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THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO LIVING LOCAL • LOCAL HOT SPOTS • LOCAL NEIGHBORHOODS • MUST SEE AND DO

JACKSONVILLE

Community Guide

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO LIVING LOCAL IN & AROUND JAX, FL

JEN CROXTON
Real Estate with Real Guidance



hello,

I'm Jen, a seasoned real estate agent helping families relocate to Northeast Florida with confidence and clarity. I'm here to make your move simple, stress-free, and actually exciting.

We're thrilled to share this guide with you, highlighting some of the wonderful neighborhoods that make our city so special. I absolutely love this community and all it has to offer, and I'm thrilled to share some of its gems with you.

A Little About Me:

This community has been my home since the 90's! I love exploring local trails, planning travel adventures, and enjoying a good cup of coffee. Whether you're just starting your search or ready to make a move, I'm here to offer my support and expertise.

Where You Might Find Me Around Town:

When I'm not helping clients achieve their real estate dreams, you can usually find me:

- at the beach or dog park
-
- trying a new restaurant
- running kids from school to activities

Let's Connect

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Discover *Northeast Florida*

Welcome to Jacksonville & surrounding areas.

This guide is your starting point for finding the perfect neighborhood - complete with local insights on home prices, schools, parks, commute options, and more.

Why Choose Northeast Florida?

- Booming job market
- Top-rated schools and universities
- Coastal lifestyle with affordable living
- Diverse neighborhoods and vibrant culture
- Outdoor activities: beaches, boating, golf, and more
- Warm, sunny weather most months
- • Family-friendly atmosphere
- • Delicious seafood and local eats
- • Quick access to St. Augustine, Amelia Island, and more

Finding the right neighborhood makes all the difference. This guide is here to help you feel confident, informed, and excited about your move to Jacksonville. Let's find your perfect spot to call home!

Jacksonville At A Glance:

- Largest city by land area in the U.S.
- Major military and logistics hub
- River city with over 20 miles of beaches
- Home to the Jacksonville Jaguars and Mayo Clinic

The Jacksonville Community:

- Population: ~975,000
- A mix of beach towns, suburbs, and urban living
- Popular with families, military, young professionals, and retirees

Jacksonville's Recognition:

- Regularly ranked among top U.S. cities for quality of life
- Growing healthcare, finance, and tech sectors
- Active arts, music, and food scene



Jacksonville FAQ

What's the Cost of Living Like in Jacksonville?

- Great quality of life with affordable living.
- Housing options for every budget - from condos to waterfront homes.
- Everyday costs like groceries, gas, and dining are manageable.
- Offers more space and value compared to many major cities.
- A smart move financially for individuals, families, and retirees.

How is the Traffic in Jacksonville?

- Less congested than many major cities, but growing.
- Expanding roads and infrastructure projects are helping ease flow.
- Limited public transportation - most residents drive.
- Many neighborhoods offer easy access to schools, shopping, and work.
- Choosing the right location can make your daily commute a breeze.

What's the Job Market Like in Jacksonville?

- A growing and diverse job market.
- Major employers in healthcare, logistics, finance, and military.
- Expanding opportunities in tech, education, and construction.
- Home to Mayo Clinic, Bank of America, Amazon, and more.
- A strong city for career growth and new opportunities.

What Else Should I Know About Jacksonville?

- There's always something going on - check out local festivals, markets, and events!
- Duval and St. Johns County Schools offer strong public and charter options.
- Some neighborhoods are walkable or golf-cart friendly, especially near the beach.
- Florida has no state income tax, which helps keep overall costs down.
- Active community groups, libraries, and local events make it easy to get involved.
- Welcoming neighborhoods with a strong sense of pride.
- The JAX Chamber supports a thriving business and entrepreneur community.

Living Local

OUR LOCAL JAX FAVORITES

Coffee & Cafes

Bold Bean Coffee Roasters – Local favorite known for its craft coffee and cozy vibe.

Sago Coffee – Stylish beachside café with great lattes and seasonal drinks.

Southern Grounds – Relaxed spot with great coffee, breakfast, and live music nights.

Restaurants:

Orsay – Upscale French-American bistro in Avondale, perfect for date night or special occasions.

Salt Life Food Shack – Beachy vibes with fresh seafood, tacos, and sushi rolls near Jacksonville Beach.

The Bearded Pig – A local BBQ favorite with a laid-back atmosphere and seriously good brisket.

Bars & Breweries:

Intuition Ale Works has a rooftop bar and river views near downtown.

Wicked Barley is a waterfront brewery with great IPAs and a dog-friendly patio.

Hoptinger in Five Points is packed with beer taps and a lively rooftop.

