

PROFESSIONAL RELOCATION GUIDE

Welcome to Winston-Salem.

Everything a relocating professional needs to know about neighborhoods, lifestyle, career infrastructure, and the real estate market — in one place.

695K	92.4	#5	\$65K
Metro Population	Cost of Living (US avg = 100)	Best City for First-Time Buyers	Median Household Income

Keon Shoulars

Real Broker LLC · Winston-Salem, NC

THE CASE FOR WINSTON-SALEM

Where Ambition Meets Affordability

For professionals relocating from high-cost metros, Winston-Salem offers a rare combination: the career infrastructure and cultural depth of a major city at a fraction of the cost. The metro's 695,000-person economy is anchored by healthcare, higher education, aerospace, and a rapidly expanding innovation sector — with a cost of living index 30–40% below Charlotte, Raleigh, and most northeastern cities.

92.4	+45K	57%	20 min
Cost of Living Index (US = 100)	Population Growth (10 yr)	White Collar Workforce	Average Commute Time

CAREER & ECONOMY

A Diverse, Resilient Job Market

- #1 City in Startup Growth — WalletHub
- #4 City for Entrepreneurial Growth — LinkedIn
- \$136M raised by Winston Starts accelerator startups
- Major employers across healthcare, finance, aerospace, & education
- 30+ organizations in the entrepreneurial support network

CONNECTIVITY

Easy Access, Everywhere

- PTI Airport — 20 minutes from downtown
- Charlotte Douglas (CLT) — 1.5 hours
- RDU Raleigh-Durham — 1.5 hours
- I-40 & I-85 corridor access
- 20-minute average daily commute

QUALITY OF LIFE

Premium Living, Practical Pricing

- 259 clear days per year
- Temperatures averaging 49–88°F year-round
- 3,500+ acres of parks, trails & greenways
- Bailey Park & Innovation Quarter social scene
- 75+ restaurants & 30+ craft breweries
- RiverRun International Film Festival
- World-class golf, Salem Lake, outdoor recreation

EDUCATION

One of the South's Best College Towns

- Wake Forest University — Top 50 nationally (US News)
- UNC School of the Arts — premier performing arts conservatory
- Salem College — oldest women's college in the US
- Winston-Salem State University
- 6 colleges & universities in the metro

NEIGHBORHOOD GUIDE

Find Where You Belong

Greater Winston-Salem spans 8 distinct communities — each offering a different lifestyle, price point, and professional environment. Here's the insider breakdown curated specifically for relocating professionals.

URBAN CORE · WALKABLE · INNOVATIVE

Downtown Winston-Salem

\$200K – \$600K+

The city's creative and economic heartbeat. Converted tobacco warehouses now house tech startups, galleries, and upscale restaurants. The Innovation Quarter draws professionals from across the country seeking a live-work-play environment.

HIGHLIGHTS

- › Innovation Quarter — 2M sq ft of research & commercial space
- › Bailey Park outdoor events & concerts
- › Walking distance to Wake Forest Baptist Health
- › Loft-style condos & new luxury apartments
- › 75+ restaurants, craft breweries, arts district

Ideal for: Tech professionals, healthcare executives, urban lifestyle seekers

HISTORIC · WALKABLE · CHARACTER-RICH

Ardmore

\$220K – \$500K

Winston-Salem's most beloved historic district. Craftsman bungalows, tree-lined streets, and a walkable village atmosphere — minutes from downtown and Wake Forest Baptist. A perennial favorite for professionals who value community and character.

HIGHLIGHTS

- › Craftsman, colonial & Tudor architecture
- › Walkable to Salem College & downtown
- › Boutique coffee shops, local dining, farmers market
- › Strong long-term appreciation track record
- › Active neighborhood association

Ideal for: Attorneys, physicians, academics, creative professionals

SUBURBAN · FAMILY-FOCUSED · ESTABLISHED

Clemmons

\$280K – \$750K+

The premier suburban destination in western Forsyth County. Consistently top-rated schools, newer construction, and seamless I-40 access make Clemmons the #1 choice for corporate relocations and growing families.

