

# DENVER LIFE<sup>®</sup>

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CULTURE | ADVENTURE | STYLE

## Denver's Best Places to Live

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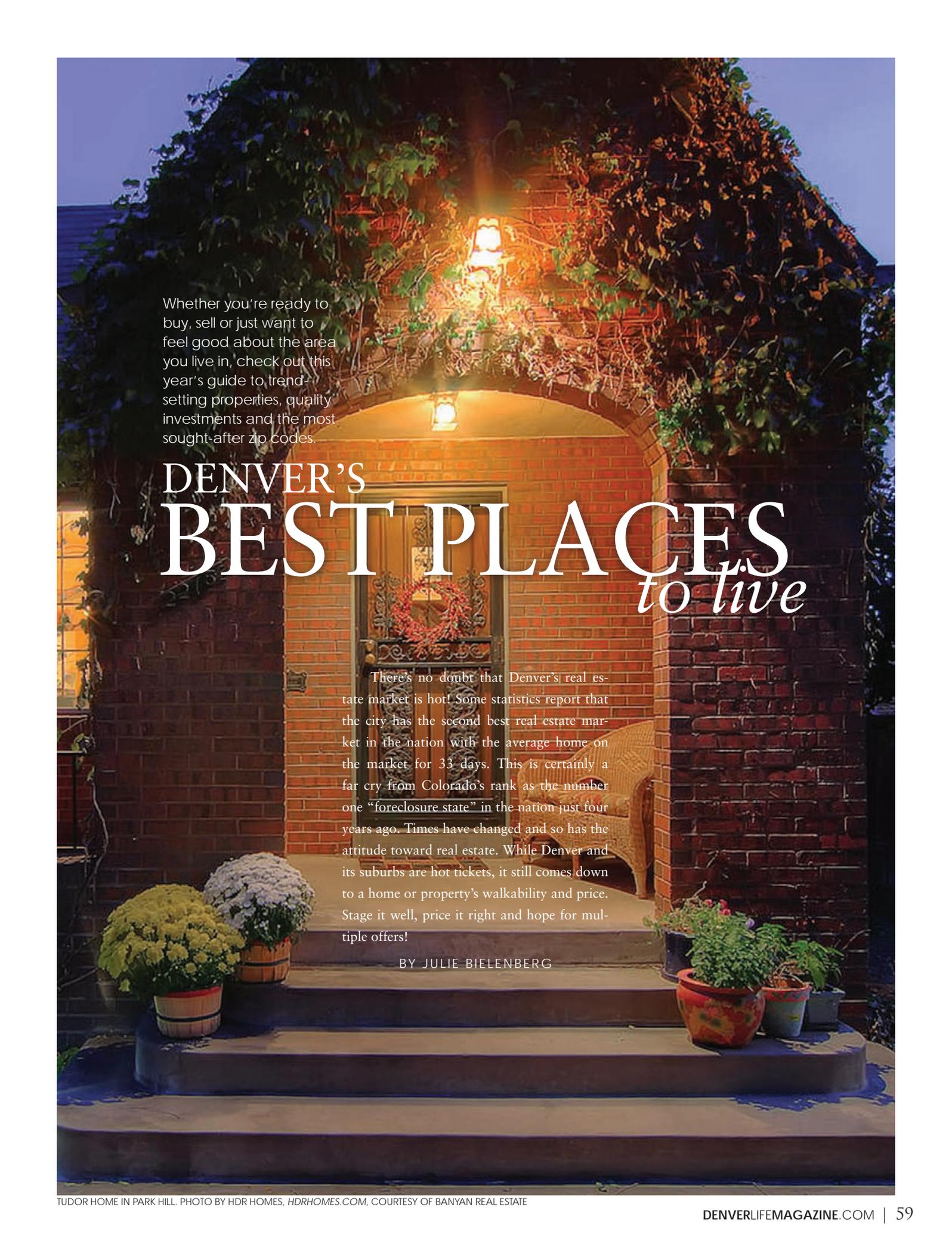


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Whether you're ready to buy, sell or just want to feel good about the area you live in, check out this year's guide to trend-setting properties, quality investments and the most sought-after zip codes.

# DENVER'S BEST PLACES *to live*

There's no doubt that Denver's real estate market is hot! Some statistics report that the city has the second best real estate market in the nation with the average home on the market for 33 days. This is certainly a far cry from Colorado's rank as the number one "foreclosure state" in the nation just four years ago. Times have changed and so has the attitude toward real estate. While Denver and its suburbs are hot tickets, it still comes down to a home or property's walkability and price. Stage it well, price it right and hope for multiple offers!