Bakeries & Sweet Treats:

Cinotti's Bakery in Jax Beach is a local favorite for donuts, cookies, and seasonal treats.

Sweet Theory in Riverside offers vegan-friendly donuts, brownies, and cupcakes that don't disappoint.

Motion Sweets in San Marco has beautiful macarons, pastries, and cakes by the slice.

Grocery & Markets:

Publix is everywhere and known for its friendly service and famous subs.

Whole Foods and Trader Joe's both have locations in town for organic and specialty finds.

Other Local Gems:

Chamblin Bookmine - giant used bookstore where you can get lost for hours.

St. Johns Town Center - big-name shopping, plus great restaurants and outdoor space.

Cummer Museum - art, gardens, and river views in a peaceful setting.



Living Local

OUR LOCAL JAX FAVORITES

Breakfast & Brunch

- **Grumpy's** – Hearty breakfast combos and hometown service.
- **Uptown Kitchen & Bar** – Creative brunch and strong coffee in Springfield.
- **Metro Diner** – Big portions and all the comfort food brunch staples.

Pet Friendly

- **BrewHound Dog Park + Bar** – Let your pup run while you grab a drink in Neptune Beach.
- **Kanine Social** – Indoor/outdoor dog park with craft beer and coffee in Riverside.
- **Wicked Barley** – Dog-friendly brewery with a big outdoor space on the water.

Indoor Activities

- **Autobahn Indoor Speedway** – High-speed indoor go-kart racing, great for groups.
- **The Edge Rock Gym** – Indoor rock climbing for all skill levels.
- **Main Event** – Bowling, arcade games, laser tag, and more under one roof.

Outdoor Activities

- **Jacksonville Arboretum & Gardens** – Peaceful trails and native plants, perfect for a walk or picnic.
- **Kathryn Abbey Hanna Park** – Beaches, hiking, biking trails, and a freshwater lake for kayaking.
- **Castaway Island Preserve** – Scenic boardwalks, marsh views, and easy kayak access.

Family Activities

- **MOSH (Museum of Science & History)** – Fun, educational exhibits with a planetarium and live animals.
- **Jacksonville Zoo & Gardens** – Always a hit with families, plus a splash pad and train ride.
- **Adventure Landing** – Mini golf, go-karts, arcade games, and a seasonal water park.

Working Out

- **Bailey's Health & Fitness** – Local gym chain with classes, weights, and cardio equipment.
- **Yoga Den** – Welcoming studio with a variety of yoga classes for all levels.
- **Hardcore Fitness** – Group training with a focus on strength and conditioning.
- **Club Pilates** – Full-body reformer Pilates classes for all experience levels.

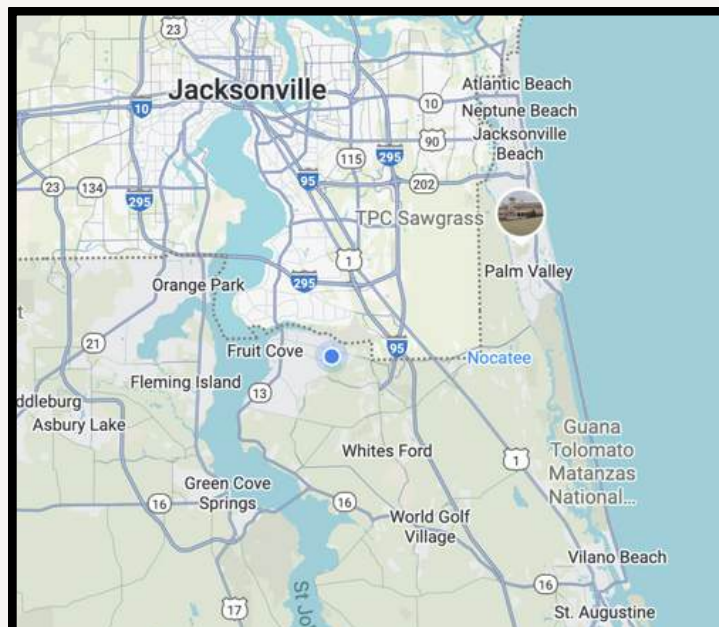


JACKSONVILLE

& SURROUNDING AREAS

At A Glance

Notable Neighborhoods



San Marco:

- 📍 South of Downtown (2 miles)
- 💰 Avg. Home Price Range: \$400K–\$1.2M+
- ✧ Historic homes, river views, and walkable shops and dining.

Riverside & Avondale:

- 📍 West of Downtown (2–3 miles)
- 💰 Avg. Home Price Range: \$350K–\$900K+
- ✧ Artsy, historic, and full of personality with parks and boutiques.

