

OCALA, FLORIDA



Ocala, with a growing population that now stands at 56,000 residents, is the largest city in Marion County, Florida, and serves as the county seat. Ocala is about an hour's drive to either coast or to the attractions in Orlando. Several major highways pass through Ocala, including Interstate 75, U.S. Highway 27, U.S. Route 301, and U.S. Highway 441.

A recent poll of residents conducted by the local newspaper, the Star-Banner, asked what people liked most about the quality of life in Ocala/Marion County. It should come as no surprise that the first response listed said that "we like the weather." The second response was "we like the natural beauty" and the third was "the people are friendly."

Ocala is surrounded by some of the most beautiful horse farms in the world, the Silver Springs Attraction with its famous glass-bottom boats and large artesian spring formation, and the Ocala National Forest. Ocala enjoys a moderate climate and a diverse economy. A very reasonable cost of living adds to the allure of the area. Ocala was ranked third for the most affordable housing in the U.S. by the National Association of Realtors in 2000.

The city of Ocala won national distinction when it was named an "All American City" by the National Civic League, and the nation's fifth most desirable place to live by Money Magazine in 1995. Ocala was recognized as the "Horse Capital of the World" by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 1999.

Every year thousands of new residents begin calling Marion County home, keeping it among the fastest growing areas in the nation. Although it is a growing community, Ocala has maintained a warm and friendly hometown atmosphere.

OCALA, FLORIDA FAST FACTS

Population:

Current Population - 56,945
Median Age - 39.0
Average Household Size - 2.29

Economy:

Median Income - \$27,053
Median Home Price - \$125,900
Median Rental Price - \$434
Sales Tax - 6.5%
Cost of Living - 5% below Florida average
State Income Tax - none

Climate:

Annual Precipitation - 49.68 inches
Average High Temperature in July - 92.2 degrees
Average Low Temperature in January - 45.7 degrees

Geography:

Size of Ocala - 43.16 square miles
Time Zone - Eastern (EST)