

# This East Coast State Is One of the Best Places to Retire in the U.S.

The First State offers many perks to retirees, who now make up a fifth of its population.

By

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Delaware may be one of the smallest states, but its beautiful Atlantic Ocean coastline, favorable tax policies, and wellness amenities have made it a popular choice for retirees. According to [Census data](#), almost 21 percent of its population (approximately one million in 2022) consisted of people 65 and over. And [Bankrate](#) recently ranked the First State as the second-best state to retire after Iowa, noting that it “combines high-quality healthcare and a light tax burden.” Additionally, Delaware offers its residents a rich history, plenty of quaint small towns and communities full of character, beautiful nature, and proximity to bustling urban areas such as Philadelphia, Washington DC, and New York City.

Unsurprisingly, Delaware's 25-mile coastline attracts the most interest from retirees.

"Lewes and Rehoboth are the topmost popular places at the beach in Delaware. To the west of these two towns are several new or newer planned communities that offer all of the amenities – and they are all within a few miles of the beach," Bill Cullin, a broker at [Long & Foster Real Estate/Luxury Portfolio International](#), told *Travel + Leisure*.

Lewes, a historic town dubbed "the first town in the first state," is nestled where the Delaware Bay meets the Atlantic Ocean, offering scenic and quiet golden-sand beaches, with various small businesses lining its beautiful waterfront. The [median age here](#) is 66 years, with 54 percent of the population aged 65 and over.

About eight miles south is [Rehoboth Beach](#), which draws thousands of visitors from nearby Washington DC in the summer. Even the President and First Lady own a summer home here and can often be seen enjoying the town's picture-perfect beaches.

"Visitors are drawn to Rehoboth Beach for its cosmopolitan feel, the multitude of great restaurants, shopping, and the boardwalk. Rehoboth is also close to the outlets and movie theatres," Cullin explained. And with a median age of 64 years, the town has a large retirement community with an active social life.

And while both Lewes and Rehoboth Beach have small populations of a couple of thousands, Cullin points out that most residents live here year-round. The only downside is that housing in both communities comes at a pretty steep price—the median home value in Lewes is \$573,676 and in Rehoboth Beach— \$757,586. Of course, that number could be in the millions if you are looking for a beachfront residence.

If affordable housing is at the top of your retirement priorities, then Cullin suggests looking into Millsboro, where homes cost, on average, \$371,000. The town is about half an hour from the Delaware coastline and sits on the banks of the Indian River.

Selbyville and Milton are two more options, popular with retirees.

"Communities that are located within 35 minutes of the beaches with brand-new or newer detached homes that offer lawn care, clubhouses, pools, pickleball/tennis courts with organized community activities [are the types of properties retirees are drawn to]," Cullin added.

Many newly-built communities pop up across Delaware each year, but Cullin suggests also looking into newer resale homes as he added they may come with extra amenities that the first owners have added, such as window treatments, patios, and screened porches.