Murray Hill:

- 📍 West of Downtown (4 miles)
- 💰 Avg. Home Price Range: \$250K–\$500K
- ✧ Laid-back, eclectic, and full of local food spots.

Mandarin:

- 📍 South Jacksonville (15 miles)
- 💰 Avg. Home Price Range: \$350K–\$800K+
- ✧ Mature trees, riverfront pockets, and a relaxed suburban pace.

Northside:

- 📍 North of Downtown (10+ miles)
- 💰 Avg. Home Price Range: \$250K–\$450K
- ✧ Affordable, spacious, and growing with new development and easy airport access.

Beaches (Jax, Atlantic, Neptune):

- 📍 East of Downtown (17+ miles)
- 💰 Avg. Home Price Range: \$500K–\$1.5M+
- ✧ Coastal living with surf, seafood, and a strong community feel.

St. Johns/Fruit Cove:

- 📍 South of Jacksonville (25 miles)
- 💰 Avg. Home Price Range: \$450K–\$1M+
- ✧ Family-focused suburbs with top-rated schools, new construction, and tons of parks and trails.

Nocatee:

- 📍 Southeast of Jax (25 miles)
- 💰 Avg. Home Price Range: \$500K–\$1.2M+
- ✧ Resort-style living with splash parks, trails, and golf carts galore.

Silverleaf:

- 📍 St. Johns County (25 miles south of Jacksonville)
- 💰 Avg. Home Price Range: \$450K–\$900K+
- ✧ New master-planned community with resort-style amenities and top-rated schools.

Greencove Springs:

- 📍 Southwest of Jacksonville (35 miles)
- 💰 Avg. Home Price Range: \$300K–\$600K+
- ✧ Small-town charm along the St. Johns River with parks, springs, and a slower pace of life.



Mandarin:

14-18 MILES FROM DOWNTOWN
25-35 MIN COMMUTE

Well-loved neighborhood known for its shady oak trees, riverfront charm, and peaceful lifestyle. Families, retirees, and professionals. Close to both Jacksonville and St. Johns County.

Population

~37,000

Zip Code

32223, 32257, 32258

Avg. Price

\$350K-\$800K+

HOA Dues:

Typically none

Schools

Duval County Public Schools

History:

Once home to author Harriet Beecher Stowe, Mandarin has deep roots and a relaxed, old-Florida vibe. River views and tree-lined streets define the area.

Amenities:

- Riverfront parks and scenic drives
- Boat ramps, playgrounds, and ballfields
- Public library and community centers
- Shopping plazas and family restaurants
- Sidewalks, trails, and mature landscaping

Schools:

- Elementary: Loretto, Crown Point
- Middle: Mandarin Middle
- High: Mandarin High School

Attractions:

- Mandarin Museum & Walter Jones Historical Park
- Julington-Durbin Preserve trails
- Easy access to St. Johns River

Why People Love It:

- Friendly Community
- Historic Charm
- Peaceful, tree-shaded streets
- Close to shopping and highways



San Marco:

2 MILES FROM DOWNTOWN 5-10 MIN COMMUTE

One of Jacksonville's most iconic neighborhoods, known for its Mediterranean architecture, riverfront views, and walkable square filled with boutiques, cafés, and history.

History:

Developed in the 1920s and inspired by Venice, San Marco features historic homes, brick streets, and a strong artistic presence centered around the iconic San Marco Square.

Amenities:

- Riverfront parks and scenic walks
- San Marco Square with dining, shopping, and theater
- Sidewalk-lined streets and pocket parks
- Boutique fitness studios and salons
- Easy access to Downtown and major hospitals

Schools:

- Elementary: Hendricks Avenue Elementary
- Middle: Landon Middle
- High: Terry Parker or Douglas Anderson School of the Arts

Attractions:

- San Marco Theatre & Square
- Riverwalk access and bike routes
- Bold Bean Coffee, Bistro AIX, and other local favorites

Why People Love It:

- Charming architecture and historic vibe
- Walkable lifestyle close to downtown
- Strong sense of community
- Great food, art, and river views

