

MIRAMAR, PINES AMONG MAGAZINE'S BEST PLACES TO LIVE [HOLLYWOOD EDITION]

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Business owner Joanne Miner said there was a time she would tell people her Miramar printing company was in Fort Lauderdale because few knew where Miramar was.

Those days are long gone, she says.

Which is why Miner, chairwoman of the Miramar-Pembroke Pines Regional Chamber of Commerce, wasn't surprised that both Miramar and Pembroke Pines landed on Money magazine's list of 100 best places to live.

"We've been a well-kept secret outside of Florida," Miner said. "People are starting to know where we are and it's quite exciting."

Four South Florida cities snagged a place on the list of cities with a population between 50,000 and 300,000. It considered factors such as housing costs, median family income, crime, leisure and culture, weather and health.

Coral Springs ranked 27th, Boca Raton ranked 36th, Pembroke Pines ranked 51st and Miramar took the 81st spot.

Last year, the only South Florida city on the list was Hollywood, which was dropped this year.

Event planner Charmaine Bruce, who has lived in Coral Springs since 1989, said her city has "gotten a little too popular. But that's what you call progress."

Taking the No. 1 spot was Fort Collins, Colo., with a population of 128,000. In Miramar, one of the country's fastest-growing cities, officials said they're glad for the exposure.

"It's just another milestone," said City Manager Robert Payton, who said Miramar is one of the few places in Broward County where people still can find homes priced between \$230,000 and \$300,000 in some of its older neighborhoods.

Unsolved, however, is traffic congestion in some parts of Miramar and Pembroke Pines. According to the information in Money magazine's report, the median commute time for Miramar and Pembroke Pines residents is 30 minutes.

"There's no doubt that with economic growth traffic becomes a concern," Payton said. "It's going to take some time."

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