BY JULIE BIELENBERG

## DENVER NEIGHBORHOOD ROUND UP

*There are 79 official neighborhoods in Denver and far too many to delve into here. Rather, find a comprehensive list of trendy neighborhoods, transformed areas and storied classics. If your neighborhood isn't on this list, check Denver Life Magazine's website for more information!*

### BELCARO

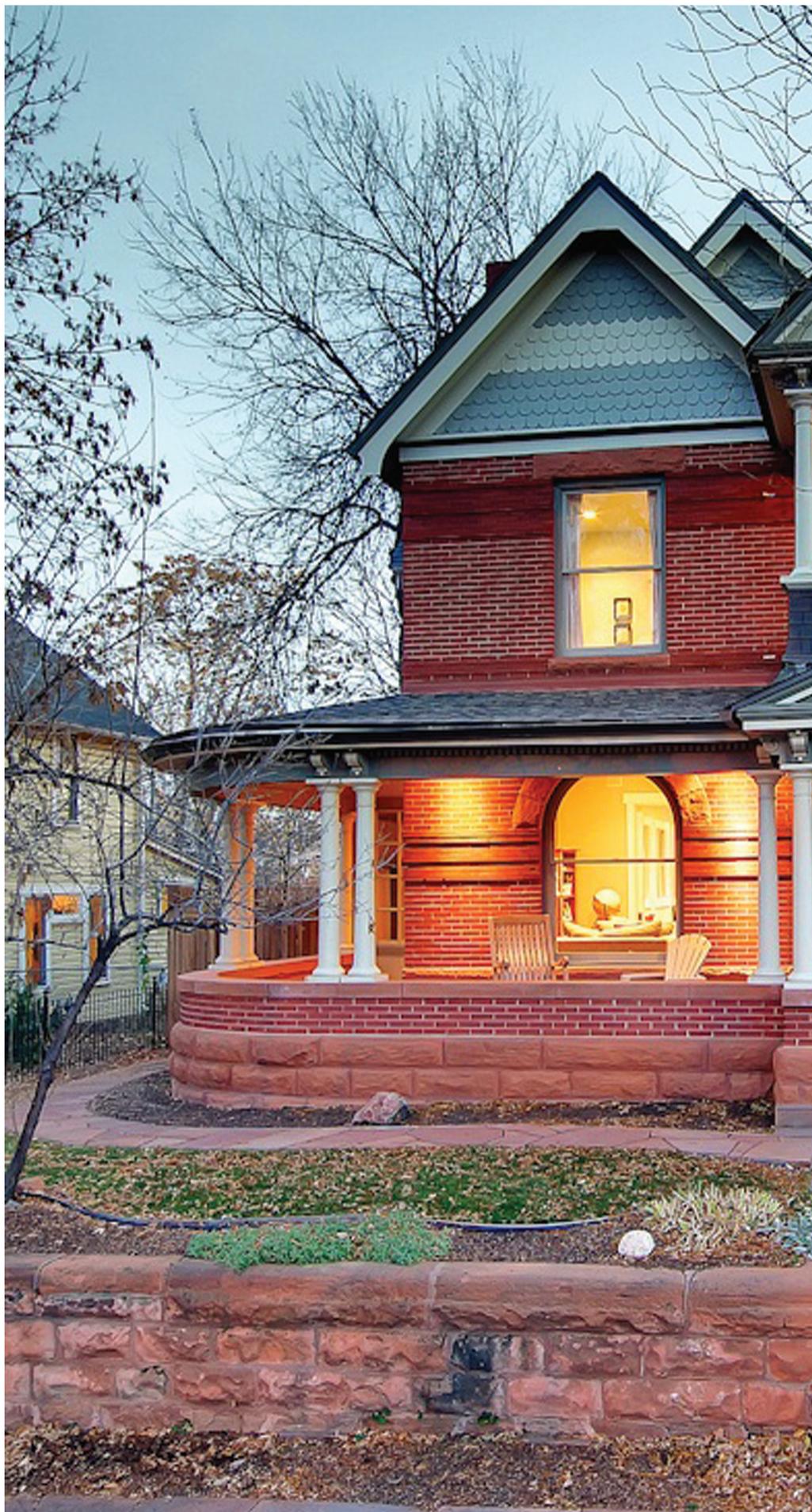
The centerpiece of this neighborhood (Exposition Ave. to Mississippi Ave., and Steele St. to Harrison St.) is the Phipps Belcaro Mansion. "Mid-century ranch style homes were constructed in the 1950s and many homes in Belcaro are occupied by their original owners. Home values for older properties start around \$600,000 and newer, redeveloped homes sell for over \$2 million," says Dagley Arnold of Perry & Co. Factor in some lots at two-plus acres and you will understand the desirability of this city neighborhood and phenomenal location close to Colorado Blvd., Washington Park and Cherry Creek.

