

Special Advertising Feature
WESTCHESTER AND FAIRFIELD COUNTIES

Livability is the bottom line

NO NEED TO CHOOSE A LIFESTYLE:
FIND IT ALL ON YOUR DOORSTEP

By *Tonie Auer*

Choosing a home involves many factors, from cost to location, but one of the biggest aspects in that selection is livability. It represents all the things that contribute to a community's quality of life. It's the environment, the area amenities, and much more. For New Yorkers who want to enjoy the luxuries of the city without living on top of one another—and paying a lot of money to do so—Westchester and Fairfield may be a good option.

So, what's the allure of living outside New York City? It's all about being "closest to the city while enjoying grass under your toes," says Owen Berkowitz, co-principal of the Berkowitz Marrone Team at Douglas Elliman Real Estate.

WESTCHESTER

"These concentric rings around New York City provide some of the best living for New Yorkers," Mr. Berkowitz says. "They've become more than bedroom communities; they're becoming destinations with a compelling and relaxing lifestyle. We are close enough to the frenzy of work, or the fun of going to the opera—but it's also about having a kitchen garden and your very own roof.

"People who are coming from the great city to our south are searching for a lifestyle that offers recreation, food, culture, squirrels, birdsong, green grass, beaches, and more," Mr. Berkowitz says.

"Whether it is seeking out a village setting where they can walk to the train or living close to amenities, the motivation varies," says Carol Marrone, who partners with Mr. Berkowitz. "But, for most people coming from New York City, they can get what they need here: from the local farmers' markets to the culture."

Mr. Berkowitz agrees. "It's never so far-flung that you can't run out to get that special cheese or the house-smoked meats that you want, or be near wonderful historic music halls or art film venues. There are also the small coffee roasters and distillers. The shows are pretty good, too."

More of Mr. Berkowitz's favorite Westchester amenities: the walkability factor of many of the towns, whether it is to a park or the train station; easy access to the city with a 20- to 30-minute ride on the Metro North commuter train; farm-to-table restaurants in Pocantico Hills.

Beyond the amenities of



Fairfield County offers the best of both worlds: close to the city but also on the coast, with beaches and water views.

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living outside the big city, the duo tells us homes can be found in all price points and styles, as well. From co-ops and condominiums to single-family homes and mansions, there is a variety, says Mr. Berkowitz. The average price point he sees is about \$800,000 to \$900,000.

Ms. Marrone adds that first-time homebuyers can get into an apartment for \$200,000 or find a house for \$500,000 to \$600,000.

For seniors who want to remain in the community as they approach the next chapter in their lives, Kendal on Hudson in Sleepy Hollow is the only life-plan community in Westchester, says the non-profit's director of sales and marketing, Gemma Maver. Most of the residents are from the area and want to stay in the lower Hudson River Valley.

"They want to be here, but as

they age, they are downsizing their homes and planning for retirement. It is a seller's market for all the river towns along the Hudson. Families from New York City want to be in this area, so it's a great time to sell and move to a life plan retirement community," she says.

The Metro North and express train can be in Manhattan within 30 minutes if they wish, or residents can simply stay local and enjoy the villages, restaurants, theaters, and galleries, says Ms. Maver, adding that Kendal on Hudson also offers ample outdoors activities and open spaces.

FAIRFIELD COUNTY

Just across the state border into Connecticut is the desirable Fairfield County, which is the most populous county of the state. A metropolis itself, it's just 30 miles from New York City while also home to great outdoors activities.

"Fairfield is the best of both worlds," says Holly Giordano, a Realtor with William Pitt Sotheby's International Realty in Darien, Conn.

"It's close to New York City, but living here is like being on vacation with picturesque views, rolling rockwalls, and inviting coastline."

Commuting to the city is easy, too, with train stations seldom more than 10 minutes away from anywhere in the area. But the coastal living may be the biggest attraction for the region, Ms. Giordano says.

"There is amazing beach life, with each town featuring activities like paddle-boarding, kayaking and sailing. You're really living outdoors."

When buying a home in Fairfield County, Ms. Giordano says, prices vary from town to town. She's sold condos in the seaside town of Norwalk for \$350,000, but the average price for a traditional colonial in Greenwich is about \$2 million.