Population

400K-\$1M+

Zip Code

32207

Avg. Price

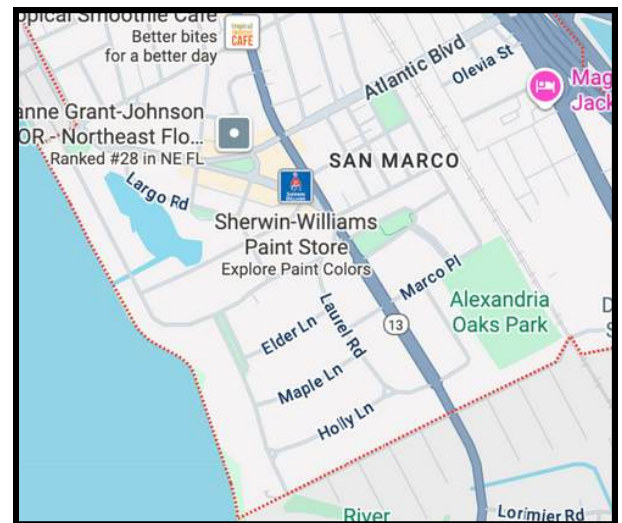
\$400K-\$1M+

HOA Dues:

Typically none

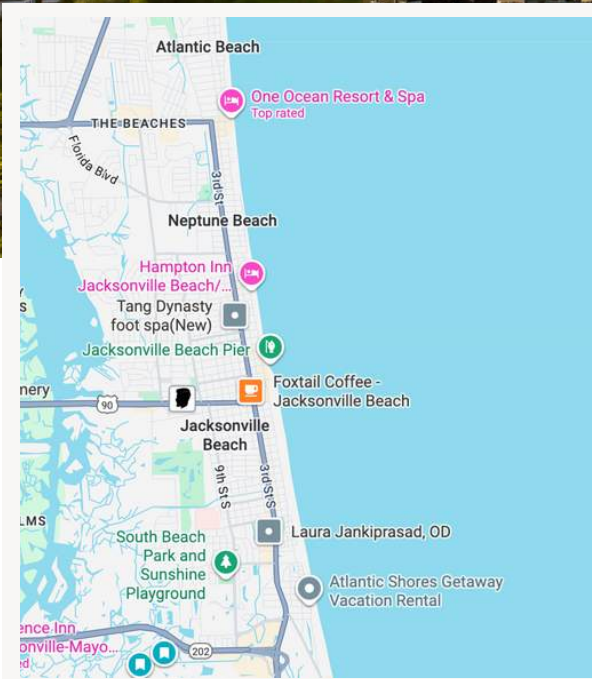
Schools

Duval County Public Schools



Beaches:

17-20 MILES FROM DOWNTOWN. 30-40 MIN COMMUTE



Jacksonville's Beaches offer laid-back coastal living with walkable neighborhoods, local surf culture, and some of the best seafood and sunsets in Northeast Florida. Whether you're catching waves or riding your beach cruiser to brunch, life moves at a slower, sunnier pace here.

History:

Jacksonville Beach dates back to the late 1800s and grew into a destination for beachgoers with boardwalks, hotels, and pier. Neptune and Atlantic followed, each with their own unique, small-town charm.

Amenities:

- Public beaches and oceanfront parks
- Bike-friendly roads and beach access points
- Local restaurants, bars, and coffee shops

Schools:

- Elementary: Neptune Beach Elem, San Pablo Elem.
- Middle: Duncan U. Fletcher Middle
- High: Fletcher High School

Attractions:

- Jacksonville Beach Pier
- Jarboe and Bull Memorial Parks
- Local surf shops, breweries, and beach bars

Why People Love It:

- Coastal lifestyle with walkability
- Sunrise beach walks and surf culture
- Tight-knit community feel
- Vibrant mix of locals, tourists, and retirees

Population

100

Zip Code

32250, 32266 , 32233

Avg. Price

\$500K-\$1.5M+

HOA Dues:

Varies by community

Schools

Duval County Public Schools



St. Johns/Fruit Cove:

20-25 MILES FROM DOWNTOWN 30-40 MIN COMMUTE

Some of the most sought-after areas in Northeast Florida, known for top-rated schools, family-friendly communities, and peaceful living along the St. Johns River.

History:

Originally a rural area with deep roots along the St. Johns River, it has grown into a suburban hotspot with highly desirable neighborhoods and strong community ties.

Amenities:

- Riverfront parks and boat ramps
- Youth sports leagues and top recreation centers
- Golf courses, walking trails, and nature preserves
- Nearby shopping centers and dining at Durbin Pavilion

Schools:

- Elementary: Cunningham Creek, Hickory Creek, and more
- Middle: Fruit Cove Middle
- High: Creekside High School, Bartram Trail High

Attractions:

- Alpine Groves Park on the river
- Julington-Durbin Preserve
- Weekly farmers markets and seasonal events
- Dog parks and community green spaces
- Easy drive to historic Downtown St. Augustine

Why People Love It:

- Top-rated public schools
- Safe, quiet neighborhoods
- Access to nature and the river
- Strong sense of community and family focus