### BONNIE BRAE

Named for its hilly topography, this was the first planned unit development in Denver. With boundaries lying University Blvd. to Steele St., and Exposition Ave. to Mississippi Ave., the neighborhood is centered on Bonnie Brae Park. "Bonnie Brae has a diverse selection of lot sizes ranging from less than 1,200 square feet to over 20,000 square feet! Prices range from \$450,000 to \$2 million," says 5<sup>th</sup> generation Denver native Arnold (also born in Bonnie Brae). A popular location with wide streets, Bonnie Brae is a pleasant neighborhood for walking the dog or heading out to the famous Bonnie Brae Tavern, Ice Cream Parlor and other shops on University Blvd. Centrally located and close to Washington Park, this is an urban gem.

### CAPITOL HILL/CHEESMAN PARK

"These densely populated neighborhoods in the heart of the city have everything within walking distance: bars, fine dining, fast food, music venues, boutiques, convenience stores



CITY PARK HOME. PHOTO BY HDR HOMES, HDRHOMES.COM, COURTESY OF BANYAN REAL ESTATE



and, of course, the Capitol Building,” says Thaddeus Howells of Porchlight Real Estate Group. “Plus, the 80-acre Cheesman Park, nearby Denver Botanic Gardens and easy access to the Cherry Creek bike path make this a perfect area for those who enjoy the outdoors.” According to Howells, real estate varies widely in price, style and age. There are large and small Victorians, towering condominiums, lofts and chic town homes that make this area a comfortable place to call home.

## CHERRY CREEK

Considered one of Denver’s most prestigious neighborhoods, expect home prices to be substantially higher than surrounding neighborhoods. “Buyers in Cherry Creek are more than willing to pay a premium for a prominent Cherry Creek North address,” says area expert Nancy Levine of Fuller Sotheby’s International Realty. Properties range from the high \$100,000’s for a studio to more than \$5 million depending on preference: older or luxury condos, pre-war bungalows, Victorians, single family homes, townhomes and much more. Levine says, “This upscale neighborhood is completely walkable. The Cherry Creek Mall is easily accessible and the 17-square-block area known as Cherry Creek North is at your fingertips and packed with art galleries, high-end boutique shops, spas, salons, restaurants and hotels. Levine explains that the area did take a hit in 2011, but it’s back with a vengeance in 2012 with nearly double the number of home and condo sales.

## CITY PARK

Home to Denver Zoo, Denver Museum of Nature & Science, a rose garden, a water feature, a golf course and the large and picturesque Ferril Lake, City Park is Denver’s crown jewel. Homes surrounding the park are a rare blend of historic and modern, single family and duplexes. Howells of Porchlight Real Estate says, “The residents are diverse as well. Many live here to be close to the park, of course, but some come for the short commute to downtown Denver and the proximity to Colfax Ave., with its lively mix of music venues, bars, restaurants and eclectic shops.” Home values range from \$150,000-\$600,000. Located right on the edge of City Park, The Pinnacle at City Park South has metro Denver condo living with a variety of views, finishes and conveniences. With an eclectic, urban style, these luxury condos run from the \$300s to \$1.2 million. There are one-, two- and three-bedroom residences, two-story ParkHomes and penthouses, all with high ceilings, natural light and great views. Condos include hardwood and natural stone floors, gas fireplaces, gourmet kitchens and private balconies, decks and terraces. There is a door attendant, full-time maintenance staff and private parking, as well as a fitness center, outdoor pool and open-air terrace. And for entertaining friends and family, you have access to the Owner’s Club Room, Media Room or Wine Tasting Room.

## HILLTOP

Hilltop is one of Denver’s premier high-end neighborhoods. Located just east of the exclusive shops and boutiques of Cherry Creek North, Hilltop boasts some of the largest lots in urban Central Denver, accommodating some of the area’s most expensive and spacious homes,” says Grant Nesbitt of Veritas Real Estate. He explains that many of the original structures have been scrapped and replaced with much larger homes.

