking Filipinos are factors that contribute to the allure of the Philippines for Americans.

Cinel said it's easy to rent properties to tourists. You can find a perfect pied-a-terre for holidays, when many Americans visit.

Where to look: Manila, Makati and Cebu

5. United Kingdom



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A common language and historic connections help Americans feel familiar with the United Kingdom, Cinel said.

A stable economy and real estate market, especially in London, make it attractive for buyers seeking property as an investment.

Where to look: London

6. Spain



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You can find properties at reasonable prices whether you focus on a place for personal use or a buy-to-let deal, Cinel said.

“It’s very easy to rent out properties to tourists in popular locations, he said.

Where to look: Barcelona, Madrid and the Balearic Islands, especially Ibiza and Palma de Mallorca

7. France



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This is where Americans go when they follow their hearts, Cinel said.

You'll find property in France reasonably priced, he said. Most Americans buy with personal use in mind, but some are seeking an investment.

Where to look: Paris, Cote d'Azur (French Riviera) and Bordeaux

8. Italy



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Your heart may also drive you to Italy, where Americans favor historic and art destinations such as Rome, Venice and Florence as well as the whole of the region of Tuscany, Cinel said.

Besides different cultural and art offerings, Italy's geography offers you the chance to choose a reasonably priced seaside, hill, lake or mountain home.



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Most people buy for personal use but sometimes also as an investment, he said.

Where to look: Venice, Rome, Tuscany, Costa Smeralda and Lake Como

9. Panama



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Low taxes and low living costs may lure you to Panama, Cinel said.

As with Costa Rica, the mentality and lifestyle found in Panama are among the most familiar to Americans, he said.

Direct airline connections ease access. Buyers purchase properties as investments and for personal use, especially after retirement.

Where to look: Panama City

10. Bahamas



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You'll find it easy to obtain a residency permit in this English-speaking, income-tax-free country, Cinel said.

American buyers purchase properties both as investment and for personal use, especially after retirement, as it's close to the States.

Where to look: Nassau and Freeport

11. Germany



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A solid economy and effervescent real estate market, especially in Berlin, attract American investors, Cinel said.

Many make buy-to-let investments in Germany, but you might also invest there to join Americans moving to the European country.

Where to look: Berlin, Frankfurt and Munich

12. Brazil



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If you like gorgeous sandy beaches, look at Brazil.

Lower prices and an improving economy are bringing buyers back, says a recent report in [The New York Times](#).

A 40-percent drop in the value of the Brazilian real against the dollar is making property affordable for Americans, the Times reports.

The northeast coast is attracting many foreign buyers, while culture and history lure many to the southeast.

Where to look: Natal, Fortaleza and Sao Paulo

13. China



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If you want to buy property in China, plan on living there.

“Individual foreign buyers need to demonstrate that they have worked in China for at least a year and are buying the residence for self use,” Anthony Couse, managing director in the Shanghai office of global real estate consultancy Jones Lang LaSalle, told Western Union.

You’ll join expats enjoying the country’s rich history and economic growth mainly in Tier 1 and Tier 2 cities, as ranked by the government and based on population and economic activity.

Where to look: Shanghai, Beijing, Shenzhen, Chengdu, Chongqing, Hangzhou, Suzhou and Nanjing

14. Belize



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Because English is this former British colony’s native language, you may find this Central American nation an attractive destination as a retiree, for a second home or for incoming-producing rental property, The New York Times reports.

Tourists flock to its massive Belize Barrier Reef, dotted with hundreds of low-lying cayes (islands) hosting rich marine life, and its jungles, home to Mayan ruins.

Where to look: San Ignacio, the rest of the Cayo District and Placencia

15. Colombia



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Low prices and great weather year-round may lure you to join foreigners attracted to this South American country as its image recovers from a past of drug lords and revolutionaries.

Many enjoy the country's rich history from coastal Caribbean cities with cobblestone streets and colonial architecture to mountain cities, according to various publications.

Where to look: Cartagena, Bogota and Medellin

16. Jamaica



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If you like white sandy beaches, dolphin- and whale-watching, scuba diving and snorkeling, along with a vibrant night life, try the English-speaking island nation that is attracting second-home owners and retirees in the luxury market.

Many foreign buyers are Americans, [The New York Times reports](#).

It's also the home of reggae music, of course.

Where to look: Montego Bay and Kingston

Where would you like to buy property abroad? Share your thoughts with us in comments below or on our [Facebook page](#).