

2026 | WORLD

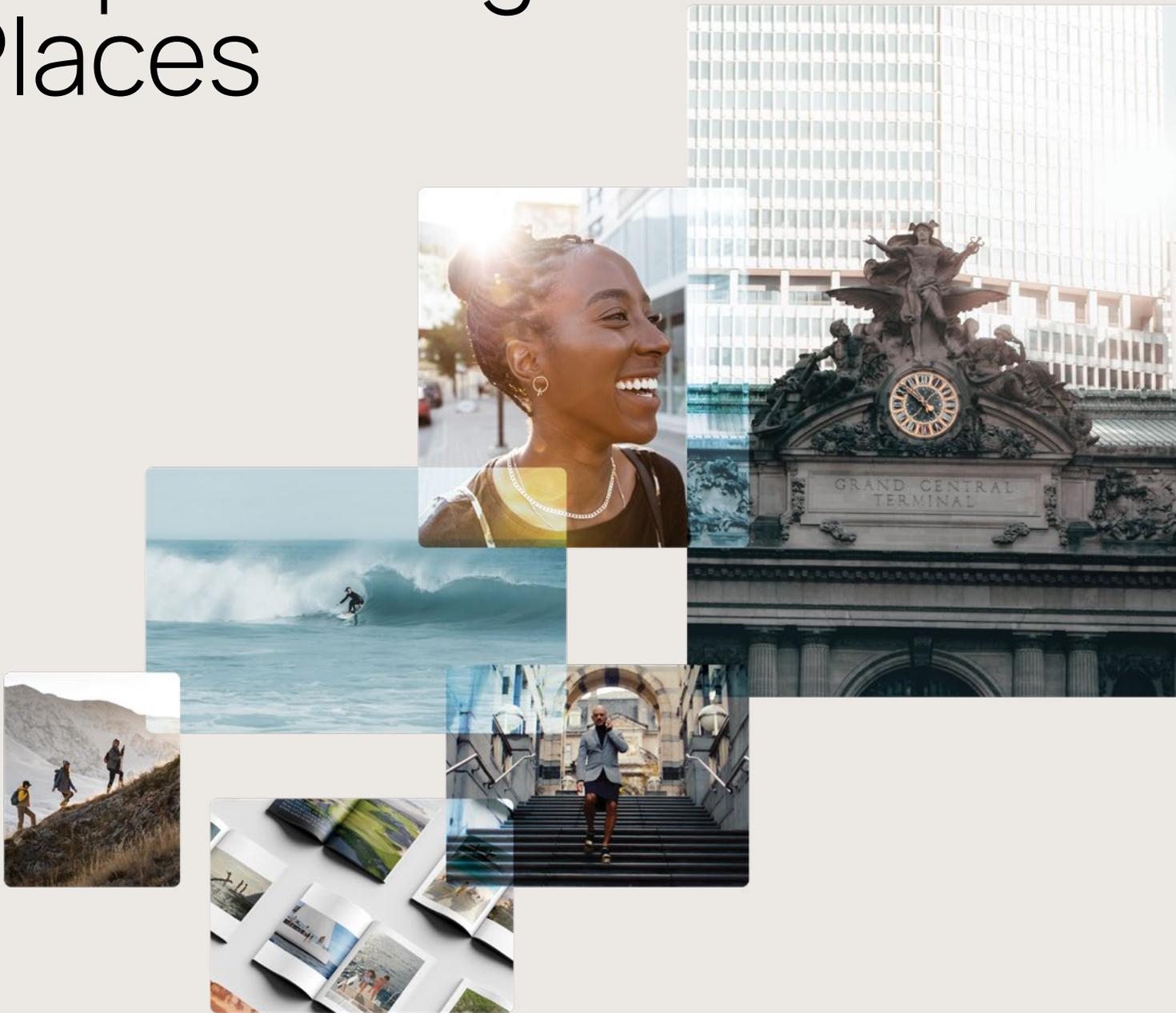


Best Cities

The 100 Global Cities
Shaping Tomorrow

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Empowering Places



Resonance creates transformative strategies, brands and campaigns that empower destinations, cities and communities to realize their full potential.

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Welcome to the World's Best Cities for 2026

As leading advisers in placemaking, branding and marketing, Resonance has conducted extensive research on the rise of cities, the key trends propelling their growth, and the factors that shape our perception of urban areas as desirable places to live, visit, or launch and grow a business.