"Consumers should plan to spend about \$1 million," she adds. "What that buys you may vary from a fixer-upper to a great home. There are also luxury properties, like the magnificent Ziegler estate, on the market now for \$175 million."

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LAST CHANCE TO OWN AT HIDDEN RIDGE AT SCARSDALE

Hidden Ridge at Scarsdale, the successful new private gated community of 42 townhomes has just four new homes remaining before they are completely sold out.

"We were very pleased to see the community sell so quickly," stated Steven A. Klar of The Klar Organization, developer of Hidden Ridge. "If you are looking for a new townhome at Scarsdale, this may be your last chance."

Hidden Ridge townhomes are all end units, and include elevators, fireplaces, gourmet kitchens, master suites with oversized soaking tubs and separate shower stall, full basements and two car garages. There is also a private



clubhouse with a party room and fitness center.

Decorated models are open from 10 am to 5 pm, closed on Thursday. For information call 914-793-4000 or visit www.HiddenRidgeScarsdale.com



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Direct Waterfront

WESTPORT - Magnificently designed by Robert A. Cardello Architects and to be built by premier builder Matterna Construction. This is a rare opportunity to own 2 parcels, one on the sound and one on the tidal inlet w/dock. Enjoy 252' +/- of direct waterfront on one side and gorgeous views of the golf course on the other. The new home is available at \$11,975,000 or \$7,750,000 for the land.



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WESTPORT - Magnificent private retreat nestled atop the Saugatuck River near the opening of the Long Island Sound. Rooms & terraces capture dramatic panoramic water views on 1 acre with pool & private dock. Distinguished architecture by Peter Cadoux. Fantastic private 2 story master suite. Distinctive family room, wine cellar and state of the art home theater. Walking distance to train & restaurants. \$4,950,000



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WESTPORT - This impeccably-designed masterpiece is a rarity of craftsmanship & taste that cannot be duplicated. This 6 BR home boasts 9 baths and 5 fireplaces. State-of-the-art security features, generator and all new smart house controls. Verandas, mahogany porches, incredible landscaping & outdoor entertaining areas surround the glamorous pool. This estate has a decidedly continental sensibility. \$4,690,000



New Home, Walk to Town

WESTPORT - Outstanding In-Town cul-de-sac. Spectacular new home is one of the most highly anticipated residences, designed & crafted by Matterna Construction. Four levels of luxurious living space showcase the highest level of sophistication & timeless beauty. The best of everything is found throughout. Magnificent, flat 1 acre property w/privacy in a convenient location, walk to shops/park/town. Rm for pool. \$3,575,000



Stunning South Wilton Colonial

WILTON - Drive down a private lane to the manicured 2 acre setting with bluestone patio and inground granite pool. A welcoming foyer leads to a spacious living rm with fireplace and large adjoining light filled office that overlooks pool and gardens. A well appointed btlrs pantry bridges a spacious dining rm & impeccably renovated custom gourmet EIK which opens into family rm. \$1,395,000



Spectacular Customized Home

WESTON - Masterfully designed, exceptionally bright, impeccably maintained Colonial in prestigious Singing Oaks. Gracious two story foyer. Large public rooms perfect for gatherings or fine entertaining. Large deck off kitchen ideal for summer relaxation w/ retractable electric awning. Room for pool. All en-suite BRs. 3 car garage. 20 kw Generac backup generator for inclement weather. \$1,270,000



Open Plan & Modern Flair

WESTPORT - Spectacular mint-condition custom home sited on magnificent acre on a quiet and convenient cul-de-sac. This sun-drenched home boasts vaulted ceilings, hardwood flooring throughout & recently renovated kitchen and bathrooms. Eat-in kitchen with granite counters & stainless steel appliances which opens to deck overlooking bucolic property. Fin LL w/ fpl, bar and more. \$1,075,000



New Development - 13 Townhomes

FAIRFIELD - Only Four Units Remain. Why rent when you can own? Buy one of these beautiful town homes, spend less money monthly and qualify for tax deductions for owning instead of paying rent. Brand new construction condominiums offering convenience, style & comfort. Private patio and attached two car garage. Maintenance-free living. Walk to Whole Foods, train, shops & restaurants, minutes to the beach & 195. Priced from \$569,000