HIGHLIGHTS

- › Top-rated Forsyth County school zones
- › Tanglewood Park — golf, trails, equestrian
- › Newer construction & custom builds available
- › Established executive neighborhoods
- › Low crime, high walkability scores

Ideal for: Corporate relocations, families, executives, healthcare professionals

SPACIOUS · QUIET · COMMUNITY-DRIVEN

Lewisville**\$300K – \$800K**

A thriving planned community with a genuine small-town feel. Larger lots, newer builds, excellent schools, and a growing restaurant and retail scene attract professionals from Charlotte, Raleigh, and the Northeast.

HIGHLIGHTS

- › Oversized lots & luxury custom builds
- › Highly rated public & private schools
- › Community farmers market & local events
- › Direct commute to Wake Forest Baptist campuses
- › Strong appreciation — growing demand from out-of-state buyers

Ideal for: Remote workers, growing families, physicians, finance professionals

PRIVATE · RURAL CHARACTER · ACREAGE

Pfafftown**\$260K – \$650K**

For professionals seeking privacy and space without sacrificing proximity. Pfafftown offers custom homes on larger parcels, a genuine rural character, and a 20-minute commute to downtown.

HIGHLIGHTS

- › Acreage lots — rare at this price point
- › Custom build opportunities
- › Equestrian-friendly properties available
- › Private, quiet setting
- › Access to Lewisville & downtown W-S

Ideal for: Executives, physicians, buyers seeking land & privacy

STRATEGIC LOCATION · AFFORDABLE · GROWING

Kernersville**\$230K – \$520K**

Positioned at the I-40 / I-85 intersection, Kernersville is one of the Triad's fastest-growing communities. Strong appreciation, new construction, and access to both Winston-Salem and Greensboro make it a smart professional buy.

HIGHLIGHTS

- › 15 minutes to PTI Airport
- › Booming new construction subdivisions
- › Access to both W-S and Greensboro employment hubs
- › Strong value per square foot
- › Thriving small-town downtown district

Ideal for: Commuters, dual-market professionals, value-oriented buyers

EMERGING · AFFORDABLE · UPSIDE POTENTIAL

Walkertown**\$200K – \$390K**

The northeast corridor's fastest-rising community. Walkertown is attracting first-time professional buyers and investors ahead of broader appreciation — the opportunity window here is now.

HIGHLIGHTS

- › Strong investment upside — early mover advantage
- › New subdivisions coming online
- › Quiet residential feel
- › US-421 corridor access
- › 20 minutes to downtown W-S

Ideal for: First-time buyers, investors, budget-conscious professionals

RURAL · VALUE · LAND OPPORTUNITY

Rural Hall & Tobaccoville
\$190K – \$390K

Northern Forsyth's most undervalued communities. Large parcels, genuine rural charm, and the lowest prices in the county make these areas ideal for professionals seeking land or a private retreat.

HIGHLIGHTS

- › Lowest price per acre in Forsyth County
- › Large lot & mini-farm potential
- › Growing investor interest
- › 20 minutes to downtown W-S
- › Peaceful, private living

Ideal for: Land buyers, hobby farmers, privacy-first professionals

MARKET INTELLIGENCE

The Numbers That Matter

Understanding where Winston-Salem stands relative to comparable metros helps professionals make confident, data-backed relocation and purchase decisions.

METRIC	WINSTON-SALEM	CHARLOTTE	RALEIGH	WASHINGTON DC
Cost of Living Index	92.4	98.9	97.2	141.9
Median Home Price	Significantly below	~2x W-S	~2x W-S	~4x W-S
Avg Daily Commute	20 min	30+ min	28+ min	40+ min
First-Time Buyer Rank	#5 Nationally	Unranked	Unranked	Unranked
Affordability for Downtown Living	#3 Nationally	—	—	—
Sunny Days / Year	259 days	213 days	213 days	197 days

