



Alabama’s quality of life is exceptional for fortune, family and fun.

Alabama’s thriving industrial economy peacefully coexists with the beautiful mountain splendor of the Appalachian foothills in the north to the world’s purest, whitest and sun-kissed Gulf Coast beaches to the south.

**Low Cost of Living**

The cost of housing in Alabama is quite low, with average sale prices for homes some 40 percent less than the national average. During the first quarter of 2016, the median sales price for a home in Alabama was \$130,558, while the U.S. average was \$217,600. The overall cost of living in Alabama’s metropolitan areas ranked well below the national index. In addition, Alabama consistently has one of the lowest tax burdens in the United States.

Alabama’s cost of living ranks below the national average, and its state and local tax burden is one of the lowest in the nation.

**Moderate Climate**

Alabama has warmth and sunshine for the greater part of the year. Spring arrives early, with the weather warming to the 60s Fahrenheit daily by March. Summer days average in the low 80s, with periods of 90 and above. Sweaters or jackets will usually keep off the chill through November. Prolonged spells of

severely cold weather are not frequent during the winter. Snow is a rarity except in higher altitudes of North Alabama.

**Education**

With some of the highest graduation requirements in the U.S., public high school students are required to pass a minimum of 24 credits, including four years of English, mathematics, social studies, and science.

Academic magnet programs provide intensive study in several disciplines, preparing students for advanced college placements.

A few highlights follow:

- The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme provides a rigorous pre-university course of studies for academically gifted secondary school students. The Diploma Programme is offered in 12 Alabama schools throughout the state.
- The Alabama School of Fine Arts in Birmingham is one of only a few state-supported creative schools in the nation. The public school provides tuition-free education to Alabama students in six fields.
- The Alabama School of Mathematics and Science, a state-sponsored institution located in Mobile, is a pre-collegiate center of excellence for science, mathematics, and technology education.

The Alabama higher education system consists of 30 four-year colleges and universities and 26 two-year community and technical colleges and junior colleges. Among these include highly respected schools of Engineering, Pharmacy, and Veterinary Medicine, and internationally recognized Optometry, Dental, Agricultural, and Forestry schools. Alabama’s institutions of higher education are strategically located throughout the state to afford Alabamians ready access to higher education opportunities.

Alabama public schools have some of the highest graduation requirements in the country and, along with 26 community colleges and 30 universities, are focused on emerging needs of Alabama’s citizens and industry.

**Average Temperatures in Major Alabama Cities**

	Birmingham		Huntsville		Mobile		Montgomery	
	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low
Spring	74 / 23	50 / 10	74 / 23	50 / 10	73 / 23	60 / 15	76 / 24	55 / 13
Summer	90 / 32	68 / 20	92 / 33	69 / 20	88 / 31	75 / 24	90 / 32	71 / 22
Fall	75 / 24	52 / 11	75 / 24	50 / 10	78 / 25	65 / 18	77 / 25	56 / 13
Winter	55 / 13	34 / 01	53 / 12	34 / 01	62 / 17	48 / 09	56 / 13	40 / 04
Mean Annual	73 / 23	51 / 10	73 / 23	50 / 10	75 / 24	62 / 17	75 / 24	55 / 13



## QUALITY OF LIFE

### Outdoor Activities and Spectator Sports

Alabama is blessed with an abundance of natural resources and a diversity of natural and scenic wonders. An abundance of forested land, water resources and natural beauty makes Alabama a paradise for outdoor enthusiasts.

**Beaches-** Alabama's Gulf Coast resort communities offer the best of sun and

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surf on miles of sugar white sands. Gulf Shores and Orange Beach are the perfect places for a great vacation where you can swim, sail, go fresh-water or deep-sea fishing, soak up the sun, feast on fresh-caught seafood, or just forget the clock and take it easy.

**Camping-** Alabama has public lands for use by everyone. Alabama State Parks provide unlimited activities for the entire family. From resort lodges to rustic chalets and campgrounds, the parks provide a wide variety of accommodations, facilities and activities for outdoor adventure and activities for every occasion. Everything from resorts, camping, boating, hiking trails, fishing, golf, tennis, swimming, cabin rentals, conference and meeting facilities and more are available at 22 state parks.

**Boating-** With Alabama's favorable weather conditions throughout most of

the year, boating is a popular activity across the state. Available for boating are more than 500,000 acres of lakes, 1,300 miles of rivers and 53 miles (85 km) of Gulf of Mexico coastline.