Chris Fair

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At Resonance, we specialize in helping cities and regions compete more effectively for talent, tourism, and investment. Our proprietary Place Power™ Score, backed by more than a decade of research, ranks cities based on both global perception and performance for factors most highly correlated with attracting prime age population, visitor expenditure and business formation.

And in 2026, those signals are more complex – and consequential – than ever.

Cities worldwide are navigating an interconnected web of challenges: accelerating impacts of climate change, shifting geopolitical and trade alliances, and the rapid adoption of AI which may prove to be more impactful on our city centers than the pandemic was. Extreme weather events, water scarcity, and energy transition demands are no longer distant concerns, but immediate factors driving infrastructure investment, real estate values, and talent mobility decisions.

Meanwhile, the global flow of people, capital, and ideas continues to rebalance. International tourism has rebounded selectively, with Asia-Pacific destinations experiencing unprecedented growth as travel patterns in that part of the world shift eastward. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council, seven of the top 10 cities with the highest growth potential for international visitor spending through 2032 are in the Asia-Pacific region. Cities like Bangkok, Singapore, and Tokyo are capitalizing on this momentum with transformative infrastructure projects and cultural initiatives that position them as tomorrow's urban centers of gravity.

Yet amidst this complexity lies extraordinary opportunity.

Cities that lead our 2026 rankings are not merely adapting, but pioneering new models of urban excellence. From London's climate-resilient skyscraper boom and Paris's revolutionary 15-minute city infrastructure, to Singapore's Great Southern Waterfront transformation and Dubai's ambitious carbon-neutral initiatives, these metros are integrating sustainability, technology, and livability in ways that attract global talent and investment while serving residents' evolving needs.

Our methodology has evolved to capture this urban renaissance. Beyond traditional metrics like GDP growth, airport connectivity, and cost of living, we now measure emerging indicators of urban vitality: startup ecosystem dynamism, digital engagement by residents and visitors, cultural programming depth, and climate risk and resilience. We've also enhanced our global coverage, integrating data from platforms like Weibo and Xiaohongshu for Chinese cities to ensure authentic local perspectives.

For leaders shaping tomorrow's urban landscape (whether through capital allocation, location strategy, infrastructure development, or destination marketing) this report offers more than rankings. It provides strategic intelligence, risk assessment, and a roadmap to the cities and opportunities defining the next decade of global growth.

The urban future is being written now. We invite you to explore which cities are authoring the most compelling chapters.

If you'd like to discuss how these insights can inform your next location or investment decisions, I welcome the conversation.

How do you measure the cities we love, live, and work in?

Welcome to the newest Best Cities ranking, focused on the evaluation of perception and performance for global urban economies.



Jason McGrath

EVP, Head of U.S. Corporate Reputation, Ipsos
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This year's World's Best Cities report is the second edition that combines Ipsos research on the perceived desirability of places to visit, work, and live, with the rigorous analysis by Resonance of the various factors that drive place performance. The combination of these two research methods creates a highly comprehensive evaluation of city perception and performance, resulting in a definitive ranking of the world's top cities.

This year's report is published against the backdrop of a shifting global landscape. Ipsos has annually conducted its Global Trends report, exploring key trends in global society according to more than 33,000 survey respondents across 43 countries. An emerging dominant theme from this year's report is the notion of "Globalism Fractures." What we've seen in the first half of this decade is that the 2020s are beginning to be defined by persistent tensions. Our analysis looks at changing global trends from three levels: the long-range impact of macro forces; the closer-in shifts in society, markets and people; and emerging signals that cue a probable future.

This year, the rate of change feels amplified. There's a significant increase in geopolitical frictions and societal realignment, largely influenced by the Trump administration's global trade strategies. These shifts have led to a rise in economic instability and geopolitical tensions. Nationalism and protectionism are on the rise as countries view global economics from a zero-sum perspective. Such global developments have palpable repercussions, influencing the cost of everyday essentials and stirring both political landscapes and consumer behavior.

Concurrently, there is a retreat from diversity and sustainability initiatives. Many organizations, wary of public backlash, are withdrawing from these initiatives, despite growing calls for inclusivity and tolerance. Increasing mobility and diversity among global

citizens only sharpens identity divisions, deepening the chasm on social issues such as immigration and gender. While the U.S. remains significantly polarized, other countries, too, are experiencing fragmentation over these issues. Our findings indicate that 65% of surveyed citizens feel that "there are too many immigrants in my country" – an increase of five points from last year. Additionally, sentiment leans towards nostalgia, with people agreeing that, "I would like my country to be the way it used to be," surging post-pandemic to 56%, and continuing to climb since (currently standing at six in 10).

