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10 Ways to Make Your Cabin
Guest-Friendly

Communal Living

Cabin communities can provide great amenities and building options to prospective owners.

Cabin communities offer access not only to like-minded homeowners but also amenities you might otherwise have to pay for, such as proximity to water, and cleared hiking or walking trails.



After years of planning, you're finally ready to build a cabin of your own — but where? Communities across the country provide that perfect location, with perks. Not only are they easily accessible, these locations likely have a variety of activities in place either on the property or nearby — an asset for those looking for a second home or transferring from, say, the East Coast to the Rockies who may not feel comfortable simply packing up and leaving for a foreign destination.

“You can never overemphasize the power of community,” says Doug David, owner and general partner at Anderson Creek Retreat in Ellijay, Georgia, where home sites are connected through more than 10 miles of trails, with additional communal areas such as 75 acres of green space to conserve the land, a shelter and a bathhouse, as well as a neighboring national forest. “People came because of shared interests in this type of lifestyle, became friends and created a community. Wherever you go, that’s important.”

Many prospective owners share a love of the same architectural styles as well, which communities enforce through architectural standards. For example, Anderson Creek Retreat requires an architect and landscape architect to design the plan and area around the home.

“We’re really trying to be consistent in terms of style,” David explains. “You can build a house for less, but it’s not the same.”

Some may only allow log cabins, while others may simply require that the cabin be made from rustic materials, so be sure to ask what, if any, restrictions are in place beforehand.

Rental or fractional ownership offerings also may be available, in case you’d prefer to test-drive the cabin-living experience before jumping completely into it. Here are a few of our favorite spots to introduce you to the community options available.

1. ANDERSON CREEK RETREAT

Ellijay, Georgia

Benefits: With more than 1,500 acres at the retreat and another 750,000 acres courtesy of the Chattahoochee National Forest next door, property owners have endless trails to wander. Enjoy your pick of rivers in three states, including the Toccoa/Ocoee River — site of the 1996 Olympic white-water events — and the popular Nantahala River, home to Class-3 rapids.

Special Features:

Property owners, through membership in the Anderson Creek Club, gain exclusive access to more than two miles of the stream — and its

plentiful rainbow and brown trout — for catch-and-release fly-fishing.

Home Info: Private home sites are grouped in “camps” adjacent to or near the green-space corridors. The home sites available on The Ridge at the Creek Preserve range in size from three to 11 acres; the sites at Spring Camp range from three to almost five acres.

County: Gilmer, population 28,292

Nearest Cities: Blue Ridge (23 mi.); Marietta (68 mi.); Atlanta (86 mi.)

Lot Price: Starting at \$55,000

Contact: 866-755-5124; andersoncreekretreat.com



2. HIDDEN MEADOW RANCH

Greer, Arizona

Benefits: Nestled on 150 acres within the Apache National Forest and at an elevation of 8,500 feet in the White Mountains, Hidden Meadow Ranch is a true four-season destination. There are 975 miles of trails, archery and cross-country skiing — even rock climbing, caving or mountain biking.

Special Features:

The Ranch House, with its 30-foot-tall granite fireplace, plus a library, media room and restaurant, is the centerpiece of the community and a destination in its own right.

Home Info: Choose from co-ownership of one of two Club Cabin styles (built, furnished and maintained by the ranch) or the Charter Lots, where you can build a

custom hand-hewn log home but still enjoy the ranch's amenities.

County: Apache, population 71,518

Nearest Cities: Show Low (50 mi.); Phoenix (220 mi.); Tucson (250 mi.)

Lot Price: The Charter Lots, \$300,000–\$450,000

Fractional Ownership: Club Cabin shares, starting at \$220,000

Contact: 866-333-4080; hiddenmeadow.com



3. TAMARACK RESORT

Tamarack, Idaho

Benefits: Tucked alongside the crooked finger of Lake Cascade, in the Long Valley of western Idaho, Tamarack comes complete with skiing, golf, village and lake amenities. At the heart of its 8,600 acres sits its world-class slopes, designed for alpine skiers and snowboarders alike, and 23 miles of cross-country trails. In addition to an award-winning signature golf course, you can enjoy boat tours, mounting biking, rock climbing — even bungee jumping.

Special Features: The Village, a collection of shopping, services and restaurants, lies at the base of the slopes. Pamper yourself at the Santé Spa, which specializes in self-indulgent treatments such as hot-stone massages and raw-sugar foot scrubs.

Home Info: Choose from one of the four Chalet models, starting at around 1,800 square feet and featuring lake views, private hot tubs, fireplaces, and detached garages for storing all of your snow gear and summer-season toys. Buyers also have the option to custom-build their own home.

County: Valley, population 9,862

Nearest Cities: Boise (95 mi.); Nampa (110 mi.)

Lot Price: Starting at \$109,000

Contact: 208-325-1000; tamarackidaho.com



4. WHITEWATER VILLAGE

Forester Falls, Ontario

Benefits: Socially conscious adventure seekers will find their haven here. The village is near Wilderness Tours, the 30-year-old white-water rafting company, which is also a partner in the community.

Special Features: In addition to beach access, the community has plans for a 3,500-square-foot clubhouse with a hot tub, exercise room and movie theater.

Home Info: Each of the community's homes will equate to about 1,700 square feet. The homes will be built using sustainably harvested 8-by-10-inch white pine logs. The homes also will feature Energy Star-rated appliances, windows and doors.

County: Renfrew, population 97,545

Nearest Cities: Renfrew (33 km.); Ottawa (114 km.); Montreal (318 km.)

Fractional Ownership: Starting at \$89,900

Contact: 866-298-3333; whitewatervillage.ca



Michael Moore photo