**Sports-** In Alabama, sports are a way of life. Enthusiastic crowds of 80,000-90,000 watch the Alabama Crimson Tide and Auburn Tigers play major college football. Alabama colleges all play first-rate basketball as well. Golf and tennis are year-round sports. Minor league baseball teams can be found in Birmingham, Huntsville, Mobile, and Montgomery. And, a professional SPHL hockey team, The Huntsville Havoc, calls the state home.

One of Alabama's best-known sports venues is the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail. Eleven Trail sites are located across the state. Each facility offers 18 to 54 challenging holes, awesome scenery and a great value. Six of the trail sites offer luxurious resorts. The signature clubhouse at each Trail location is a magnificent structure, featuring a full service restaurant, meeting space, locker facilities, and a wrap-around porch. The courses were designed by the renowned Robert Trent Jones, Sr., yet each is unique thanks to Alabama's topographical diversity.

The Talladega Superspeedway was built to be the biggest, fastest and most competitive speedway in the world.

The track was opened in September of 1969 and plays host to two NASCAR Sprint Cup Series (formerly Winston Cup) races. Talladega Superspeedway holds the record for the fastest 500-mile stock car race (188.354 mph, May 10, 1997, won by Mark Martin). The facility is used for various automotive testing purposes and driving schools.

The \$60 million Barber Motorsports Park and Barber Vintage Motorsports Museum opened in early 2003 near downtown Birmingham. The new museum holds what is considered the largest and best motorcycle collection in North America and possibly the world. The new 2.38-mile, 45-foot-wide road racing track has 17 turns. Barber

*Talladega Superspeedway*



*Barber Vintage Motorsports Museum*



Motorsports Park is the exclusive site of the Porsche Sport Driving School, and is also home to world-champion motorcyclist Kevin Schwantz's Driving School.

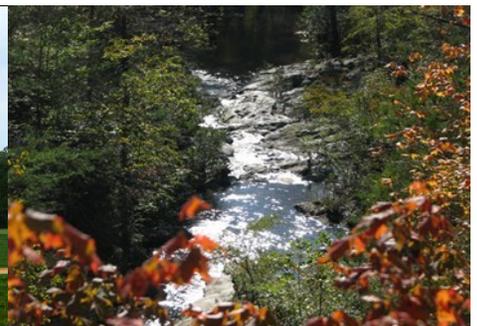
*Alabama's Gulf Coast Beaches*



*Ross Bridge Resort & Golf*



*Talladega National Forest*





## QUALITY OF LIFE

**Hunting-** Alabama has long hunting seasons, low license fees, and a variety of big and small game including deer, turkey, quail, dove, duck, geese and other game. Alabama has dozens of wildlife management areas with controlled hunting and plenty of accessible private land. The state continues development, maintenance, and management of hundreds of thousands of acres of land for hunters.

**Fishing-** Alabama has a year-round fishing season, miles of perennial rivers, streams and delta, lakes covering thousands of acres. Plus, the Gulf of Mexico provides a full range of saltwater fishing. The Alabama Bass Trail offers five world-class fishing sites at Alabama State Parks. In addition, numerous public lakes, across the State, are managed to provide quality fishing for the Alabama fisherman.

### The Arts

**Theater-** A 975-seat facility houses Montgomery's world-renowned Alabama Shakespeare Festival. Each season, it attracts thousands throughout the Southeast and beyond. Alabama also has many other fine theater groups throughout the state, including little theater and children's theater.

**Music-** Alabama's symphonies have earned reputations as being among the

nation's best regional orchestras. Each year they perform across the state in their masters', pop, and children's series.

**Dance-** Talented ballet companies in Birmingham, Mobile, Huntsville and Montgomery feature talented and energetic dancers who give glittering performances.

**Opera-** Opera Birmingham, Huntsville Opera, and Mobile Opera stage a variety of operas during their seasons. Productions range from traditional work to light and children's operas.

**Festivals-** Mobile, the first capital of the Louisiana Territory, celebrates the country's oldest Mardi Gras. Birmingham's Festival of Arts is the oldest continuous arts festival in America and ranks nationally among the top ten. Dothan's National Peanut Festival is held during the November harvest. A few of Alabama's other festivals include the National Shrimp Festival, Gulf Shores; the Tale Tellin' Festival, Selma; the W.C. Handy Music Festival, Florence; and the Azalea Trail Festival, Mobile.



*The Alabama Shakespeare Festival in Montgomery*

Alabama is home to a vibrant arts and cultural scene, beautiful parks, botanical gardens and a great selection of live music and theatre venues.



*Mardi Gras in Mobile*

## STATISTICAL SOURCES

Cost of Living—Alabama Center for Real Estate, C2ER Cost of Living index, Tax Foundation.

Climate—Alabama Office of State Climatology

July, 2016