Recent Ipsos research on the impact of "Brand America" shows growing global backlash against American brands. Brands perceived as "American" suffer in terms of trust and purchase intent, approximately 20 points lower than when the same brand is perceived as "international." This undoubtedly spills into perceptions of the nation and its cities as well and leads to a behavioral impact on the desire to visit, work, or live in U.S. cities.

The impact of these global trends is evident in the results of this year's World's Best Cities report, where our survey results show decreased desire to visit U.S. destinations from our global survey respondents, and other destinations seeing increased desire. There are also fewer U.S. cities in the Top 20 rankings this year as compared to last.

Time will tell whether these shifts will have a short-term impact or be a longer-term trend. We welcome the opportunity to discuss the results in greater detail and to understand how your destination performs. Please don't hesitate to reach out to connect and discuss how Ipsos can help you better understand your target stakeholder audiences and their expectations of your place.

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Our Methodology

How we ranked World's Best Cities for 2026

To rank the performance and perception of the World's Best Cities for 2026, Resonance analyzed the principal cities of metropolitan statistical areas with populations of more than 1,000,000 (according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and each country's federal agency for statistical data). We determined the Top 100 cities using a combination of core statistics and user-generated data from online sources such as Google, Instagram, and TikTok to measure quality of place when it comes to experiential factors. This ranking also excludes all Russian cities, as it has since 2022, due to the country's illegal invasion of Ukraine and its ongoing military aggression.

This blend of data led to the creation of Resonance's proprietary Place Power™ Score, the foundation of all of our Best Cities rankings. So how does Resonance choose the metrics to effectively measure an urban region's performance relative to its competitors? While many factors shape our perception of urban regions as desirable places to live, work or visit, Resonance's rankings are focused on the shared factors that demonstrate moderate to strong correlations with the performance of urban regions when it comes to attracting prime age population (age 25 – 44), visitation trends and/or business formation. Based on our ongoing analysis, these factors are an eclectic mix that range from the number of large companies headquartered in a city to the variety of nightlife and outdoor recreation experiences.

Since these factors can change and evolve over time, we continually update our methodology to reflect these shifts. For example, in recent years we've included new measures such as Weather (to gauge the volatility of precipitation) and Public Transportation (to assess residents' accessibility to public transit). We've also refined our data sources to improve global coverage and reduce regional bias. For example, we now integrate online review data from Google, which offers stronger representation across regions, and supplement global social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook with equivalent platforms in markets where these are not accessible, such as Weibo and Rednote for Chinese cities, ensuring a more accurate reflection of local and international engagement.

In total, our performance data measures 46 metrics across 30 categories. All metrics are weighted evenly and aggregated up to the category level, and all categories are weighted equally and aggregated up to each Livability, Lovability, and Prosperity pillar.

As part of our partnership with Ipsos (see page 4), we combined the performance data of the categories that comprise our overall Livability, Lovability and Prosperity indices with perception data reflecting the opinions and preferences of more than 21,000 respondents across 31 countries spanning North America, Europe, Asia Pacific, Latin America, and Africa. Each country was given equal weight in the total data set. The survey was constructed to extract the towns and cities where these 21,000 people would most like to live, where they would most like to visit, and where they believe they would find the best job opportunities. This was accomplished with three open-ended questions where respondents could identify the towns and cities that they prefer.

We asked them, when thinking about places across the globe, including small towns and large cities: which three towns or cities would most like to live in, most like to visit, and think currently offer the best job opportunities?

This open-ended question methodology enabled us to capture the destinations that are top of mind to survey participants rather than restricting them to a predetermined list of cities. The responses to these questions were aggregated and coded to benchmark the perception equivalent of our performance results, creating a true balance across our three overall indices of Livability, Lovability, and Prosperity.

Livability

Our most layered overarching category quantifies a city's physical sense of place.

To score a city within our Livability category, we evaluate the perceived quality of its natural and built environments. This includes the availability of green space in its urban center and how many quality parks, outdoor experiences, and sights and landmarks are recommended online by locals and visitors. We also look at key socioeconomic factors such as the cost of living relative to income – a factor that not only retains talent, but also attracts it (and, by extension, attracts skill-seeking companies as well). Livability also looks at the natural attributes of a region such as the amount of tree cover and the quality of the air residents and visitors breathe.

