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Florida Attracts More Buyers in Search of Better Deals

One of the places luring property hunters is Hallandale Beach, which also offers a touch of tranquillity



With its golden beach and quieter ambience, Hallandale Beach, shown in an aerial view, is gaining popularity as a more affordable Florida haven. Saul Martinez for The New York Times

This article is part of our latest special report on [Waterfront Homes](#).

South Florida has long been popular with second-home buyers and retirees who are seeking a sun-filled escape. But most of the real estate activity has traditionally been concentrated in Miami, Ft. Lauderdale and Palm Beach.

Today, is a different story. While the appeal of these go-to spots has not waned, their high prices and overdevelopment have given way to more affordable alternatives that also offer a quieter, laid-back pace.

Hallandale Beach, in particular, is gaining traction, with new luxury residential buildings, renovated parks and a growing number of diversions.

The New York Times

Because of the pandemic, South Florida’s outdoorsy lifestyle has piqued the interest of even more buyers than in the past, said Taylor Marr, the lead economist for the international real estate brokerage and research firm Redfin.

Data from the company shows that the number of its users relocating to South Florida during the first six months of this year, compared with the same period in 2020, more than doubled from 7,000 to 19,000. “This migration has created a more competitive market for housing, but Hallandale isn’t part of the frenzy — at least not yet,” Mr. Marr said.



Hallandale Beach started to draw attention when the first Pegasus World Cup Invitational Stakes was held at Gulfstream Park Racing and Casino in 2017. Spectators checked out the horses before a race last month. Saul Martinez for The New York Times

Located in Broward County, about a 25-minute drive from Miami and Ft. Lauderdale and 20 minutes from Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport, Hallandale Beach is 4.4 square miles and has a population of 38,000, according to its mayor, Joy Cooper. In the winter, the number swells to 50,000 when part-time residents live in their vacation homes.

It’s long stretch of sand doesn’t see the crowds that are common at Miami and Ft. Lauderdale beaches, she said.

A farmer and preacher, Luther Halland, established the town more than 90 years ago when the area was farmland where tomatoes grew in abundance.

Development happened slowly and included beachfront condominiums and two casinos, Gulfstream Park Racing and Casino and the Big Easy Casino (formerly called Hollywood Greyhound Track), that South Floridians frequented for their weekend entertainment, Ms. Cooper said.

Overall, however, Hallandale Beach had a reputation as a sleepy town where Canada and East Coast of the United States snowbirds owned vacation homes.

The New York Times

Troy Dean Ippolito, a home builder and designer who has lived in Hallandale for more than 40 years, recalled how it emptied out over the summer. “All the second home buyers went back north when it got too hot in Florida, and it used to feel almost deserted,” he said.

That is no longer the case.

“Hallandale has transformed in the last five years from being a nothing-is-happening spot to an increasingly vibrant one that’s drawing people who would typically buy in Miami or Ft. Lauderdale if they wanted a home in South Florida,” said Juan Aluma, a real estate agent at ONE Sotheby’s International Realty in Florida.

South Florida has a finite amount of oceanfront property, Mr. Aluma said, and as Miami and other popular cities continue to be saturated, buyers are exploring other options. “Hallandale is on top of their lists because of all the changes happening there,” he said.

The perception of Hallandale Beach started shifting in 2017 when the first Pegasus World Cup Invitational Stakes, a thoroughbred horse race, was held at Gulfstream Park and garnered international fame for being the then-richest horse race in the world, with \$12 million in prize winnings.

The annual event continues to draw a global audience, and home buyers, who include Canadians, Americans, South Americans and a handful of Europeans, are catching on.

A sign of the increased demand: the ONE Sotheby’s International Realty Market Report in August indicated that Hallandale Beach saw 129 condominiums sold in that month, a 61 percent increase from August 2020.



Ocean views and luxury amenities are features of many of the new condominium developments being built in Hallandale Beach. Saul Martinez for The New York Times

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In addition, 52 properties have sold for more than \$1 million in Hallandale in the last 12 months, according to ONE Sotheby's International Realty. Compare this with the four previous years when 20 to 25 sold annually for that number, Mr. Aluma said.

The town's favorable prices, compared with other locations in South Florida, are a big reason for this jump, he said. In Hallandale, buyers can expect to pay \$700 a square foot. In Miami Beach, that number is \$1,500 to \$2,000, while in Ft. Lauderdale it's \$1,000 to \$1,500, according to Mr. Aluma.

Danielle Hale, the chief economist at Realtor.com, said the median price of a home in the area with the ZIP code 33009, which included Hallandale Beach, was \$300,000. The Greater Miami Metropolitan area, in comparison, has a median home price of \$463,000.

Hallandale Beach's safety record — with low crime rates that allow residents to walk around at night — adds to its appeal.

Prospective home buyers have their pick of several new or soon-to-open residential developments, most of which are synonymous with luxury.

[2000 Ocean](#), for example, is a 38-story oceanfront condominium that will be move-in ready later this month. The architect Enrique Norten and his firm Ten Arquitectos designed the contemporary glass tower with floor-to-ceiling windows, and the Italian furnishings and design company Minotti is behind the muted metals and cream tones of the interiors.

