



Active adult communities are booming for boomers

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Imagine waking every day to the crash of waves on the beach near your front yard, or a view of the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains just beyond your bedroom terrace. For baby boomers, these dreamy vacation landscapes are becoming home as Active Adult Communities(AACs) spring up across our nation. Residents do not need to be retired to experience what these AACs have to offer. The only qualifier for entrance is age, usually 55+ as well as the ability to pay. Average age in these communities tends to be in the mid-60's or less. A large percentage of residents are still working and many of the floor plans include space for a home office.

Amenities offered include group cooking classes, hiking, group exercise and many others that correspond to an active lifestyle. Homes are energy-efficient and modern, often one-story and frequently laid-out in a way that allows residents to grow old there and remain independent. AACs have a central, hub-like community center, where residents can socialize and take part in the organized events or classes. Communities usually also have gyms, tennis courts and pools and they are always located close to major metropolitan areas for convenience so that residents don't need to give up family and friends in their retirement or pre-retirement transition.

Forms of ownership range from simple rental arrangements to outright purchase in both the traditional manner and also through the more complicated Life Care Community arrangement. Rental costs that I found range from \$1500 per month all the way up to \$6000. per month. Some communities have home owner associations with self governance and others have continued management ownership by the original building company.



AACs are becoming increasingly popular with seniors of all demographics: from those over eighty to those not-quite seniors in their fifties. You will find a heavy concentration of these in North Carolina, which has many communities across the state in Raleigh, Asheville, and Greensboro. There is no objective directory online at this time but a simple on-line search using “Active Adult Community” will yield quite a few companies describing their communities throughout the country.

This evolution in housing options is shaking up the real estate game for seniors, with more and more people choosing to live independently in this type of neighborhood. You can expect rapid growth in this type of housing over the next decade as our changing demographic continues to modify the real estate landscape.

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