LIVABILITY METRICS

Biking

The average travel time for an individual to reach daily activity venues in a city on bike. Daily activity venues include outdoor activities, learning institutions, supermarkets, restaurants, transit stations, cultural activities, gyms, government services, and healthcare facilities. (15min-City)

Walkability

The average travel time for an individual to reach daily activity venues in a city on foot. Daily activity venues include outdoor spaces, learning institutions, supermarkets, restaurants, transit stations, cultural spaces, gyms, government services, and healthcare facilities. (15 Minute City)

Weather

The annual average amount of precipitation, such as rain and snow, that reaches the Earth's surface each year, relative to the global average. (OECD and weather-and-climate.com)

Air Quality

The Air Quality Index (AQI) is a measure of air pollutant concentrations. (IQAir)

Climate Risk

Powered by AlphaGeo, the resilience-adjusted climate risk score measures a city's exposure to climate-related hazards – such as extreme heat, flooding, and storms – adjusted for its capacity to mitigate and adapt to these risks. (AlphaGeo)

Green Space

This category includes metrics that measure the share of land area covered by green area, including trees, shrublands, and grasslands, in a city's urban center. (OECD)

Sights & Landmarks

The number of sights and landmarks rated above four stars, as well as the popularity of those assets, as listed on Google and Trip.com. (Google and Trip.com)

Nature & Parks

The number of natural areas, parks and outdoor activities rated above four stars, as well as the popularity of those assets, as listed on Google and Trip.com. (Google and Trip.com)

Public Transit

The estimated share of urban population who can access a public transport stop within a walking distance of 500 meters (for low-capacity public transport systems) and/or 1000 meters (for high-capacity public transport systems) along the street network. (United Nations)

Internet Infrastructure

Average internet download speed, deviation from world average. (OECD)

Standard of Living

Reflects the overall economic well-being of residents, using the value of goods and services produced locally as a proxy for income, adjusted for the relative cost of living in the city. (OECD and National Statistic Offices)

Health

Includes metrics that measure the population's life expectancy at birth and the availability of physicians relative to population size.

Perception

Ranking in a survey of more than 21,000 respondents from 31 countries about the top three cities and towns that they would most like to live in someday. (Ipsos)

Lovability

Lovability speaks to the relative vibrancy and quality of place of a city relative to its competitive set.

For almost a decade, Resonance research has shown that the more vibrant a city or region is in terms of its culture, dining and nightlife, the more visitors, young professionals and large corporations it attracts. A region's lovability also inspires residents, businesses and visitors to promote a region to the world more effectively and cost-efficiently than destination marketers can ever hope to. Resonance ranks a city's performance in each of these areas based on the number of stories, references and recommendations shared online about that city in key user-generated digital channels like Google, Instagram and TikTok.

LOVABILITY METRICS

Google Trends

Popularity of a city worldwide on Google Trends in the past 12 months, relative to the other cities analyzed. (Trends.Google.com)

TikTok Videos

Measures the total number of posts, including videos and short-form content, geo-tagged to a city and shared by residents and tourists on TikTok, relative to the average number of posts for other cities analyzed that are listed on the platform. (TikTok)

Facebook Check-ins

Measures the total number of check-ins posted by residents and tourists in a region, relative to the average number of check-ins for other cities analyzed that are listed on the platform. For cities where Facebook is not accessible – primarily in China – data from Weibo, a major Chinese social media platform used for sharing updates, photos, and location-based check-ins, is used instead and compared to other cities listed on Weibo. (Facebook.com and Weibo.com)

Instagram Posts

Measures the total number of posts, including Reels, geo-tagged to a city and shared by residents and tourists on Instagram, relative to the average number of posts for other cities analyzed that are listed on the platform. For cities where Instagram is not accessible – primarily in China – data from Xiaohongshu (Rednote), a popular Chinese social media platform known for image-driven lifestyle content, is used instead and compared to other cities listed on Rednote. (Instagram.com and Rednote.com)

Nightlife

The number of local nightlife experiences, including lounges, comedy clubs, and night clubs rated above four stars, as well as the popularity of those assets, as listed on Google and Trip.com. (Google and Trip.com)

Shopping

The number of shopping centers, including shopping malls and markets, rated above four stars, as well as the popularity of those assets, as listed on Google and Trip.com. (Google and Trip.com)

Restaurants

The total number of restaurants listed within a city, as well as the popularity of those restaurants, as listed on Google and Trip.com. (Google and Trip.com)

Museums

The number of museums and galleries in a city rated above four stars, as well as the popularity of those assets, as listed on Google and Trip.com. (Google and Trip.com)

