

✈ From the ocean, to the heartland

flyoverfuture.com/newsletters/?-from-the-ocean-to-the-heartland/

October 18,
2019

FLYOVER LIVING

Reader Story: How moving inland improved my life



Knoxville Skyline - Shutterstock

By Felicia Muniz

As a former resident of cities on both coasts, I was apprehensive about moving to a landlocked state. But I knew relocating was the only way to attain my goals of buying a home, growing roots, and creating a sustainable life.

Homeownership

Most first-time homebuyers in America are in their early to mid-30s and many are purchasing before marriage. In coastal cities, housing is a huge expense with one-bedrooms in bad areas valued at more than a million dollars. While easier for a two-income household, sole homeownership is nearly impossible.

Coastal states were all I knew until I moved to Knoxville, TN. I initially came to the area to visit my mom before heading back to Los Angeles. However, since homeownership had always been a dream of mine, I stayed longer after looking into the housing costs.

Knoxville

The median home price in Knoxville is about \$174,000. Favorable loans and grants, like those from the United States Department of Agriculture, are also available for rural housing purchases and developments like those on the outskirts of the city.

Affordable listings are in safe neighborhoods, have backyards, and more closely resemble my childhood home than the skyscraping apartments of Miami. The rental choices in my budget are mansions compared to the studio shoeboxes I was used to. Housing, groceries, utilities, and transportation in the area are all less expensive than the nation's average.

Community and culture

Relocating to the Appalachian region took some getting used to. Sayings like, "Have a blessed day" initially rattled me. But I soon realized that those colloquialisms stem more from manners than from beliefs. Those folks were simply wishing me well.

Back to nature

Tennessee has mountains, valleys, and rushing rivers. The area offers great outdoor activities like boating, climbing, and mountain biking year-round. In addition to the Great Smoky Mountains, Ijams Nature Center is a playground in the wilderness, with everything from adventure trails to climbing and ziplining.

Lifestyle

Knoxville is a quaint but progressive city that crosses Southern charm with hipster subculture. It has been quietly renovating downtown for the last few decades. And since hosting the World's Fair in 1982, Knoxville has polished its historical architecture. Buildings retain their nostalgic charm and incorporate mural art, while businesses follow current trends just like East and West Coast cities do.

Knoxville has all the modern city amenities available in coastal metropolitan areas—but with a more affordable price tag.

People are polite. They take a moment to ask about your day and treat you like a person with a backstory rather than someone impeding their day.

Settling in

The seasons provide more variety than I ever experienced in Southern California. As the mild Tennessee winter shifts into a warm spring and then a sticky Southern summer, the insistence of change reminds me that anything and anyone can transform with time, which is an enlightening thought for those of us who wish to start fresh in a new place.

Posted in [Most Recent Newsletter](#)