“The Hilltop market experienced a downturn during the recession, but has shown significant improvement recently and tighter inventory is stabilizing and improving the market.” Cranmer Park is a great place to watch the fireworks from Glendale on 4<sup>th</sup> of July or picnic with the family throughout the warmer months. Sensational views of the city abound and one of Denver’s finest private schools, Graland Country Day School, is adjacent to the park.

## HIGHLAND NEIGHBORHOOD

Highland sits just across I-25, right next to downtown Denver, between 38<sup>th</sup> Ave., 29<sup>th</sup> Ave., Federal Blvd. and Sheridan Blvd. “People come from all over the city to check out the charming boutiques, eat at delicious restaurants or have a few drinks at a neighborhood hotspot. Even out-of-state folks know about this trendy hood. Average list prices run in the mid-to-high \$300,000 range; quite a bargain when you consider all the area has to offer,” says Ben Ellefson of Porchlight Real Estate Group. “So far in 2012, 80 single-family sales have closed with the highest at \$950,000; the median sale price at \$315,000, which is up from \$250,000 in 2002.” Fun Fact: The population of the neighborhood is 9,172 and the median age is 38-years-old.

## LODO

Lower Downtown, which borders Park Ave. West, Lawrence St., the South Platte River and Speer Blvd., is for the true urbanite. “Residentially, you’ll find 19<sup>th</sup> century brick architecture with classic arched windows as well as converted warehouses, renovated historic buildings, high rises and luxury living with many new lofts and condos. Unit prices range from \$200,000 to \$3 million,” says Howells of Porchlight Real Estate Group. Bordering LoDo is an excellent example of the caliber of living you can find downtown: Residence XXV, a luxury hotel resort living experience above The Ritz-Carlton Denver. With 25 private condos privy to a private lobby, fitness center, spa and valet, doorman and concierge services, this community lands you in the middle of the metro action. Howells sums up LoDo and the surrounding metro area well: “Bustling with shoppers, nightclub hoppers,



LODO/UNION STATION, PHOTO BY SIMON O' MAHONY



PHOTO BY MARK WOOLCOTT PHOTOGRAPHY, COURTESY OF RESIDENCE XXV

## CONVERSATION PIECES

Interested in the area market or just want some great conversation starters? Adam Mackstaller, a real estate broker at Banyan Real Estate and numerous award winner by the Denver Board of Realtors, shares distinct real estate facts from his ample experience in the Denver area:

- There is a big trend toward Baby Boomers downsizing and moving back into the city.
- A neighborhood's walkability factor is playing an increasingly large factor in many buyers' decision-making processes.
- Good Denver school areas are very hot, but it's not just the "known" schools that are in demand. There are numerous 'alternative tracks' in various Denver Public Schools that are making many schools more attractive options for families with young children. Examples of alternative tracks include Montessori, British Primary and International Baccalaureate.
- The Highlands neighborhood is the center of a new urban agriculture and urban farming movement. This undertaking has many facets including larger-scale vegetable gardening (taking up significant portions of backyards), raising chickens for egg production and local restaurants utilizing surrounding backyards for cultivation.
- Community backyards have more neighbors joining to create common backyards, where two or more homeowners remove some or all of their fences to share yard space, often to make bigger play areas for kids.
- "Mother-in-law apartments" are a huge trend. With last year's rezoning in Denver, certain areas are in more demand because of their "two unit" zoning. Many people (even families) are converting their basements into apartments for extra income.

sports fans, business people, gallery-goers and tourists, there is always something going on."

### LOHI

LoHi— the trendy name for the Lower Highlands area—is the community just northwest of downtown Denver and is one of the hottest neighborhoods for young professionals due to the eclectic mix of historic buildings, homes, high-end condos, lofts, apartments and a diverse commercial district. "Enjoy a short walk or bike ride over the Highland Pedestrian Bridge to access Riverfront Park and the amenities surrounding LoDo, the new Union Station development and downtown Denver. The restaurant/bar rooftop patios, with amazing views and sensational menus, are alluring," says Bogel of Twin Peaks Real Estate Group. "Prices are rising in LoHi with increased demand for the rapidly transitioning neighborhood, close proximity to the city center and Highlands area amenities. Historic homes range from \$250,000-\$900,000. New condos, lofts and town homes range from \$315,000-\$900,000."

