



Best of the Best

A look at some of this year's best homes on the market in the most desirable communities in Westchester and western Connecticut.

Home-buying decisions involve a multitude of factors, from financial to emotional — and always involve more than just bricks and mortar. Communities with good schools and thriving downtowns are often at the top of anyone's list. Wilton, Conn., is a tight-knit community with a colonial feel, a downtown filled with shops and restaurants, and plenty of walking trails and even a town forest. The 1938 Georgian white brick colonial with a long driveway at 19 Valeview Road in south Wilton, listing for \$2,795,000, is located on more than five acres with an expansive lawn, patio and stone walls, a pool/spa with a waterfall, and a majestic ash tree that towers in front of the circular court. There is also an attached guest apartment.

With six bedrooms, six full bathrooms and three working fireplaces, the home comprises approximately 6,128 square feet, with an additional 644

square feet in the finished basement. "The home was built by a New York City architect as a summer residence, and it still works well as either a seasonal home or a full-time residence," said Dori Seamans, sales agent with Realty Seven. "The current homeowner is a builder of new high-end homes, but she sought out this one for herself because she loves its vintage 1930s character. The layout is far from a conventional center hall colonial, with a first-floor guest wing, and a dramatic double-height curved wall and staircase. And the gardens are spectacular."

Built in 1993, 20 Andrews Farm Road is one of a dozen homes in the 24-hour gated backcountry Greenwich, Conn., community known as Andrews Farm. On the market for \$7.85 million, the four-acre Georgian manor house, about five miles from downtown Greenwich, has a classic Palladian look outside, but with a more contemporary open-flow

layout inside, with all the formal rooms — the living room, family room and dining room — connected. The oversized 55-by-25-foot pool is flanked by a one-bedroom poolside pavilion, with a full-size outdoor kitchen, and the pool deck is equipped with a misting system for hot days.

The 9,744-square-foot home features an expansive double-height first-floor master suite, with an additional half bath in the woman's closet, as well as a drop-down movie screen. Almost every window in the house has remote controlled shades. "We are finding that there are buyers with multiple homes to take care of who are willing to pay a premium for homes like this in gated communities," said Brian Milton, sales agent with Houlihan Lawrence. "When they leave their main home for one of their other properties, they appreciate having a security guard to protect it."

Less than 60 miles from New York City, New Canaan, Conn., a quaint and quiet community on the Westchester border, is becoming more and more of a weekend destination for second-home buyers. Built in 2008 on four acres, 26 Pequot Lane, listing for \$9,250,000, is close to shopping in Pound Ridge, but enjoys annual real estate taxes of under \$50,000 a year — noticeably lower than similarly sized properties across the New York State border. The 12,385-square-foot brick estate with three finished levels, serviced by double stairways and an elevator, comes with balconies off the bedrooms that overlook the pool, pool pavilion and tennis/sports court. In addition to the walkout lower level, with a wine cellar, media room, wet bar, double-sided stone fireplace and sauna, there is also a wide-screen home theater on the second floor.

"It is brick — where most of New Canaan's construction is clapboard — and was custom-built by this owner for himself," noted Karen Sneirson, sales agent with William Pitt Sotheby's International Realty. "It is a grand home that could handle multiple generations, and can even be expanded to the unfinished fourth floor."

Bedford, N.Y., long renowned for its sprawling country estates and its extensive network of horse-riding trails, is home to 270-306 Hook Road, a 1920s stone-and-shingle country property that has been in the same family for more than 50 years. The 4,670-square-foot main home features four fireplaces, hardwood floors, French doors and an 80-foot-long covered porch. The entire 40-acre parcel — main house, several cottages and separate 25-acre lot — is listing at \$7.8 million. The same house is also available in a 10-acre configuration, with a single cottage, for \$3.4 million.

OPPOSITE PAGE: The graceful 1930s Georgian colonial at 19 Valeview Road in Wilton, Conn., offers a spa-like retreat on five acres.

BELOW LEFT: 20 Andrews Farm Road, a Georgian manor house near Greenwich, Conn., has the security of a 24-hour gated community.

BELOW RIGHT: A chic double staircase graces 26 Pequot Lane in New Canaan, Conn. Photo: William Pitt Sotheby's International Realty





TOP: This 1920s country property at 270-306 Hook Road in Bedford, N.Y., has been in the same family for more than 50 years.

