

California, Florida, Hawaii, Texas and Colorado Are the Most Popular States Where Americans Would Choose to Live

New York, Denver, San Francisco, San Diego and Seattle the most popular cities that people would choose to live in or near

New York, N.Y. — October 5, 2009 — For the sixth year in a row, California tops the list of states that Americans would choose to live in if they did not live in the states where they are now. Florida, which was the most popular state in 2001, retains second place on the list and Hawaii is number three, as it was in 2007.

New York City tops the list of cities that people would most like to live in or near, followed by Denver and San Francisco.

These are some of the results of The Harris Poll of 2,498 U.S. adults surveyed online between August 10 and 18, 2009 by Harris Interactive.

The Harris Poll has asked these questions almost every year since 1997. Florida topped the list of the most popular states every year from 1997 to 2001. California jumped to the number one position in 2002 and has remained there ever since.

After California and Florida, the states where the largest number of Americans would like to live are Hawaii (#3), Texas (#4), and Colorado (#5). Next came three states tied for 6th place: Arizona, North Carolina and Washington state.

Filling out the rest of the top 15 states are Tennessee (#9), Oregon (#10), New York (#11), South Carolina and Massachusetts (both equal #12), Georgia (#14), and Montana (#15).

New York City has topped the list of cities where the most people would like to live in or near, every year, since 1997, except in 1998 when it slipped behind San Francisco. However, Denver and San Francisco, now tied for second place, have moved up from # 9 and # 4 last year. This is the first time in the thirteen year series that Denver has placed higher than #4.

The other most popular cities on the top ten are San Diego (#4), Seattle (#5), Chicago (#6), Boston (#7), Las Vegas (#8), Washington, DC (#9), and Dallas (#10).

Also in the top 15 are Austin (#11), Nashville (#12), Atlanta (#13), Orlando (#14), and Los Angeles (#15).

So what?

This is much more than a beauty contest. The most popular states and cities where large numbers of people would like to live tend to attract tourists and business. They are places where people like to take vacations and where companies like to have their offices and factories.

The climate appears to be important. The majority of the states and cities listed have hot or warm climates, and the top four states are all in the Sun Belt. However, both the two most popular cities, New York City and Denver, get snow and low temperatures in winter.

It is worth noting that California is still top of the list of states in spite of the widely publicized economic problems and the political battles to control its budget deficits.

TABLE 1
STATES WHERE MOST PEOPLE WOULD LIKE TO LIVE - APART FROM THEIR OWN STATE

"If you could live in any state in the country, except the state you live in now, what state would you choose to live in?"

Base: All U.S. Adults

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2005	2006	2007	2009
California	3	3	2	5	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
Florida	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	3	2	2
Hawaii	7	=7	=9	7	3	3	3	3	2	3	3
Texas	10	=7	5	=10	12	14	7	=8	5	6	4
Colorado	4	2	3	2	4	4	4	4	7	5	5
Arizona	2	5	6	4	6	6	6	6	9	8	=6
North Carolina	6	4	4	3	7	5	8	=8	4	4	=6
Washington	8	12	8	6	5	9	10	11	6	=10	=6
Tennessee	5	6	13	15	10	7	*	10	11	=10	9
Oregon	9	9	15	14	9	10	11	7	10	9	10
New York	*	=15	*	=10	8	8	5	5	8	7	11
South Carolina	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	=12
Massachusetts	*	*	*	*	=14	*	*	*	*	*	=12
Georgia	11	14	12	=8	13	15	14	11	13	13	14
Montana	*	*	7	=10	11	11	13	15	15	*	15

= Tied for that position

* Not in top 15.

RETURNING TO TOP 15 THIS YEAR

Massachusetts (tied for #12)

South Carolina (tied for #12)

Montana (#15)

DROPPED OUT OF TOP 15 THIS YEAR

Virginia (was #10)

Pennsylvania (was #14)

Alaska (was #15)

TABLE 2
TOP FIVE STATES – BY AGE AND GENDER

"If you could live in any state in the country, except the state you live in now, what state would you choose to live in?"
Base: All U.S. adults

Rank	Generation				Gender	
	Echo Boomers (18 to 32)	Gen X (33 to 44)	Baby Boomers (45 to 63)	Matures (64+)	Men	Women
1	California	Florida	California	Florida	California	Florida
2	Florida	California	Florida	Hawaii	Florida	California
3	Texas	Texas	Hawaii	California	Texas	Hawaii
4	Washington	Arizona	Colorado	Oregon	Hawaii	Texas
5	Hawaii	Hawaii	North Carolina	North Carolina	Colorado	Colorado

TABLE 3
U.S. CITIES PEOPLE WOULD MOST LIKE TO LIVE IN OR NEAR TO

"If you could live in or near any city in the country except the one you live in or nearest to now, which city would you choose?"

Base: All U.S. Adults

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2005	2006	2007	2009
New York, NY	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Denver, CO	4	=5	6	4	=5	=6	=9	7	=7	=9	=2
San Francisco, CA	=5	1	3	=6	=2	2	3	4	2	4	=2
San Diego, CA	=7	=7	9	5	=2	8	2	2	3	2	4
Seattle, WA	2	4	2	3	4	3	=9	5	4	3	5
Chicago, IL	10	=12	5	=6	=7	=6	6	6	9	11	6
Boston, MA	=7	=7	7	9	=7	12	=13	11	10	12	7
Las Vegas, NV	*	=15	12	=6	=5	=14	4	3	5	5	8
Washington, DC	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	9
Dallas, TX	*	11	*	*	*	9	*	*	*	*	10
Austin, TX	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	15	15	*	11
Nashville, TN	11	=9	11	*	*	*	*	15	*	*	12
Atlanta, GA	=5	3	4	2	9	5	11	9	*	*	13
Orlando, FL	*	*	*	*	*	*	12	*	14	6	14
Los Angeles, CA	*	14	=13	=12	11	10	5	12	11	=9	15

= Tied for that position

* Not in top 15

CITIES NEW TO TOP 15 THIS YEAR

Washington, DC (#9); Dallas, TX (#10); Austin, TX (#11); Nashville, TN (#12); Atlanta, GA (#13)

CITIES WHICH DROPPED OUT OF TOP 15 THIS YEAR

Honolulu, HI (was #7); Phoenix, AZ (was #8); Charlotte, NC (was #13); Portland, OR (was #14); Miami, FL (was #15)

Methodology

This Harris Poll was conducted online within the United States August 10 and 18, 2009, among 2,984 adults (aged 18 and over). Figures for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including sampling error, coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. Therefore, Harris Interactive avoids the words "margin of error" as they are misleading. All that can be calculated are different possible sampling errors with different probabilities for pure, unweighted, random samples with 100% response rates. These are only theoretical because no published polls come close to this ideal.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in Harris Interactive surveys. The data have been weighted to reflect the composition of the adult population. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to participate in the Harris Interactive panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

These statements conform to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

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Q805, 810

The Harris Poll® #110, October 5, 2009

By Humphrey Taylor, Chairman, The Harris Poll, Harris Interactive

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