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WHAT IT'S LIKE TO LIVE IN ...

west palm beach

THIS WALKING CITY IS HOME TO A NEW WATERFRONT, HOT SPOTS AND HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOODS



If there was ever a time to move to West Palm Beach, it would be now. Often overshadowed by the glitz of Palm Beach, its sister city to the east, the diverse and vibrant WPB set along the Intracoastal Waterway offers an urban lifestyle as well as the nationally acclaimed Antique Row, the Kravis Center for the Performing Arts, the Norton Art Museum and two core destinations—Clematis Street and City Place—with great shops, eateries and nightlife. Locals cite insider hot spots too. “West Palm’s Dolce Di Palma is a great little across-the-tracks restaurant that utilizes local purveyors for a really creative menu,” says Flamingo Park resident Aime Dunstan, a writer and producer.

The Northwood historic district is emerging as a go-to locale as well. “Jade Kitchen and Café Centro are always packed with foodies who come over from the island [Palm Beach],” she continues, “and Circa Who and Gardenhouse Décor are hot for midcentury furnishings and accessories.”

Another lure is the state of the housing market. “There are luxury high-rises with prices at all-time lows,” says Darrell W. Naquin, a broker associate at Coldwell Banker, who also owns three historic buildings in town. “It’s a buyer’s market, and >>

Clockwise: Locals Aime and Chris Dunstan; City Place; Clematis Street; Il Bellagio’s Insalata Tonno.

STORY **SUSAN FRIEDMAN** PHOTOGRAPHY **DIANE BRADFORD**



>> motivated sellers are having to meet foreclosure prices to sell,” says Naquin. Deals to be had vary from living downtown in One City Plaza to a historic bungalow in Old Northwood. “While there is some softness, you don’t see foreclosures in high-net-worth neighborhoods, such as El Cid and Flamingo Park.”

Habatat Galleries is new to historic Clematis Street.

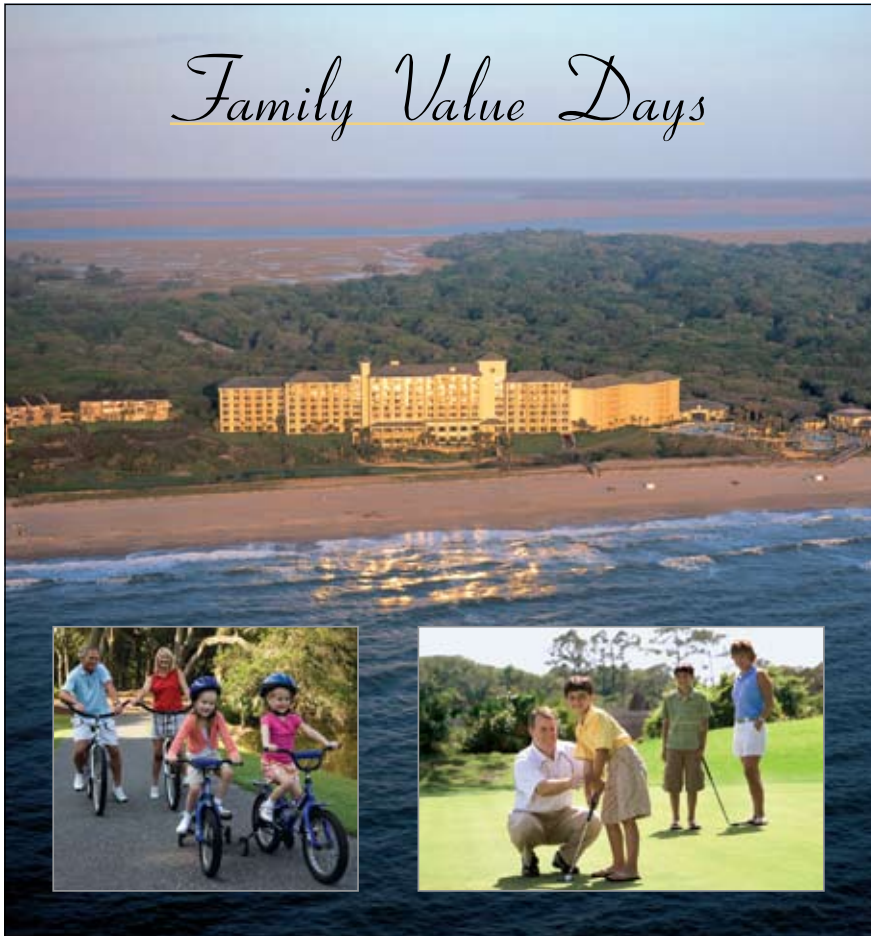
With 15 designated historic districts, architectural preservation is a focus of this

