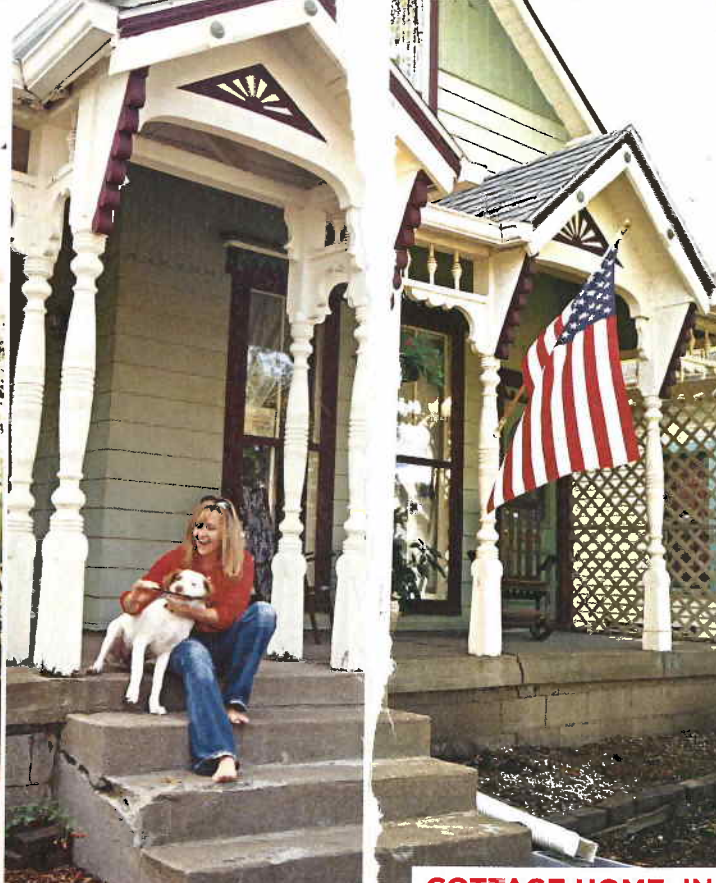


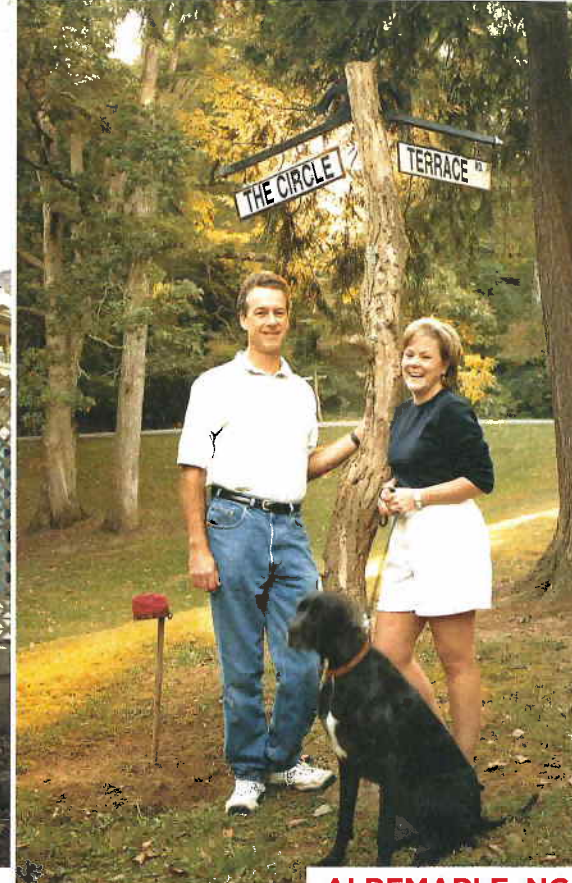
FIRST ADDITION, OR



BUNGALOW HEAVEN, CA



COTTAGE HOME, IN



ALBEMARLE, NC



DEL RAY, VA

2006 cottageliving OUR TOP 10 COTTAGE COMMUNITIES

What makes a great neighborhood? For us it's cottage charm, civic pride, and

a close-knit feeling. Here's our pick of places we'd like to call home >



FIVE SISTERS, VT



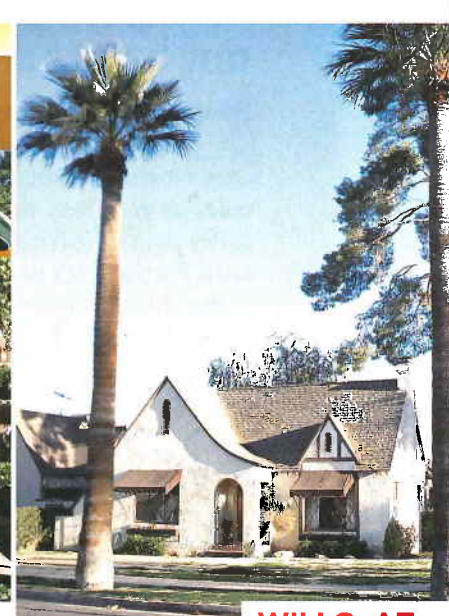
HISTORIC KENWOOD, FL



BRYN MAWR, MN



OLD WEST AUSTIN, TX



WILLO, AZ

TOP 10 COTTAGE COMMUNITIES



DEL RAY, VA

THE IDEA:

Find 10 standout cottage communities—places with porches and gardens, parks and playgrounds; streets where you can stroll to locally owned shops and restaurants; areas with architecture that makes your heart skip a beat; places where neighbors know your name and are trustworthy, dependable, and free for a cookout on Friday night.

