

Comparing Steamboat with other resorts

STEAMBOAT PILOT & TODAY

Each ski area is not the same, as homebuyers interested in resort towns soon discover. The decision to invest in property in a resort town requires consideration of properties in more than one resort.

Most people who are considering resort life are looking at a range of towns, said Cam Boyd, a broker and co-owner of Prudential Steamboat Realty.

"A lot of times when people are looking at buying property in Steamboat Springs they're looking at other resorts as well," Boyd said. These buyers usually consider places such as Winter Park, Vail, Breckenridge, Keystone, and even towns in Utah and Wyoming, Boyd said.

A buyer's final decision is based on several factors, one of which is simply what each resort town is like. One attraction of Steamboat, Boyd said, is that it feels like a town.

"We have a lot more of a town atmosphere, whereas some of the other resorts are just resorts," Boyd said. "A lot of people really like having a sense of a community."

Buyers for whom the resort home is a second home should consider how far away they want to drive or fly from their hometown to get to the resort. Steamboat's distance from the Front Range is one barrier for people in cities such as Denver and Boulder who don't want to spend an extra hour and a half in the car. Proximity is less of a problem for people living further away who have to fly into Steamboat, Boyd said.

The fact that Steamboat is more out of the way than other resorts can also be a plus, Boyd said. Because the town doesn't have as much traffic through town from Front Range skiers who come up for the day, it stays quieter during the winter.

Another important consideration is price. Compared to Aspen, Jackson Hole, Telluride and Vail, homes in Steamboat are reasonable. But for people who haven't visited other resort towns, Steamboat may seem expensive.

The quality of skiing also plays into the decision of which resort town to pick. A lot of people come to Steamboat Springs because they like the mountain here, Boyd said. Parents with children also tend to choose Steamboat because it is a family-friendly resort.

"Lots of people buying here love the ski area," Boyd said. "The ski area is really conducive to families because it's not real difficult, but it's big enough so they never get bored."

Two final attractions for Steamboat are the good weather and the breathing room.

Compared to weather in resorts in Summit County, which sit at elevations that are thousands of feet above Steamboat, the weather in Steamboat is mild. Winters are less harsh and the quality of snow in Steamboat is better. That also means that summers come more

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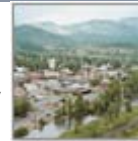


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quickly, a plus for the golfers and bikers.

Also, because Steamboat sits in a broader valley, there's more elbow room and a better chance for people to buy a 35-acre ranch or a 100-acre ranch, or even a home with a large backyard.

After comparing a handful resort towns and deciding which features of resort living are most important, buyers should know enough to make an informed decision that keeps them happy for years to come.

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