Population

~60,000

Zip Code

32259

Avg. Price

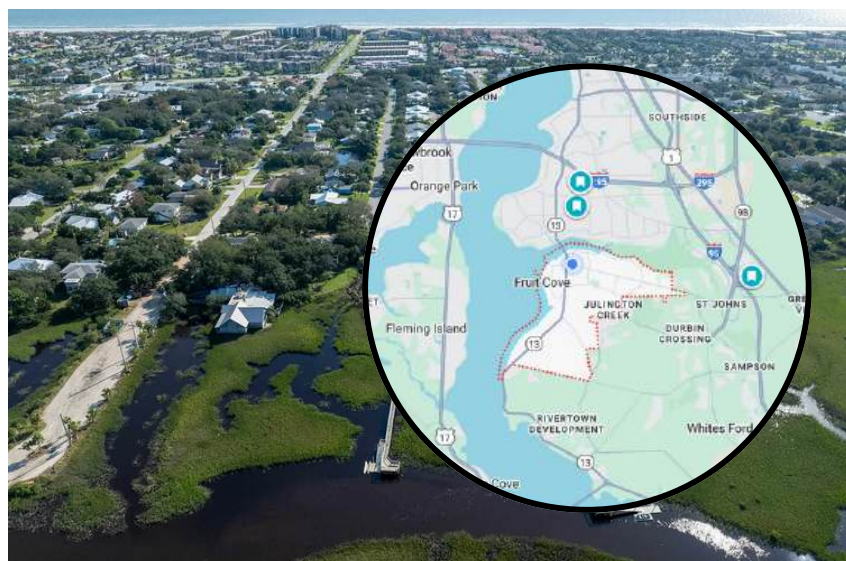
\$450K-\$900K+

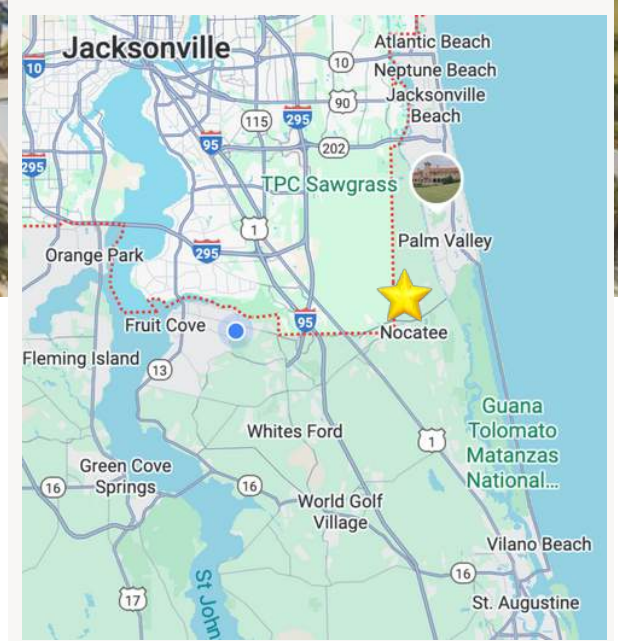
HOA Dues:

Varies by community

Schools

St. Johns County School District





Nocatee:

25 MILES FROM DOWNTOWN JACKSONVILLE

One of the fastest-growing master-planned communities in the U.S., known for its resort-style amenities, golf cart lifestyle, top-rated schools and laid-back luxury.

History:

Developed in the early 2000s, Nocatee was designed to balance modern living with preserved green space. It's now a national model for smart growth and community planning.

Amenities:

- Splash and Spray Water Parks
- Kayak launches, dog parks, and fitness centers
- Golf cart trails throughout the community
- Dozens of neighborhood parks and playgrounds
- Town Center with shopping, dining, medical, and more

Schools:

- Elementary: Palm Valley Academy, Pine Island Academy, and more
- Middle: Valley Ridge Academy
- High: Nease High School

Attractions:

- Farmers markets and Food Truck Fridays
- Paddle Launch for kayaking and paddleboarding
- Splash Water Park with zip lines, lazy river, and slides
- Fitness classes, family events, concerts, and seasonal festivals
- Easy access to Ponte Vedra Beach and historic St. Augustine

Why People Love It:

- Resort-style amenities
- Top rated schools
- Golf cart lifestyle
- Nature Preserves

Population

~20,000+ and growing

Zip Code

32081

Avg. Price

\$500K-\$1.2M+

HOA Dues:

\$100-\$200/month + CDD

Schools

St. Johns County School District



Population

Rapidly growing

Zip Code

32092

Avg. Price

\$450K-\$900K+

HOA Dues:

\$1500-\$1700

Schools

Wake County Schools

Silverleaf:

128-32 MILES FROM DOWNTOWN JAX - 40-50 MIN

SilverLeaf is a newer master-planned community in St. Johns County offering a mix of neighborhoods, top-rated schools, and resort style amenities, with no CDD fees.