### LOWRY

Built on the grounds of a decommissioned air force base, the now vibrant, mixed-use community is teeming with activity. This area includes everything from one-bedroom condos to luxury custom homes exceeding 6,000-square-foot house; there are singletons, families and empty nesters. "In the summer evenings, there is always a crowd of kids playing by the central fountain. Independent schools in Lowry such as Stanley British Primary, The Logan School for Creative Learning, Montclair International School, Bishop and Matchbeouf High School are extremely attractive to families," says Wendy Handler of Fuller Sotheby's International Realty. "Lowry residents have loads of amenities: a historic aviation museum and a sports complex with baseball and soccer fields, tennis and basketball courts, an ice arena and a golf course. There is an impressive collection of public art all around the neighborhood, and it's only a 10-minute drive to Cherry Creek and 15 minutes to downtown Denver. Lowry has seen a slight decrease in prices over the past few years but it is steadily climbing back with the health of the market."

### OBSERVATORY PARK

Observatory Park houses the University of Denver. With the University comes fantastic shopping, eating and entertainment. Situated just south of I-25, easy access to the city is a big draw. "Many homes have been torn down and replaced with much bigger dwellings that accommodate modern living in a neo-eclectic mansion style. Seemingly on every block in the area there is the sound of saws and hammers as Observatory Park receives a huge facelift from homeowners looking to upgrade and expand," says Dave Ness of Thrive Real Estate Group. "Observatory Park has historically done very well in terms of value, and has become the perfect blend of prestige and quaintness." Fun Fact: Chamberlin Observatory, located off Evans Ave. in Observatory Park, opened 1894 and remains a great place for a family outing or a date night!



## PARK HILL

With diverse housing stock running from \$200,000 to \$1 million, Park Hill attracts a wide range of buyers to the neighborhood. “Larger, more expansive homes can be found along Montview Blvd., between 17<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> Ave.,” says Nesbitt of Veritas Residential Real Estate. Local attractions include City Park, Denver Museum of Nature & Science, Denver Zoo, the shops at 23<sup>rd</sup> and Dahlia St., and the Kearney Street shops at 23<sup>rd</sup> Ave. and Kearney St. Beautiful Tudors and bungalows make up the majority of the inventory. Fun Fact: Former Nuggets great and current New York Knicks point guard Chauncey Billups grew up in Park Hill.

## STAPLETON

The Stapleton community (the old airport) has exploded with 12,000 residents and a mixed-use Town Center. Stapleton has attracted people interested in urban living but also newer, more livable homes than older Denver neighborhoods can offer. The area has a wide variety of residents and boasts the nation’s 11<sup>th</sup> best-selling residential community; number one in Colorado and the largest Energy Star® community in Colorado. Stapleton is the quintessential example of new urbanism and a planned community, offering a pedestrian-friendly neighborhood with 1,100 acres of parks, five pools, nine schools, a library, town center and planned Light Rail station all within 25 minutes of downtown, Cherry Creek, the airport and more. New home sales in Stapleton are incredibly hot right now as Central Park West is nearly sold out and the new Bluff Lake neighborhood is underway, which is the last area to be built-out south of I-70. The area is a 7.5-square-mile community and roughly one-third the size of Manhattan.

## WASHINGTON PARK

There are two distinct neighborhoods in Wash Park—the west side of the park and the east side of the park. Both are very family-friendly areas. The park is one of the largest parks in the city of Denver encompassing 162 acres including a lily pond, more than 50 flowerbeds, two lakes and a boathouse with rentable paddleboats. Wash Park has several miles of jogging paths and bike trails, two playgrounds, tennis courts, a basketball court, a fitness center and an indoor swimming pool. John C. Berry, of Colorado Luxury Realty, explains that prices range between the mid \$300,000s to well over \$1.5 million. He notes that the west side is more affordable with smaller lot sizes and somewhat smaller homes. Fun Fact: The S. Gaylord St. section of Wash Park is one of the oldest business districts in Denver, founded in 1924. Old S. Gaylord St. has several restaurants, boutiques, galleries and gift stores. Beware: Traffic can be heavier in this area on the side streets due to the park’s popularity.



