

THE VILLAGES OF CITRUS HILLS

The Florida Cost of Living Guide



2400 N. Terra Vista Boulevard

Citrus Hills, FL, 34442

Phone: 800-511-0814

www.thevillagesofcitrushills.com

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If you love golfing, cycling or fishing all summer long, chances are you've thought about moving to Florida. We've heard from many Northerners who have moved here that the years of shoveling snow, sliding on icy roads and feeling cooped up all winter long are big motivating factors when considering a move to Florida.

When it comes to moving, one of the major factors is cost of living. The price of the home and the local taxes are just part of the equation. People who visit us also want to know how much it will cost to fill up their gas tank and grocery cart. If they turn up the air conditioning in the summer, will the electric bill be sky-high, and how much will it cost to do the things they enjoy, like dining out? We understand that cost of living plays a big role in any person's decision to relocate, but we're confident you'll find that the cost of living in Citrus County is even less than living in any of America's major population hubs.

About Citrus Hills

The Villages of Citrus Hills offers residents active resort-style living at a relaxed Florida pace. People move here for many reasons; to retire, to vacation year after year, or to live and work here full-time. Whatever your motivation, the Villages of Citrus Hills provides a safe, relaxed and beautiful environment. It is the perfect setting to build your dream home.

Citrus Hills is located in Citrus County, a scenic suburban area known for its spectacular natural habitat with giant Spanish-moss laced oaks, rolling hills, and miles of river and Gulf shoreline. It is home to just under 150,000 people and in close proximity to Orlando and Tampa, each just over an hour drive. Unlike other areas of Florida, the Villages of Citrus Hills sits about 260 feet above sea

level- one of the highest elevations in Florida. Not only does this make for a more scenic landscape, but the elevation of Citrus Hills allows cool breezes off the Gulf of Mexico to flow into the region, creating a nearly perfect climate throughout the year.

If being outdoors is what you love, Citrus County is the place to be. Known as a sportsman's paradise, the region is bordered by water on three sides and is home to nationally recognized snorkeling, scuba, boating and fishing spots. State parks and other outdoor recreational areas are great for hiking and biking, including the 46-mile Withlacoochee State Park multi-use path, the longest in Florida. There are also hundreds of on-site activities for residents of the Villages of Citrus Hills, including golf, tennis, pickleball, fitness and activity centers, outdoor pools and more.

Cost of Living in Citrus Hills

If you are interested in making Citrus Hills your home, it's important to understand how much it will cost on a day-to-day basis. Citrus County has a six percent sales tax on all purchased goods except food and drugs, which includes prescription medication and over-the-counter drugs. Depending on the state you're moving from, this could be a savings for you in the long-term. Please note that some counties in Florida have a sales tax that is somewhat higher than six percent.

A move from a northern state to Florida obviously means less in home heating costs. Utilities usually cost less in Florida than in states located in the Northeast or upper Midwest, as well. Health care and groceries are two other common expenses that are typically less compared to northern cities. The ACCRA Cost of Living Index is a measure of day-to-day expenses in hundreds of cities across the country. Compiled by the Council for Community and Economic Research, it shows how living in a community like Citrus Hills stacks

up to living in places like the Boston, Chicago or New York City metro areas.

According to the ACCRA Cost of Living Index, daily living expenses in the Tampa and Gainesville areas, both of which are close to Citrus Hills, are approximately 34 percent less than living expenses in Boston. In this chart below, you can see how other areas compare to our community.

Living in Citrus Hills vs living in the following cities

- 20% less than Chicago
- 29% less than northern New Jersey
- 14% less than Baltimore
- 45% less than San Francisco

Florida is also a friendly state for people looking to save on income taxes. There is no income tax on money earned in Florida, and there is no income tax on retirement income either. That means the income you generate from stocks, mutual funds or cashing in your 401k will not be taxed on the state level.

If you become a permanent resident of Citrus Hills, you can also get discounts on your local property taxes. The Florida Homestead Exemption provides up to \$50,000 off the assessed value of your home when calculating property taxes, as long as you are a permanent resident. Under Florida law, a permanent residence is *“that place where a person has his or her true, fixed, and permanent home and principal establishment to which, whenever absent, he or she has the intention of returning.”* Even if you keep a second home up north, you can get this benefit if you prove Florida is your home.

That means doing things like registering your car, getting a driver's license and registering to vote in the state.

The cost of your home in the Villages of Citrus Hills depends on your preference. There are some 20 different home styles to choose from, starting at just under 1,700-square feet to more than 4,000 -square-feet. Depending on the style and neighborhood you choose, home and home site packages range from the mid \$200,000s to more than \$1.2 million.

The estimated monthly costs of owning a \$250,000 care-free home in our Brentwood neighborhood, including property taxes, utilities, trash collection, yard maintenance, cable and phone, home association fees and the Country Club Social Membership fees, is about \$899 a month. The monthly cost of a \$350,000 care-free home in Terra Vista with the above taxes, utilities, fees and amenities is about \$1,052. These costs will vary based on utility rates, local tax rates and how many people live in your home.

What do the Country Club Social Membership fees get you?

- Free tennis at our Country Club courts, access to our Activity Center with outdoor heated pool, library, fitness center and pickleball courts
- Access to the BellaVita Spa and Fitness Center, including indoor pool and all of our many fitness classes.
- Access to our three members-only restaurants, with no food minimum
- The 42-acre Rockwood Park and Nature Trail, including children's play area, bocce courts and dog parks

- Access to Brentwood Swim and Fitness Center and Belmont Hills swimming pool

How do the Villages of Citrus Hills compare?

When comparing the Villages of Citrus Hills to other communities, please take care to look at all the added-on costs. *Many large retirement communities offer activities for residents like golf, dance classes and social clubs. But they also charge a number of fees potential buyers often don't consider, such as landscaping, various membership fees, charges for activities and more.* Those fees can all add up quickly and will be an unpleasant surprise if you're not aware of them.

There are many other resort-style communities in Florida that would love to become your new home, but we believe the Villages of Citrus Hills offers our residents much more for their money than the standard gated community. The suburban location means less traffic, crime and less stress compared to other more populated regions of the state. Citrus Hills offers residents the opportunity to personalize their new homes and provides more amenities than you can fit into your day. While many of our residents are retired, the Villages of Citrus Hills is not exclusively a retirement community, giving us diversity in ages and a neighborhood feel people enjoy.

It's also about quality of life

Calculating your cost of living in the Villages of Citrus Hills will depend largely on what kind of lifestyle you plan to live. Will you golf twice a week? Do you like to dine out a lot? How often will you be hosting the kids and their families? Life's little pleasures aren't always included in calculations and spreadsheets, but they should

be, especially when deciding where you'd like to live for years to come. At Citrus Hills, you can find Florida living the way it once was: quiet neighborhoods, great outdoor activities and friendly neighbors at an affordable price.

Experience the Citrus Hills Lifestyle- Choose Your Visit

Choose the visit that best meets your needs. Stop by with no appointment necessary and we'll give you the red carpet treatment with a tour of our community, amenities and two model homes. Or for those ready to make a decision on where to build their Florida dream home our two-night Discovery Visit is your opportunity to experience everything that's happening at Central Florida's best active resort-style community. You'll and see first-hand Florida's largest private spa and fitness center, our two tennis centers, four golf courses and an enticing array of club amenities. On your visit you will learn about:

- Our extraordinary collection of fully-customizable homes with prices ranging from the mid \$300s to over \$1.2 million.
- The comfort of living on some of Florida's highest elevations.
- The advantages of Citrus Hills' club amenities and the best resident to course ratio around.

We look forward to having you visit us!