History:

Launched in the 2020s, SilverLeaf was planned to blend modern living, nature, and community connection, with over 8,500 acres of preserved land and trails for walking and biking.

Amenities:

- Splash parks, resort pools, and clubhouses
- Dog parks, playgrounds, and pickleball courts
- Golf cart-friendly streets and wide sidewalks
- Future shopping, dining, and commercial hubs in development

Schools:

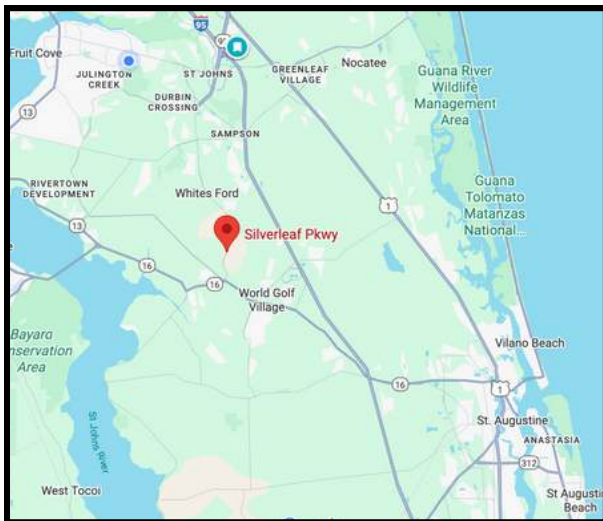
- Elementary: Wards Creek Elementary (zoning may vary)
- Middle: Pacetti Bay Middle
- High: Toco Creek High School

Attractions:

- Rec centers with fitness and kids' zones
- Biking and jogging trails throughout the community
- Quick drive to World Golf Village, I-95, and St. Augustine

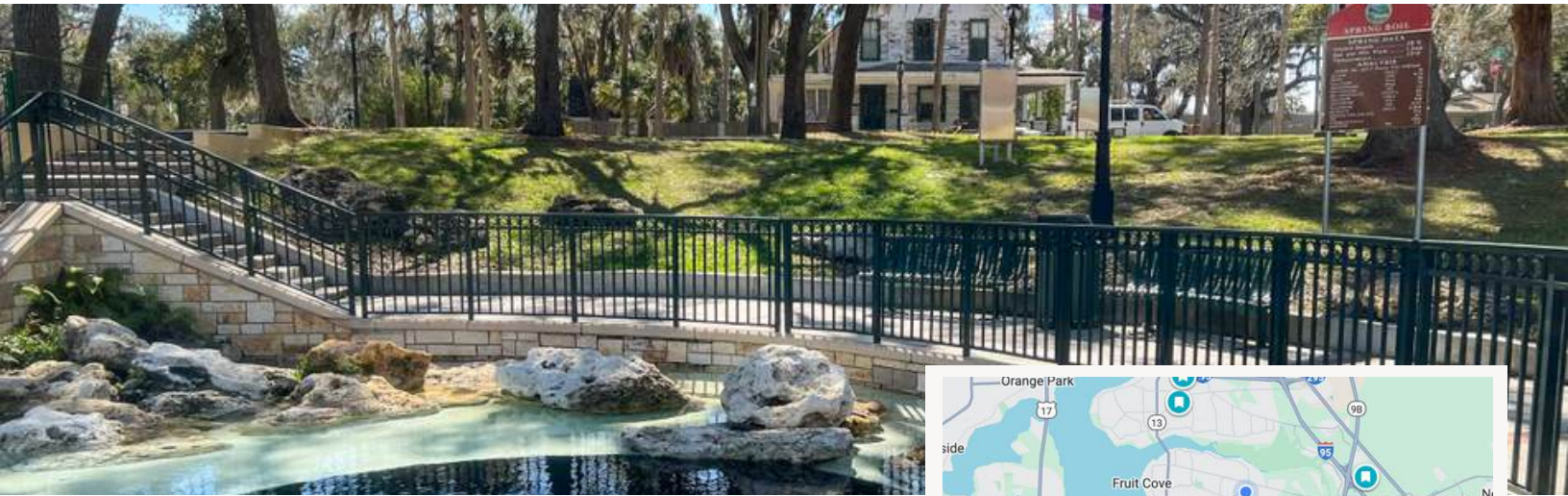
Why People Love It:

- Brand-new homes and neighborhoods
- Resort-level amenities without leaving your neighborhood
- Top-tier schools in a peaceful setting
- No CDD fees



Green Cove Springs

35 MILES FROM DOWNTOWN JACKSONVILLE 45-55 MIN COMMUTE



Green Cove Springs offers small-town charm along the St. Johns River with a slower pace of life. Known for its natural spring, riverfront parks, and historic downtown,

History:

Founded in the mid-1800s, Green Cove Springs became a popular winter destination for northerners. The historic spring still feeds a public swimming pool today.