PHOTO COURTESY OF SPIRE



## SPOTLIGHT ON SUBURBIA

*Go just a few miles outside of central Denver and bigger houses, more land and better school districts lure homebuyers. Popularity of these areas has always existed, but homes are selling more quickly with the turn in Colorado's real estate market. Again, if priced right, landscaped well and updated, multiple bids will come for a property in Denver's outlying areas. The days of sluggish suburban sales are gone.*

### BOULDER

Boulder is truly one of the most unique places on earth—25 square miles surrounded by mountains and open space. The town is certainly eclectic with fairly high-density neighborhoods and a bustling downtown, complete with street performers and spectacular restaurants. “Boulder’s housing prices are high, but look closely and there is something for everyone. We also have one of the best affordable housing programs in Colorado,” says Jill Grano of RE/MAX Alliance on Walnut. She goes on to note that Boulder did not experience the same depression as the rest of the county: “In the last five years, the Boulder market has actually appreciated by .02%. The 2012 market is hot, and in certain price ranges and neighborhoods we are seeing significant gains in values again. Boulder has been, is, and I believe always will be a safe place to invest.” Not surprisingly, Boulder has been voted the “happiest,” “fittest,” “brainiest,” “foodiest” and “best all-around city” many times over by multiple publications and studies. Boulder also has some of the strictest building requirements in the country, which is one of the reasons for its continued charm. “Wonder why that roof is curved and pointed and then drops off? It is probably because of the solar shadow ordinance. Your roof can’t cast a shadow on your neighbors or it is considered an infringement on their right to solar panels!” says Grano. And, Boulder has one of the highest concentrations of professional athletes and Master Sommeliers in the country; obviously residents love to exercise then drink good wine!

### CASTLE ROCK

Situated halfway between Denver and Colorado Springs, the charming community of Castle Rock has a reputation for small town hospitality and has received recognition by national publications as a best place to live. Named for a prominent rock formation that overlooks the town, Castle Rock is located in the heart of East Plum Creek Valley and is surrounded by rocky buttes. From stunning views of the Rocky Mountain Front Range to a charming historic downtown district, Castle Rock is a wonderful place to call home. Nestled on 3,000 acres north of town and just 10 minutes south of the Denver Tech Center, Castle Pines is a world-class community designed to blend into the spacious environment of dramatic rock cliffs and old-growth pine forest. Two nationally celebrated Jack Nicklaus Signature Golf Courses, a completed amenity package and limited remaining real estate opportunities make Castle Pines Village a suburban oasis. Lots price begin at \$280,000 and range from a half acre to a full acre. Buyers can customize their home with a preferred builder of their choice (but must maintain certain architectural guidelines).

## CENTENNIAL

Centennial offers the benefits of city living and the comforts of suburban life with large homes at many price points. With access to acres of public parks, open space and trails, it mirrors the Colorado dream with abundant outdoor recreational options. The Streets of SouthGlen, Centennial Promenade and IKEA (the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest in the country) make the city shopper-friendly and give a boost to the local economy. There is a highly educated workforce, low crime rate and two prestigious school districts. Centennial real estate guru Mike Smith of Porchlight Real Estate Group notes that home performance has been strong recently with a slight increase in average sale price and an increase in overall sales.

## CHERRY HILLS VILLAGE

Considered by many to be one of the most exclusive Denver suburbs, Cherry Hills Village covers 6.5 square miles of Arapahoe County and is one of the premier low-density communities in the western United States. Tim Chavez of Keller Williams Realty says, “The City of Cherry Hills Village has prevailed in maintaining its semi-rural character against changing economic trends. Public and private schools are among the best in the state; landscaping is mature and lush; crime is very low; commercial zoning is almost obsolete; and the far-reaching trail system, the High Line Canal, is an outdoor enthusiast’s dream.” Homes range from \$700,000 to more than \$12 million, and the average home sale price is approximately \$1.8 million. Incomes of the residents in Cherry Hills are the highest in the state and among the top 10 in the United States. Chavez says, “It’s only 10 minutes to the Denver Tech Center, 15 minutes to the Cherry Creek Shopping Center and 20 minutes to downtown.”

## GREENWOOD VILLAGE

“Fifty years ago, Greenwood Village was a land strewn with farms, dairies, gravel roads and a population of 500 residents. Today, those charming rural elements have been combined with the addition of high-end urban and residential areas. The 35 neighborhoods found within Greenwood Village’s 8.21 square mile border offer an interesting range of real estate for family living,” says area expert Tim Chavez. Residents have more than 21 parks at their fingertips. The conveniently close location to the Denver Tech Center, upscale restaurants and shopping adds almost 70,000 people to the city’s daytime population. Home prices typically range from \$300,000 to more than \$3 million. Cherry Creek School District and Littleton Public Schools service the area and also set some of the highest standards for public education in the Denver Area.