Theaters & Concerts

The number of theater, concert, and event venues rated above four stars, as well as the popularity of those assets, as listed on Google and Trip.com. (Google and Trip.com)

Family-Friendly Attractions

The number of zoos, aquariums, amusement parks, and fun and games, such as mini-golf and video arcades, rated above four stars, as well as the popularity of those assets, as listed on Google and Trip.com. (Google and Trip.com)

Perception

Ranking in a survey of more than 21,000 respondents from 31 countries about the top three cities and towns that they would most like to visit in the next 12 to 24 months. (Ipsos)

Prosperity

Human capital is becoming a region's most valuable resource when it comes to generating wealth and prosperity. For many cities, it is increasingly in short supply.

To assess a city's prosperity, Resonance evaluates the foundations that enable economic growth and the attraction of talent. Corporate presence and a thriving start-up ecosystem signal a city's capacity for innovation, job creation, and global competitiveness. High labor force participation and educational attainment reflect the availability of skilled workers, while low unemployment supports stability and resilience. Business infrastructure, such as international airport connectivity and venues capable of hosting major conventions, facilitates trade, investment, and knowledge exchange. Together with the reputation of leading universities, these factors shape a city's ability to cultivate human capital, foster entrepreneurship, and sustain long-term economic vitality.

PROSPERITY METRICS

Convention Center

The size of the largest convention center in a region based on exhibition space. (Venue websites)

Large Companies

The number of companies with more than 1,000 employees that are headquartered in a city. (Crunchbase)

Labor Force Participation

A region's active workforce, defined as the percentage of all people age 15+ who are employed or are actively seeking work. (OECD and National Statistic Offices)

Airports

Number of direct destinations from major airports within a 50-mile radius of the principal city. (Flightsfrom.com and travelmath.com)

University

The aggregate score of the highest-ranking university in a city, reflecting its academic reputation, research output, and global influence. A top-performing university attracts talent, drives innovation, and strengthens a city's human capital – key drivers of long-term prosperity. (QS Top Universities, U.S. News & World Report Best Global Universities Rankings, and Times Higher Education World University Rankings)

Economic Output

The GDP per capita in a region in U.S. dollars, reflecting the value of goods and services produced per person. Higher economic output signals a productive economy and stronger capacity to invest in infrastructure, services, and talent. (OECD, Eurostat, Bureau of Economic Analysis, and National Statistic Offices)

Business Ecosystem

The quantity, quality and overall state of a city's business environment that contributes to the success of start-ups. (StartupBlink)

Unemployment Rate

The rate of unemployment in a region. (OECD and National Statistic Offices)

Educational Attainment

Percentage of the population who have completed tertiary education or higher in a region. (OECD, Eurostat, and National Statistic Offices)

Perception

Ranking in a survey of more than 21,000 respondents from 31 countries about the top three cities and towns that they think currently have the best job opportunities. (Ipsos)

Resonance is proud to partner with AlphaGeo on the World's Best Cities 2026 Report

Resilience is a race

Darwin taught that it is not the strongest or most intelligent who survive – but those most adaptable to change.

AlphaGeo is the first AI-powered geospatial software that rigorously measures the exposure to risk, adaptation capacity – and ultimately the resilience – of every location on Earth.

Together, Resonance and AlphaGeo are guiding investors into the future-proof geographies of the 21st century.

AlphaGeo. Invest in resilience.

Learn more at www.alphageo.ai



AlphaGeo

World's Top 100 cities, --- in detail

The world's great urban centers are the engines of their nations and, increasingly, the global economy. They are the pistons driving the places where people choose to live, work and travel – magnetizing talent, capital and culture. For centuries, these cities have stood as symbols of human ingenuity and vibrancy, shaping the narrative of progress and resilience across continents. Today, they've never mattered more to our collective future.

In this decade of rapid transformation, the world's cities are confronting challenges head-on, from climate resilience and aging infrastructure to equitable growth. The pandemic, long forgotten but still a sage oracle, exposed foundational weaknesses – from health-care capacity to housing affordability. Yet, true to their dynamic nature, the leading cities are not merely recovering, but setting the pace, defining new paradigms of innovation, sustainability and everyday livability.

Shifts in talent mobility, remote work and the cost of living have fueled the rise of secondary and emerging cities alongside the global powerhouses. From Manchester to Melbourne, from Montreal to Mecca, new centers of economic potential are flourishing, blending affordability, opportunity and connectivity that attract both global talent and investment. Public- and private-sector bets on reshoring, green energy and food security are recoding supply chains and elevating cities as critical nodes in a more resilient world economy.