Amenities:

- Riverfront parks and public boat ramps
- Community pool fed by the natural spring
- Historic downtown with shops and local dining
- Multiple sports fields, playgrounds, and picnic areas

Schools:

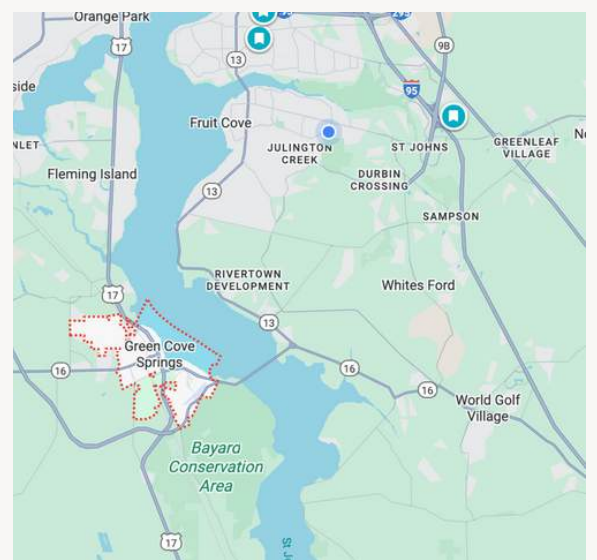
- Elementary: Charles E. Bennett Elementary
- Middle: Green Cove Springs Junior High
- High: Clay High School

Attractions:

- Riverfest, Memorial Day, and Christmas on Walnut Street festivals
- Easy drive to kayak launches, trails, and nature preserves
- Short trip to Fleming Island shopping and dining

Why People Love It:

- Active Lifestyle
- Waterfront Living
- Parks and Trails
- Quaint Feel



Population

~9,000

Zip Code

32043

Avg. Price

\$300K-\$600K+

HOA Dues:

Varies by community

Schools

Clay County School District

Northside Fax:

10-20 MILES FROM DOWNTOWN JACKSONVILLE

The Northside offers a mix of suburban neighborhoods, rural space, and waterfront living along the St. Johns River.

History:

Historically an agricultural and industrial hub, the Northside has seen steady residential growth in recent years, with new communities emerging alongside long-established neighborhoods.

Amenities:

- Proximity to Jacksonville International Airport
- Riverfront parks and boat ramps
- Large retail centers like River City Marketplace
- Golf courses and nature preserves

Schools:

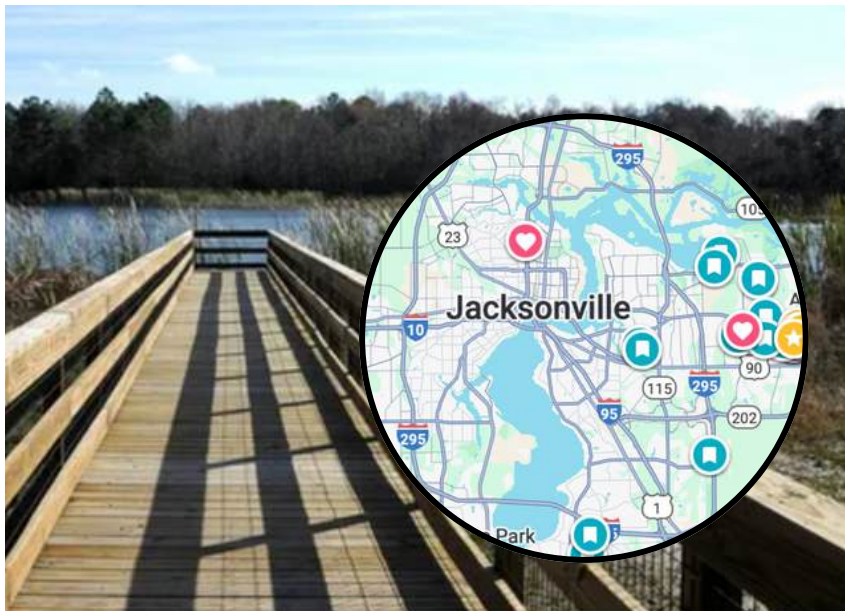
- Elementary: New Berlin Elementary, Biscayne Elementary
- Middle: Oceanway Middle
- High: First Coast High School

