

## The World's Best

There are many opinions regarding the perfect retirement destination. Three years ago, Modern Maturity Magazine made an objective observation by rating several destinations where one may want to retire or buy a second home. We have retained their rankings (60 being the maximum), added our own content, and only listed the top five.

### 1. Costa de Sol, Spain – Score: 51

This beach rich area is what you would expect of a major European vacation destination. The magic that is worthy of a high rating is found in the quiet enclaves on the coast and the pristine countryside inland. This area was given high scores for its low crime rate, good health care, and recreational activities.

### 2. Cinque Terre, Italy - Score: 49

Located in the northwestern area of Italy, the “five lands” are five villages nestled into the mountains that overlook the Italian Riviera. Cinque Terre won the number two spot because of its low crime, moderate climate, and the excellent, yet affordable Italian health care system. House rentals are high, however, since Italy’s rent control doesn’t apply to foreigners.

### 3. Boquete, Panama - Score: 48

If you love tropical lushness and don’t need the stimulation of the big cities, this lively community near the Costa Rican border is the destination for you. Home to many European and American expats, most have come for the stable political scene, very modest cost of living (25% less than in the suburbs of most U.S. cities), clean air, and outdoors activities such as river rafting, tennis and golf. Boquete is known as the “Land of Eternal Spring”, a village nicely placed in the attractive landscape of coffee plantations and orange groves. Here the

retirees escape the 80-90 degree heat in the lowlands and luxuriate in Boquete’s day time temperatures that hover around 70 degrees. A three bedroom house rents for \$450 monthly and a simple meal can be had for \$4 to \$5. Retiree incentives abound with discounts for everything from transportation to health care. Modest medical needs are met locally, with a regional hospital only 35 minutes away in David, Panama’s third largest city. World class facilities are available in Panama City (a one hour, ten minute flight way) where Johns Hopkins International is building a major hospital.

### 4. Provence, France - Score: 48

Provence is known as a European utopia, with some of the best food in a country that treasures food. Excellent cultural activities are plentiful and picturesque towns adorn the countryside. It is civilized but pricey. A three room farm house in need of repair will cost over \$265,000. Groceries are expensive, although you can buy wonderful produce in open air markets for a lot less. People over 65 receive discounts on buses and trains. To stay in France for more than three months you’ll need a long-stay visa before you arrive, requiring a certain amount of red tape.

### 5. St. Vincent / The Grenadines - Score: 47

A world away from the typical Caribbean tour, this 33-island archipelago greets visitors with more fishing and walks on the beach than motorized water sports and night clubs. St. Vincent, the main island, has the beauty of lush rain-forests. Mustique, also lush, has been known as a hideaway for the rich and famous. Although medical care is available, serious medical problems will require a return to the States. Smooth roads and scheduled bus service are not to be expected in this getaway. Cheap living is also a thing of the past, due to the same rich and famous driving up the housing costs. St. Vincent’s leisure activities, clean environment, and great climate have resulted in its high score.