55-square-mile city flanked by Riviera Beach to the north and Lake Worth to the south. “It’s this historic character that sets West Palm apart,” says Rick Rose, co-owner of Grandview Gardens Bed & Breakfast on Lake Avenue in historic Grandview Heights. A West Palm Beach native, Rose and his partner, Peter Emmerich, opened the 1925 Spanish Mediterranean dwelling, with seven guest suites and two furnished cottages, in 2004. “In addition to the Old Florida ambience in our neighborhoods and the downtown urban feel of West Palm Beach, one other notable characteristic is the number of bike paths,” he exclaims. “We have the famous Palm Beach Lake Trail on the island and an additional five to six miles of paths on the West Palm Beach side of the Lake Worth Lagoon.”

WHAT’S NEW Coincidentally, one of the latest hot spots in town is Velocity Cycling Studio. Owners Chris Fix and Blake Stouffer—Fix is an executive recruiter, and Stouffer is in publishing—teach a Friday “happy hour” class that fills up as fast as any bar on Clematis Street, the city’s main drag. Another gathering spot with buzz: the Darbster, the area’s first vegan restaurant. With outdoor seating on a canal, it’s jammed with locals and social-media meet-up groups with a focus on the vegan/vegetarian lifestyle.

The big story for the city in 2010 is revitalization, specifically the \$30 million redevelopment project for the >>

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>> downtown waterfront at the foot of Clematis Street. City Commons and Waterfront Park, which had its grand opening celebration in late February, is composed of three piers, an interconnecting mile-long promenade running parallel to the Intracoastal, a performance theater and lush, tropical gardens. A gathering place for social and cultural activities, it will “distinguish our city as a world-class destination,” says West Palm Beach mayor Lois Frankel.

Authentic Provence owners Susan and Wolfgang Hofherr chose Clematis Street for their garden-accessories showroom nearly 12 years ago. He’s an art historian; she comes from the world of fashion. The chic duo values their historic surroundings. The 500 block of Clematis has the highest concentration of buildings downtown that have been placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Calling El Cid home, the Hofherrs live in a 1925 Florida Colonial that shows off their European panache and gorgeous garden goods.

Dunstan and her husband, Chris, owner of Dunstan Designs, a landscape design firm, opted to live in historic Flamingo Park when they moved to West Palm in 2004. “It’s a charming, funky neighborhood,” says Aime. “I immediately joined committees for holiday home and garden tours and eventually served on the Flamingo Park Neighborhood Association.” Aime also co-chairs Evening on Antique Row (this year’s event is March 6).

With a citywide population hovering just below 100,000, it’s amazing there’s so much going on within city limits—and that’s just how the locals like it.

REAL ESTATE

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DOWNTOWN Built in 2006, the Prado has eight floors and 310 units in the heart of the city center. A majority of units face an interior courtyard overlooking a pool and gym. A two-bedroom, 1,273-square-foot unit was recently listed at **\$179,000**.



One City Plaza with 354 units is the newest luxury high-rise.

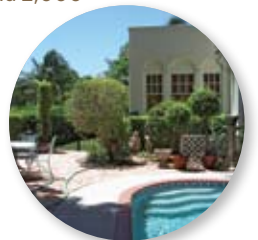
A two-story, 1,450-square-foot loft was recently listed at **\$255,000**.

HISTORIC In Old Northwood, a two-bedroom, one-bath bungalow is priced at **\$159,000**

surrounded by \$600,000 Spanish Mission-style homes.



Flamingo Park is comprised of 1920s homes. Right now, there are three-bedroom dwellings with 1,400 square feet as well as two-bedroom homes with a guest house and 2,000 square feet in the **\$300,000** range that could have cost \$550,000 two years ago. *Contact Darrell W. Naquin, Coldwell Banker, 561.358.9893*



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