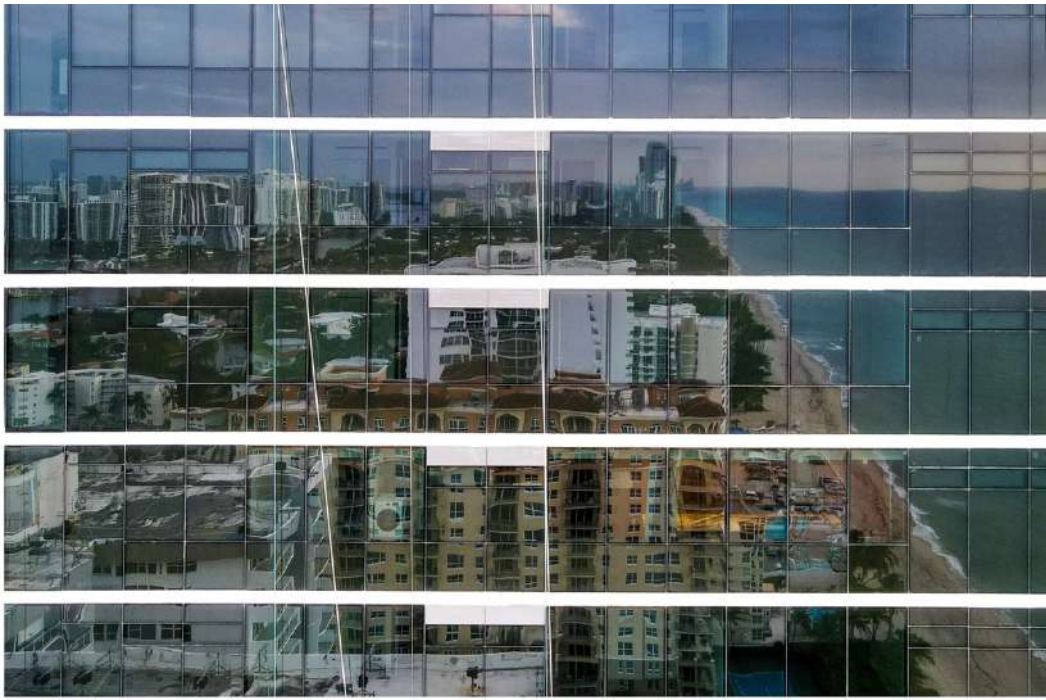
The 64 residences each have private elevators and terraces that offer views of the sunrise and sunset. Most homes are three bedrooms and 3,000 square feet — prices start at \$3 million — but there are six larger penthouses.

2000 Ocean has a long list of amenities, including two swimming pools — one facing the ocean and the other overlooking the Intracoastal Waterway — areas for children and teens; a spa within a bamboo garden; a yoga studio and gym; a meditation garden; and a lounge with a movie screen.

Shahab Karmely, the chief executive of KAR Properties, 2000 Ocean's developer, said that 40 percent of the units had sold as of early October. He said he wanted a building in Hallandale Beach because, "It's serene without any rowdy restaurants and bars.

"It reminded me of Malibu, which is a place I love," he said.

The New York Times



An aerial view of 2000 Ocean, a 38-story oceanfront condominium in Hallandale Beach that will be ready for residents later this month. Saul Martinez for The New York Times

2000 Ocean isn't the only project making a mark on the neighborhood.

The half-billion-dollar makeover of the Diplomat Golf Resort & Tennis Club, for one, is another venture.

Ari Pearl, the founder of the real estate firm PPG Development, bought the 125-acre complex, with a marina, in 2018 and is building it in phases.

A recently finished Greg Norman-designed 18-hole golf course will be the centerpiece of a private golf club, Mr. Pearl said, and a 250-unit upscale rental building will start leasing apartments in early 2022, with amenities such as a gym, swimming pool, business center, golf simulator wine cellar and movie theater.

In partnership with Witkoff Group, another real estate company, PPG plans to begin construction next year on a luxury hotel with residences.

Oasis Hallandale, a \$370 million venture, will debut in phases, according to its lead broker Norma Campos. The blocklong complex is off Hallandale Beach Boulevard and has a design that includes palm trees and cactuses, as well as fountains and a six-story waterfall.

Oasis Hallandale's initial phase, 50,000 square feet of commercial space, will open later this year, Ms. Campos said, and include a kosher market, restaurants and a spa. Other venues, including offices and an art gallery, will follow next summer, and a 250-unit condominium will debut in 2024; prices for residences start at \$440,000.

The New York Times

Single-family homes are part of the mix, too. Builders are buying run-down properties, tearing them down and constructing new ones. Mr. Ippolito, the home builder and Hallandale Beach resident, as an example, is constructing seven properties in the prestigious gated waterfront community of Golden Isles.

The residential and commercial development in Hallandale coincides with a \$54 million town face-lift. Mayor Cooper said that the 15 city parks had new plantings, playgrounds and walking paths.

The city has spent \$20 million in flood abatement infrastructure, such as water pumping stations and pipes. The town will soon roll out a fleet of electric buses.

All of the recent changes have given Hallandale a new vibrancy, Mr. Ippolito said.

“There’s a sense of community building here that never used to exist,” he said. “You see families spending time in the parks and people year-round. Now, there’s life.”