These qualities are nearly impossible to quantify. You can't plug income, real estate, crime, and school stats into a computer and expect it to spit out a bunch of neighborhoods. We went about our search the best way we could, by talking to folks. We followed their leads to hundreds of cottage communities around the country. By their very nature, some older, more established neighborhoods rose to the top. More recently established communities—New Urbanist-inspired creations known as Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TNDs)—simply couldn't compete. Yet.

What truly inspired us were the comeback stories of residents whose older communities—the very places the TNDs model—had suffered post-World War II urban blight only to be revived by dedicated homeowners. Historic Kenwood in St. Petersburg and Cottage Home in Indianapolis are two places that have made remarkable turnarounds, as their rising real estate prices attest.

Which brings us to an important point: Home prices are up, especially in great cottage communities. When you buy into one of these neighborhoods, though, you're getting so much more than house and lot. In the broadest sense, you're getting a home. >



THE CRITERIA

We divided the country into five regions and picked two cottage neighborhoods from each. Targeting metropolitan areas with at least 100,000 people, we spent months querying real estate agents, architects, local and national preservation groups, city officials, neighborhood association leaders, and editors at alternative news weeklies, searching for the most notable spots. Here's what we looked for and the weight we gave each category.

HOMES (30 PERCENT): vernacular architecture, cottage-y scale (not sprawling, in line with original neighborhood design—no teardown zones), affordability (as related to regional income levels and real estate prices), walkability

PEOPLE (30 PERCENT): diverse and caring neighbors, well-organized community network, social events for fun and good causes

SHOPS AND HANGOUTS (20 PERCENT): colorful, independent retail stores and eateries within walking distance

GREENSPACE (10 PERCENT): parks, playgrounds, nature preserves

COTTAGE TWIST (10 PERCENT): signature characteristic that brings a smile

“Places where neighbors know your name and are trustworthy, dependable, and free for a cookout on Friday night”



Community profile

- **LOCATION:** 2 miles west of downtown St. Petersburg (10 miles from beaches)
- **NUMBER OF HOMES:** 1,100
- **WHAT \$300,000 WILL BUY YOU:** You'll spend about \$250,000 for an updated three-bedroom bungalow, among the nicest in the neighborhood.
- **CLOSEST LATTE:** Grinders Coffee and Art Bar, on Central Avenue
- **FOR MORE INFO:** historickenwood.org

5 **HISTORIC KENWOOD**

ST. PETERSBURG, FL

Elbow grease and lots of parties brought back this bungalow enclave

THE PORCH SYMBOLIZES the neighborly attitude you'll find in Historic Kenwood—people wave to passersby, pamper their plants, host a monthly happy hour. So it was only fitting when the neighborhood association won a grant for a new park pavilion that the structure look like, well, a four-sided porch.

Developed in 1912, Historic Kenwood, like so many early 20th-century American neighborhoods, began a mid-century downward spiral that didn't let up until the 1990s. That's when pioneers like Bob Jeffrey moved here and bought homes for prices that today sound more like high credit card balances. He and others banded together and helped turn the neighborhood, once nearly 90 percent rental, back into mostly single-family homes. In the past 15 years, dedicated residents have reversed a three-decade trend that saw the enclosure of 240 porches by opening back up 185 of them—yet another reason to raise a glass to the Historic Kenwood porch. >

THE WAY THEY LIVE

- **HOMES:** Historic Kenwood has one of the highest concentrations of 1920s Craftsman-style bungalows in Florida. Most are two- and three-bedroom homes lining brick streets with hexagon-block sidewalks. Mature trees tower above thick lawns and palm shrubs. Last year's "best front yard landscape makeover" contest paid a top prize of \$500.
- **PEOPLE:** This is a generous, fun-loving bunch, hosting regular potluck suppers and happy hour porch parties. "We spend more time socializing than doing neighborhood improvement," admits Bob Jeffrey. "There are not a lot of issues left, because we've worked so hard." Members of the Historic Kenwood Neighborhood Association have recently revived their own updated version of the Welcome Wagon, giving newcomers baskets filled with gifts from local merchants, such as coffee, dog biscuits, and plants.
- **SHOPS AND HANGOUTS:** Once they got the neighborhood back on its feet, residents tackled the commercial district, known as Grand Central, and have done wonders with it. A majority of local businesses are not only nonchain but owned by Kenwood residents. Two favorites: Grinders Coffee and Art Bar, and Roco Traders (home furnishings).
- **GREENSPACE:** The one-block-square Seminole Park anchors the neighborhood. Resident volunteers designed and built the pavilion modeled on a nearby row of bungalows.
- **COTTAGE TWIST:** We mentioned fun-loving. How about puckish? An anonymous group calling themselves the Kenwood Elves now enforces an unwritten rule that residents must decorate for the holidays. Don't decorate by December 15 and the sneaky elves may do it for you.

"In the past 15 years, dedicated residents have reversed a three-decade trend that saw the enclosure of 240 porches by opening back up 185 of them"