ABOVE: 11 Sky Meadow Farm in Purchase, N.Y., features a grand pool house. Photo: Julia B. Fee Sotheby's International Realty

The home's carriage-style great room, with soaring ceilings that are around 40 feet high, also features a grand 85-foot-long porch off the back, facing west to the sunsets. There is also a long driveway to the main house, as well as a pool, tennis court, four fireplaces, a cabana with dressing rooms and a greenhouse attached to the house. "You could buy the entire property and sell off portions because the subdividing process has already been approved by the town — that is the beauty of it," said Muffin Dowdle, associate broker with Ginnel Real Estate. "The main house is a beautiful fieldstone house on 10 acres, and that may be plenty for some people. Others may want to have horses in the lower fields, and want the entire 40 acres."

Bordered by Mamaroneck, White Plains, Rye and Scarsdale, Purchase, N.Y., is an enclave within Harrison that was named after a man named Harrison who purchased all the land he could cover by riding his horse in one day — known then as Harrison's Purchase. The most striking feature of the 9,489-square-foot home on just under three acres at 11 Sky Meadow Farm in Purchase, on the market for \$5 million, is its magnificent pool house, built in 2001, three years after the main house. The pool house comes with its own dining area, lounge area, changing room, shower, kitchen, bar and full bathroom, and even has its own alarm system, air conditioning and heat.

The main house retains the brick walls of the property's original carriage house, which are artfully integrated into the 1998 home. The new house added an imported French limestone floor, Venetian plaster walls and a media room with a glass ceiling and concealed lighting to achieve a glam-



ABOVE LEFT: The 1885 stucco manor home at 937 Greacen Point Road in Mamaroneck, N.Y., was fully renovated in the 1990s.

ABOVE RIGHT: Set on 56 wooded acres in the horse country of North Salem, N.Y., 105 Mills Road has the look of a hunting lodge.

orous look, from the black granite wet bar and the designer backsplashes to the leather walls in the rear foyer. "You get both privacy and glamour with this property, which is totally turnkey, and just 35 minutes from New York City," said Wendy Alper, sales agent with Julia B. Fee Sotheby's International Realty. "The exterior is very unassuming, but it is very luxurious in the inside, so that when you walk in, it is truly an unexpected 'wow' experience for everyone."

Built in 1885, 937 Greacen Point Road in Mamaroneck, N.Y., on the market for \$3,250,000, offers approximately 4,500 square feet of living space, five bedrooms, four-and-a-half bathrooms and 1.2 acres of professionally landscaped gardens designed by Oehme van Sweden — a firm that received the 2014 Landscape Architecture Firm Award from the American Society of Landscape Architects. The landscape design includes more than 9,000 perennial plantings designed to change with the seasons.



The 19th-century stucco manor home with French casement windows was fully renovated in the 1990s, adding the kitchen/family room with vaulted ceilings, and maximizing the views of Delancy Cove in Orienta Point, Mamaroneck's waterfront area. "There is also a private boardwalk that transverses a nature sanctuary, so you can actually walk directly to the cove," said Elizabeth Diamond, sales agent with Coldwell Banker. "With a wall of windows and a beautiful bluestone multilevel patio, the back of the home faces the cove, which empties into Long Island Sound. Having access to your own nature sanctuary is very unusual."

North Salem, N.Y., is horse country, and 105 Mills Road is right in the thick of it. Built in 2006 on 56 wooded acres, the four-bedroom open-plan home resembles a hunting lodge, with a half-mile driveway and a great room with latticed beams, floor-to-ceiling stone fireplace, and multiple sitting/dining areas with direct views of the Titicus Reservoir. Listing for the reduced price of \$3,975,000, the property is really three lots that can be subdivided, or serve as a vast single-family compound.

"The barn beams, the high ceilings, the views of the reservoir, and the natural stone feel are the main features here," said Sally Slater, associate broker with Douglas Elliman Real Estate. "It makes a great winter home for cross-country skiing, with the floor-to-ceiling fireplace, and then in the fall, the foliage is amazing. The summer is great for hiking and fishing in the reservoir. While it is totally private, it is just a few minutes from the highway, with Manhattan about an hour away. It feels like you are in Vermont — and with the recent price reduction, it is now a great deal." ■