The world's urban centers are more than economic hubs. They are cultural powerhouses where people gather, create and connect. From the bustling streets of Mexico City to the tranquil innovation corridors of Singapore, these cities are redefining what it means to thrive in an interconnected world.

The 100 cities profiled in this report represent the heart of this global renaissance. Each one, in its own way, is helping shape how the world will live, visit and do business for the rest of this decade and beyond.

1

London

United Kingdom

PLACE POWER™ SCORE

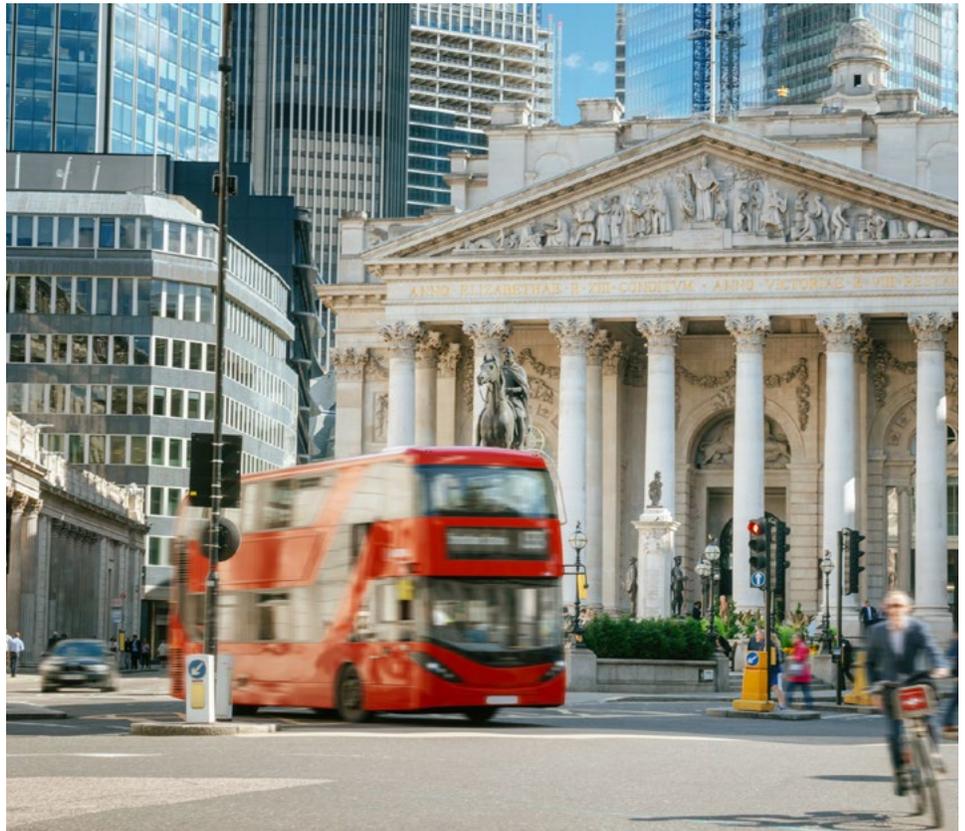
- 1 Prosperity
- 2 Lovability
- 3 Livability

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Airports
- 1 Large Companies

POPULATION

Metro 12,451,000



THE ROYAL EXCHANGE

The “Capital of Capitals” claims the throne atop the World’s Best Cities ranking in 2026 for an incredible 11th consecutive year. It secures the top position in three of our 34 subcategories (the most of any city), and ranks 1, 2 and 3 in our Prosperity, Lovability and Livability indexes, respectively.

London’s magnetic appeal continues to draw a global audience, from students and entrepreneurs to tourists and corporate titans. The city’s robust recovery post-pandemic is reflected in its strong international traveler spending, which in 2024 reached almost \$22 billion (up from \$17.4 billion in 2023) and secured London the third-highest amount globally, outpacing destinations like New York and Dubai.

Benefiting from a softer pound, London has remained a compelling bucket-list destination. Heathrow Airport recorded record-breaking arrivals, exceeding pre-pandemic passenger levels, and Gatwick Airport’s recent \$320-million upgrade underscores London’s infrastructural excellence, enhancing the visitor experience with new concourses and improved amenities. The city’s airports, not surprisingly, rank #1 in our Top 100 cities.