Attractions:

- Jacksonville Zoo & Gardens
- Catty Shack Ranch Wildlife Sanctuary
- Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve
- Little Talbot Island and Amelia Island beaches just a short drive away

Why People Love It:

- Affordable housing options
- Easy access to I-95, I-295, and the airport
- Mix of city convenience and natural beauty
- Close to beaches and historic coastal towns



Population

~90,000+

Zip Code

32218, 32226, 32208, 32209, 32219

Avg. Price

\$250K-\$450K+

HOA Dues:

Varies by community

Schools

Duval County Public Schools



History:

Developed in the early 1900s, Riverside and Avondale are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and showcase preserved Craftsman, Tudor, and Colonial Revival-style homes.

Amenities:

- Riverfront parks and scenic walking routes
- Boutique shopping and local markets
- Eclectic restaurants, coffee shops, and breweries
- Art galleries, museums, and theaters

Schools:

- Elementary: Fishweir West Riverside
- Middle: Lake Shore Middle
- High: Riverside High School

Attractions:

- Riverside Arts Market (weekly) & parks
- Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens
- Five Points dining and nightlife district

Why People Love It:

- Walkable, bike-friendly streets
- Rich history and architectural charm
- Thriving local food, art, and music scene
- Minutes from downtown and major hospitals

Riverside/Avondale

2-4 MILES FROM DOWNTOWN JACKSONVILLE. 5-15 MIN COMMUTE

Two of Jacksonville's most beloved historic neighborhoods, known for their tree-lined streets, river views, and vibrant mix of arts, dining, and culture.

Population

~15,000 combined

Zip Code

32204, 32205

Avg. Price

\$400K-\$1M+

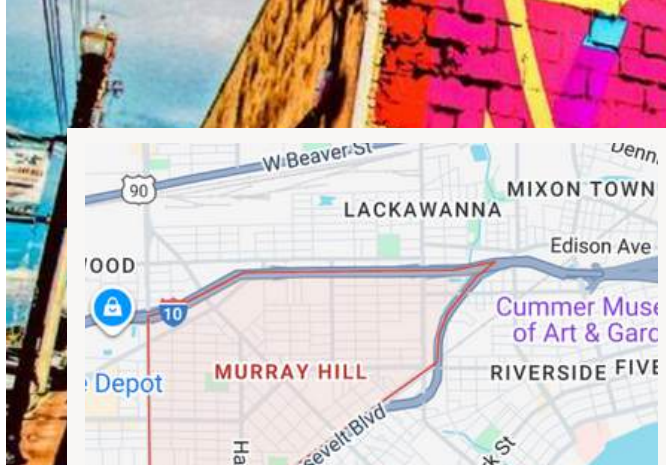
HOA Dues:

None

Schools

Duval County Public Schools





Murray Hill

4-5 MILES FROM DOWNTOWN JACKSONVILLE
10-15 MIN COMMUTE

A quirky, up-and-coming neighborhood with a small-town feel just minutes from downtown. Known for its affordable bungalows, creative local businesses, and growing food scene.

History:

Developed in the early 1900s as a streetcar suburb, Murray Hill retains much of its original charm with historic homes, mature trees, and a strong sense of neighborhood pride.

Amenities:

- Locally owned restaurants and coffee shops
- Parks, playgrounds, and community gardens
- Murray Hill Theatre and vintage shops
- Quick access to Riverside, Avondale, and I-10

Schools:

- Elementary: Ruth N. Upson Elementary
- Middle: Lake Shore Middle
- High: Riverside High School

Attractions:

- Dreamette ice cream stand, a Jacksonville classic
- Murray Hill Theatre for live music and events
- Four Corners Park and neighborhood murals

Why People Love It:

- Affordable homes with historic charm
- Tight-knit, creative community
- Walkable to dining, coffee, and nightlife
- Central location with easy commutes

Population

~9,000

Zip Code

32205

Avg. Price

\$225K-\$400K+

HOA Dues:

None

Schools

Duval County Public Schools





your *Jacksonville*

REAL ESTATE RESOURCE

Have Community or Real Estate Questions? I'm Here to Help!

I'm passionate about our community and dedicated to helping you find the perfect place to call home. Whether you have questions about local schools, events, market trends, or anything real estate-related, please don't hesitate to reach out. I'm happy to share my knowledge and connect you with the resources you need.

Stay up-to-date on the latest community news, real estate insights, and more by following me on social media! I look forward to hearing from you!

let's chat

Jen Croxton

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