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Westchester's most well-heeled homes

A look at the top residential listings in New York City's ritziest suburban county

By C.J. Hughes



151 Sarles Street, Mount Kisco; Photography courtesy of Renwick Sotheby's International Realty

With the dawn of the school year, a new crop of children is enrolling in public schools in Westchester County, many of them likely transplants from New York.

Unhappy with their choices in Manhattan, parents often relocate to this tonv leafy suburb to

Westchester's most well-heeled homes

Unhappy with their choices in Manhattan, parents often relocate to this leafy, leafy suburb to educate their kids for the price of a property tax-bill, rather than fork over private-school tuition in the city (See Luxury Listings NYC's story on private school tuition on page 22).

But other reasons compel buyers to pack their bags. Indeed, as LLNYC found in its round-up of the top five most expensive Westchester properties currently being marketed for sale, these homes rival their co-op and condo equivalents in the city in terms of elegance and over-the-top finishes — and with many more rooms, and lawns, to boot.

Mostly located along the I-684 belt, where zoning tends to allow for roomier spreads than in other areas, these trophy properties often pack in docks, ponds and tennis courts, and maybe even a green on which to practice a putt. Urban dwellers usually associate these types of features with their summer retreats in the Hamptons, brokers say, but in Westchester County, which fans out from the Long Island Sound and the Hudson River, they can be enjoyed at home for many more months.

Still, Westchester isn't exactly a bargain-hunter's paradise. In fact, it's the priciest New York suburb. The median value of an owner-occupied house is \$518,000, according to 2009-to-2013 census figures.

In contrast, Nassau County, on Long Island, has a median of \$455,000, the data show, and Bergen County, on the Hudson in New Jersey, is \$451,000. Meanwhile, the median in Fairfield County, in southwestern Connecticut, is \$432,000.

Then again, considering Westchester's high-income levels, the steep home values may make sense: The median household income as of 2013 was \$82,000, according to census figures.

In the same vein, socializing can seem to revolve around elite members-only institutions, from the Larchmont Yacht Club, in Larchmont, to the Willow Ridge Country Club, in Harrison, among many others. Naturally, well-heeled celebrities have also gravitated to the area, particularly to Bedford, where secluded estates tucked into winding, woodsy roads shelter Michael Douglas, Richard Gere and Bruce Willis.

Notable restaurants include Blue Hill at Stone Barns, among the pioneers of the farm-to-table trend, which is found at Tarrytown's Rockefeller family compound. And the Westchester mall in White Plains offers a Manhattan-style bevy of stores, such as Burberry, Swarovski and Apple, as well as some that haven't even made it to New York yet, like Neiman Marcus.

Though public schools in places like Scarsdale, Pelham and Chappaqua are top notch, those with deep-enough pockets may choose private alternatives, like the Hackley School, a kindergarten-to-12th-grade prep school in Tarrytown.

Property taxes, though, can be significant at those big-ticket homes, featured below:

\$23M**151 Sarles Street, Mount Kisco**

9 bedrooms; 12 full and 2 half-baths; 20,600 square feet

Dating to 1930, this nine-bedroom Georgian called Glenclyff, which is listed at \$23 million and is the county's priciest property, boasts a traditional red-brick exterior. But its rooms are unequivocally modern. A sinuous white staircase, for instance, twists up along a wall; the kitchen's fireplace is sheathed in ridged metal. Appliances are stainless steel, and a deep soaking tub under a flat-screen TV makes up the master bath. The mansion sits on 25 acres off a stone wall-lined street near Bedford Corners, a retail area. Extras include an outdoor pool, tennis court and garage with enough space for seven cars. Try finding that perk in the city.

\$22M**408 Grace Church Street, Rye**

6 bedrooms; 6 full and 3 half-baths; 10,400 square feet





Photography courtesy of Julia B. Fee Sotheby's International Realty

Boaters will find much to like at this 1994 waterfront shingle-style home. Not only does the house offer numerous views of where the Byram River empties into Long Island Sound near the Connecticut border in the “down county” area, but it also sports its own dock accessed from a grassy peninsula. Also found on the 4.5 acres are a rolling lawn and tennis court. In the summer, splash around in an outdoor pool with views of anchored boats; in the winter, an indoor version offers a similar nautical vista.



Photography by Drew Dies of ImaginationTV and Stanley Jesudowich

\$19.9M

17 Cowdray Park Drive, Armonk

6 bedrooms; 10 full and two half-baths; 19,400 square feet

Former New York Knick Allan Houston custom-built this gray-stone chateau-inspired house, which offers an outdoor pool, home theater and putting green, as well as a half-size basketball court, naturally. A gym also seems professional-grade. Located in Conyers Farms, a rural gated community on the Greenwich border where the minimum zoning is 10 acres, Houston's house does have a sizeable tax bill: \$181,000 a year. But the land is heavily wooded and private, and there's a large body of water, Converse Lake, a free throw's distance away.

\$19.9

9 Holly Branch Road, Katonah

6 bedrooms; 8 full and 4 half-baths; 21,000 square feet

At \$19.9 million, Holly Branch Manor, a neo-Georgian estate with nine fireplaces, was in a tie for third place with 17 Cowdray Park. And similarly, the 35-acre expanse may appeal to the outdoorsy set. At one end of the heated 65-foot pool is an elaborate, brick open-air pool house with outdoor kitchen. Also, two basketball hoops are installed on the tennis court; there's also a pond. And the interior of the house, which has limestone floors and custom molding, heaps on amenities, like a sauna and steam shower, a wine-storage area and an eight-seat home theater.





Photography courtesy of Renwick Sotheby's International Realty



Photography courtesy of Twin Oaks

\$18.8M

773 Armonk Road, New Castle

Multiple buildings; 70,000 square feet

Built in 1904, the brick-and-limestone Rose Hill compound was the country getaway of Billy Rose, the lyricist and owner of the Ziegfield Theatre. More recently, the Legionaries of Christ, a controversial Catholic order, had a retreat there. In 2011, the group said it was selling the property. However, the 97-acre spread doesn't appear to have been publicly listed until this spring, at \$29.5 million. And that price was then chopped, to \$18.8 million. But as LLNYC went to press, news reports said the property was relisted with a new broker and getting a price increase, to \$36 million, which would make it the priciest in Westchester.



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