## HIGHLANDS RANCH

Highlands Ranch is a master-planned community that includes four state-of-the-art recreation centers, 25 community parks, two skate parks, batting cages, a tennis center, four dog parks, and 58 miles of trails winding through the neighborhoods! Established in 1981, the population continues to grow and is close to 100,000 people. The community is almost built out, with four communities currently under construction. One such community, Backcountry, was awarded “Community of the Year” by the Homebuilders Association of Metro Denver. Many call the Backcountry community “wild at heart,” and it’s easy to see why. More than 20 years ago, the developer of Backcountry made an agree-

ment with Douglas County to preserve land now known as the Backcountry Wilderness Area. This unusual agreement is what makes it possible for residents of the Backcountry community to have 467 acres of flora, fauna, trails and parks to explore in their backyards. Offering a variety of home styles—from the \$300s to \$1.2 million—you’ll feel much farther away from the Denver business hubs than you actually are. This SheaHomes community, offers well-designed homes surrounded by natural waterways and exclusive trails, as well as the Sundial House—this private lodge for Backcountry residents and guests, is a gorgeous landmark that is actually designed to be a sundial. Trina Oylo of Cherry Creek Properties points out that Highlands Ranch was ranked by *Forbes* as one of the “top places to move to” in the U.S., and by *Business Week* as one of the “best places to raise kids.” Pretty impressive for a former potato farm that once covered the land.

## SOUTH DENVER

(Englewood, Littleton, Lone Tree and Parker)

Living in south Denver definitely has more benefits than drawbacks. Included in Denver’s rank as “one of the most secure places to live” in 2011, commuters can easily and safely get downtown without too much of a hassle. Englewood, with a growing population of about 30,000, has many recreation areas and parks. The Englewood Community Garden provides a commonplace for the city’s diverse residents. There are many singletons and families, providing a diverse array of options in housing. The high-end residences and shopping



PHOTO COURTESY OF SOLTERRA



PHOTO COURTESY OF PRADERA



found at Vallagio at Inverness are one such example. Bordering Englewood is Littleton. This city of about 41,000 people is home to many young professionals and smaller families. Its neighborhoods have turn-of-the-century homes and modern mansions. An ideal home for younger boomers, Littleton is ranked as one of “America’s most playful cities” and “cities on the edge of greatness” by *Sperling’s Best Places*. South of Littleton is Lone Tree, a Douglas County city of 11,000 with a daytime employment population of more than 300,000. This area’s economic output is close to 25 percent of the state’s total, including businesses like CH2MHill, Investco and First Data. With many shopping and entertainment areas, Lone Tree is a destination for many surrounding cities. Residents here embrace the combination of nature and new urbanism. One example of a Lone Tree community that blends urban and rural is Montecito at Ridgeway. Just west of I-25, Century Communities will bring 142 homesites to Montecito among 1,000 acres of parks, trails and open space. These homes will be in close proximity to fantastic retail, dining and recreation hotspots, as well as easy access to medical facilities and mass transit options. Century Communities ranks as a “Top 5 Colorado builder” and “Top 100 National Builder,” so Lone Tree residents can trust that Montecito at Ridgeway will only better the surrounding area. Another Lone Tree community, Heritage Hills is recognized as the 2011 Parade of Homes Dream Community. Heritage Hills offers semi-custom luxury homes in the Overlook neighborhood (from the mid-\$700s) and fully custom homes in the Summit neighborhood (from \$1 million). The total build-out of homes in all price ranges is projected to be 677 and currently the development is just under 80 percent complete. From Colorado-rustic to Tuscan to Old World, the floorplans are open and the designs include courtyards and outdoor rooms. Great for an active family, the development has four tennis courts, a basketball half-court, a mini soccer field, parks, playgrounds and two Junior-Olympic-size pools within its gates. With low crime rates, excellent schools and communities like Ridgeway and Heritage Hills, we don’t see the growth and success of Lone Tree slowing down any time soon. East of Lone Tree is Parker, a 45,300-person city located 20 min-

utes south of Denver. With an average age of 31 and excellent education options, Parker is an ideal place for young families. The growth from 2000 to 2010 has been 97 percent, and the town ranked 29<sup>th</sup> in *CNN Money Magazine's* Best Places to Live. Located in the south portion of the town, Pradera is a beautiful community nestled in the hills between Parker and Castle Rock offering new luxury homes with outdoor living spaces and stunning views of the surrounding area. Most of the homes reside on or near the golf course, while some touch Pradera's hundreds of acres of protected open space. There are Courtyard Villas from the \$400s, Semi-Custom Homes from the \$500s, the European Hillside Collection from the mid-\$700s and Custom-Homes from \$1 million. Community amenities—a private golf course, pool, parks and trails—will provide your family with endless seasonal entertainment. Between Lone Tree and Parker, you can't go wrong: the Douglas County schools are some of the best in the area and Douglas County was ranked 7<sup>th</sup> on *Forbes'* "Nation's Richest County" list and 4<sup>th</sup> on CNN's "Where The Jobs Are" growth list.