Yet beneath these tourist triumphs lies a luxury property market experiencing a fascinating paradox that savvy investors are exploiting. High-end home sales have dropped sharply as new tax policies put off wealthy international buyers, pulling prices lower and leading to a glut of supply.

Americans aren’t deterred.

They now form the largest demographic of overseas buyers in London, accounting for 25% of prime purchases in the city last year, up from 18% in 2023, according to Beauchamp Estates. “Americans are taking advantage of the markets being relatively flat,” said Ugo Arinzeh, an American real estate consultant based in London, in an interview with The Wall Street Journal. Real estate agents say they have never had as many inquiries from U.S. clients, prompted by favorable exchange rates and political concerns back home.

The value proposition is compelling: according to data from Knight Frank, \$1 million now buys 365 square feet in London, compared with only 247 square feet a decade ago.

This sustained investment confidence is palpable in the city’s luxury hospitality renaissance. The Peninsula London, which opened in September 2023 near Hyde Park Corner, epitomizes elegance with Peter Marino-designed rooms, sweeping views of Hyde Park, and amenities such as a world-class spa and Rolls-Royce fleet.



CITY OF LONDON SKYLINE

Equally captivating is the opening of Raffles London at The OWO, the meticulously restored Old War Office, now hosting stunning guest rooms and restaurants by Michelin-starred chef Mauro Colagreco, revitalizing the previously quiet Whitehall area into a chic nightlife hotspot. Here too, Americans comprise the largest demographic of buyers at the OWO's private apartments, which can cost up to \$26 million.

American institutional real estate interest is voracious, with U.S. funds investing \$3.78 billion into UK commercial property in the first quarter of 2024 alone. High-profile acquisitions, including MCR's purchase of the iconic BT Tower for transformation into a luxury hotel and Starwood Capital's substantial entry with a \$1-billion acquisition of 10 Radisson Blu Edwardian hotels, reinforce London's buoyant property market.

Meanwhile, London's skyline is undergoing its most dramatic transformation since Christopher Wren rebuilt the city after the Great Fire. Last year alone, planning applications for 64 towers of more than 20 stories were submitted. Although only six received planning approval, some 270 skyscrapers have been given the green light

in the past decade, according to official data from the Greater London Authority, analyzed by the New London Architecture think tank. A further 583 are in the planning pipeline.

Even if just a fraction of these get built, London's architecture is poised to change forever.

"Tall buildings have changed the face of London substantially over the last 20 years and will continue to do so," says Nick McKeogh, the chief executive of NLA, which has published an annual Tall Buildings Survey since 2013, according to The Times. "To meet London's housing needs, densification through tall buildings is not just necessary, it's an opportunity for innovation and growth."

Tower Hamlets topped this year's list, with 17 applications for 20-story-plus towers, including the \$678-million, 1,600-home Orchard Wharf regeneration project near the East India Docks. The scheme includes seven potential buildings between nine and 25 stories tall. Southwark follows with 10 applications, including Berkeley Homes' Borough Triangle with four towers of up to 44 stories delivering 900 homes, and the controversial Aylesham Centre redevelopment in Peckham, an 867-home scheme by Berkeley

Homes with buildings ranging from four to 20 stories.

The average tall building completed in 2014 was 26 floors, shooting up to 36 floors in 2022, though moderating to 29 floors in 2024. While 2024's residential tower applications totaled 13,000 homes – significant against the capital's 35,000 total completions – they remain well short of the government's 80,000 annual target for London.

The ambitious "Canary Wharf 3.0" project in particular exemplifies London's reinvention, blending traditional banking spaces with a mixed-use community and Europe's largest life sciences center, an 823,000-square-foot research hub.

This transformation underpins London's position as Europe's top city for inward investment in 2023, according to EY, surpassing traditional rivals like Paris and Frankfurt while competing globally with financial centers like Singapore and Hong Kong.

India's rise as London's premier source market for tech investments has reshaped the city's global appeal, exemplified by innovators like InMobi Advertising, iGene Media and VenPep

“London is a city of constant reinvention. It is this remarkable commitment to ongoing growth that has seen us retain our crown as the World’s Best City. In 2025 we launched a 10–year plan for growth in the capital and celebrated a number of wins: record-breaking London-based scaleups going global, growing visitor numbers and an almost £10 billion planned investment in our experience economy over the next decade.”

–LAURA CITRON, CEO, LONDON & PARTNERS

Solutions choosing London as a gateway to international markets. Climate tech, notably, is experiencing meteoric growth, with companies like Allume, Cloverly and Einride electing to scale in London.