MAJOR EMPLOYERS

A Stable, Multi-Sector Economy

Atrium Health / Wake Forest Baptist	Health Care	Wake Forest University	Higher Education
Novant Health	Health Care	Inmar Intelligence	Data & Logistics
Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools	Public Education	Cook Medical	Medical Devices
Truist Financial	Financial Services	Forsyth Technical Community College	Education
Wells Fargo	Financial Services	PepsiCo	Beverages & Distribution
Reynolds American	Tobacco / Manufacturing	WestRock	Packaging & Logistics
Hanesbrands	Textiles / Apparel	Womble Bond Dickinson	Legal Services
Collins Aerospace	Aerospace Components	John Deere Kernersville	Construction Machinery

PROFESSIONAL PLAYBOOK

Insider Strategies for Your Move

Relocating professionals who work with a local expert navigate the Winston-Salem market faster, negotiate smarter, and land in the right neighborhood the first time. Here's what the data and experience say.

FOR BUYERS RELOCATING FROM HIGH-COST METROS

Your Dollar Goes Significantly Further	A \$500K budget in Winston-Salem buys an executive-level home in Clemmons or Lewisville. That same budget in Charlotte or DC gets you a starter home. Most relocating professionals are surprised by what's available here.
Move Fast on Desirable Inventory	Well-priced homes in Clemmons, Lewisville, and Ardmore routinely receive multiple offers within days. Come pre-approved and ready to decide — hesitation costs you the best properties.
Consider New Construction	Kernersville and Lewisville have active new construction markets where professionals can customize finishes and lock in pricing. Builder incentives are currently strong.
Match Neighborhood to Your Work Pattern	Remote workers thrive in Lewisville and Pfafftown. Downtown-based professionals benefit most from Ardmore or Downtown. Hospital system employees should prioritize proximity to Atrium or Novant campuses.

FOR EXECUTIVES & HIGH-NET-WORTH BUYERS

Clemmons & Lewisville Offer True Luxury at Triad Prices	Custom builds in executive neighborhoods like Bermuda Run and Touchstone offer finishes that rival Charlotte's SouthPark at 40-60% lower price points. Land + build opportunities are available.
Pfafftown for Privacy & Acreage	For executives seeking a private estate environment, Pfafftown offers custom homes on 2-10+ acre parcels — a product that simply doesn't exist at this price point in Charlotte, Raleigh, or the Northeast.
The Investment Opportunity is Real	W-S is one of the few remaining major NC metros where professional-grade real estate is still genuinely affordable. Early movers in the Innovation Quarter corridor have seen strong appreciation over the past 5 years.

FOR RENTERS EXPLORING BEFORE BUYING

Downtown Apartments Are Your Best Orientation	Spending 6-12 months in a downtown rental gives you the full W-S experience before committing. The rental market is active with competitive pricing compared to comparable southern metros.
Use the Rental Period Strategically	Get pre-approved, explore neighborhoods on weekends, and connect with local professionals in your industry. Winston-Salem has a strong professional networking culture — meet people first.

Let's Find Your Winston-Salem Home.

I specialize in helping professionals relocate to the Winston-Salem area with clarity and confidence. From neighborhood selection to negotiation and closing — I'm with you every step of the way.

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Found this guide helpful? Subscribe to my YouTube channel for weekly Winston-Salem market updates, neighborhood spotlights, and relocation tips.

NEIGHBORHOOD QUICK REFERENCE

NEIGHBORHOOD	CHARACTER	PRICE RANGE	PROFESSIONAL FIT
Downtown W-S	Urban / Walkable	\$200K – \$600K+	Tech, healthcare, creative
Ardmore	Historic / Charm	\$220K – \$500K	Attorneys, academics, physicians
Clemmons	Suburban / Premier	\$280K – \$750K+	Corporate relocation, executives
Lewisville	Spacious / Modern	\$300K – \$800K	Families, remote workers, finance
Pfafftown	Private / Acreage	\$260K – \$650K	Executives, physicians, privacy
Kernersville	Growth / Strategic	\$230K – \$520K	Commuters, dual-market buyers
Walkertown	Emerging / Value	\$200K – \$390K	First-time buyers, investors
Rural Hall / Tobacc.	Rural / Land	\$190K – \$390K	Land buyers, privacy seekers