PHOTO COURTESY OF BACKCOUNTRY



{click *real estate*}

For a list of local realtors and more great neighborhoods, visit [denverlifemagazine.com](http://denverlifemagazine.com)



PHOTO COURTESY OF BLACKSTONE COUNTRY CLUB (CANNONGATE)

# TRENDING

Read about some off-the-beaten path neighborhoods and areas of dramatic transformation.

## AURORA

### Blackstone Country Club Estates

This community is included in the nationally award-winning Cherry Creek School District. With a short drive to premier shopping and many other dining and entertainment options, residents of Blackstone Country Club Estates can enjoy nearby biking/walking/running paths, gardens, picnic pavilions, community parks and nature trails. The community has easy access to E-470, I-25, I-225 and, of course, Blackstone Country Club, which provides access to upscale amenities including a championship golf course, which was the creative design of *Golf World Magazine's* 1996 Architect of the Year, Jay Morrish. Between club amenities, including a pool, a fitness center and tennis courts, and property amenities, such as walk-in closets, a library loft and outdoor gas fireplaces, you can't overlook this popular community. Builders include Lennar, Ryland and Brookline with prices ranging from the \$300's to \$800's.

## DENVER

### Cherry Creek Country Club

After bottoming out in 2009 with more than a dozen foreclosures, this gated golf paradise has turned the corner and is one of very few offering new construction starting in the mid-\$500,000s. "The club is nestled 15 minutes from Cherry Creek, along the Cherry Creek bike path, and is surrounded by luxury, technology, civilized amenities and endless rounds of inspiring Jack Nicklaus Signature golf. The spa and fitness center has more than enough amenities and the area is abuzz with a huge influx of new members (from the former Green Gables Country Club). "Membership is near capacity, according to sources close to Karen Hart, the club owner," says Dan Fead of Fuller Sotheby's International Realty.

## THORNTON

### Marshall Lake

Marshall Lake (Adams County) has one of the area's hottest real estate markets. Keep your eyes open between 132<sup>nd</sup>, 136<sup>th</sup> and Holly Street. "There are great trails to walk, run or jog with family and pets. The stunning homes were built in 2006 and 2007 and range from 3,000 to 5,000 square feet, boasting gorgeous kitchens and huge, open great rooms. As of mid-May there is only one home on the market and seven under contract if that tells you how popular this community is!" says Aimee Quaratino of 8z Realty.

## LAKEWOOD

### Solterra

Solterra, a new-build, master-planned community situated in Denver's foothills between Green Mountain and Red Rocks offers residents a 6,000-square-foot clubhouse, spa, fitness center, infinity pool, outdoor amphitheater, onsite play area, fenced dog park, resident events and natural open space parks and trails. Among the current plans for development is a new phase of homebuilding from Cardel Homes, with the introduction of the new Renaissance Series, adding six floorplans from the low \$400,000s. Golfers rejoice. There are 144 fairways within 10 minutes of Solterra and it's only 20 minutes to downtown Denver.

## DENVER

### Spire

It's a new LEED-certified high-rise community with resort-style amenities in the heart of downtown Denver at 14<sup>th</sup> St. and Champa St. There is a rooftop pool, health club, yoga garden, screening room, dog park and more. Spire has received strong recommendations through recent awards, including the NAIOP Development of the Year and the Rocky Mountain Real Estate Challenge Multifamily Project of the Year.

It is certainly a hot ticket for true urbanites who want the amenities of the big city and the comfort of a true home. More than 200 units in the building have sold and prices start in the mid \$200,000s.

## AURORA

### Tallyn's Reach

Located just east of E-470 off Arapahoe Rd. and south of Smoky Hill Rd., this community is nearing build-out. Tallyn's Reach has rolling hills, open space, mountain views and tall Ponderosa pines; it backs up to over 200 acres of open space and is close to fantastic amenities such as Southlands Shopping Center. "The Tallyn's Reach community includes custom builders, Toll Brothers, New Town Builders and several others with prices starting in the low \$300,000s to \$1 million. Cherry Creek School District is a big draw and students entering third through fifth grade at Black Forest Hills Elementary School this August will receive an Apple iPad loaded with curriculum for use at home and at school," says John Berry of Colorado Luxury Realty.



PHOTO COURTESY OF SPIRE