All to say that the #1 ranking in our Large Companies subcategory is safe for a while.

Efforts to better connect the city’s attributes are underway, with the famed Tube network improving dramatically in recent years, notably through the expansion of the transformative Elizabeth line, connecting Reading, Heathrow, Abbey Wood and Shenfield directly through central London. The Bond Street station, opened in 2022, has further amplified the West End’s vibrant allure.

Placemaking remains central to London’s growth, exemplified by the highly anticipated Camden Highline. Inspired by New York’s famous High Line, this mile-long elevated greenway, slated to open in 2027, symbolizes the city’s commitment to enhancing urban livability through creative renewal projects.

Mayor Sadiq Khan, re-elected in May 2024 for an unprecedented third term, continues his vision for a “fairer, safer, greener” London,

aiming to construct 40,000 new council homes by 2030 and driving ambitious plans for net-zero carbon emissions by the end of the decade. This synergy, bolstered by alignment between city leadership and the national government, promises to deliver tangible benefits to residents and businesses alike.

The city’s strategic vision is encapsulated in the ambitious London Growth Plan, developed by City Hall and London Councils, which aims to harness London’s strengths in finance, technology and sustainability to drive inclusive economic growth powered by the planet’s third-most-educated residents. Prioritizing productivity growth, the plan targets raising London’s economic output significantly by 2035, creating 150,000 high-quality jobs by 2028 and driving inclusive prosperity through extensive investment in affordable housing, transport infrastructure and skills training.

City marketing organization London & Partners’ Tourism Vision sets an ambitious goal of positioning London as the most visited, sustainable and diverse global city destination by 2030. Recognizing the tourism industry as vital to London’s economy, the strategy aims to boost international visitor

spending to \$28.5 billion annually and attract three million more visitors compared to pre-pandemic levels.

Investment promotion through Opportunity London, a public-private partnership, targets \$135 billion of inward capital focused on low-carbon infrastructure and real estate, underpinning sustainable and inclusive growth.

“London is a city of constant reinvention. It is this remarkable commitment to ongoing growth that has seen us retain our crown as the World’s Best City,” says Laura Citron, CEO of London & Partners. “In 2025 we launched a 10-year plan for growth in the capital and celebrated a number of wins: record-breaking London-based scaleups going global, growing visitor numbers and an almost £10 billion planned investment in our experience economy over the next decade.”

2 New York USA

PLACE POWER™ SCORE

- 2 Livability
- 2 Prosperity
- 3 Lovability

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Google Trends
- 2 Large Companies

POPULATION

Metro 19,940,000



CENTRAL PARK AND JACQUELINE KENNEDY ONASSIS RESERVOIR

New York City, the perpetual heartbeat of America, has moved into #2 this year. Gotham's refusal to play by anyone's script remains its greatest asset, which will keep the world transfixed and craving the Big Apple's special sauce in 2026 and beyond.

NYC's escape velocity is visible from the corner offices of Hudson Yards to the stoops of Bed-Stuy: the city is back to building, hiring, opening – and arguing – at a scale and intensity only New York can manage.

The political headlines alone have been seismic: Assemblymember Zohran Mamdani shocked the establishment by winning June's Democratic mayoral primary and now heads into November favored in a city where Democrats dominate. Whatever your politics, the race has already re-centered City Hall's attention on housing supply, transit financing and the cost of living, and New Yorkers will feel the effects in permitting timelines, budget priorities and where the next big projects break ground.

On the ground, demand for the city is undeniable. By spring 2025 Manhattan's doorman buildings posted a \$5,200 median monthly rent, with concessions shrinking and vacancy hovering on the lean side – real signs that household formation and office-adjacent leasing are back, even with more supply on the way. Brooklyn's rental market is just as tight. For investors and operators, that's a one-two punch: rent resilience alongside a

steady pipeline of new product created by long-running rezonings and incentives.

Tourism has returned to a full, throaty roar. After welcoming nearly 65 million visitors in 2024, New York is tracking roughly 64.1 million in 2025 as transatlantic softness weighs on international trips even while domestic travel holds. The spend still hums – north of \$70 billion by the city's accounting – and crucially it's diversifying beyond Manhattan as outer-borough museums, nightlife and food halls compete for itineraries. Expect a fresh spike in 2026 as MetLife Stadium across the Hudson hosts the FIFA World Cup final and the airports' new capacity comes online, cementing their #2 global ranking.

The crown jewel is JFK's New Terminal One, now weather-tight and racing toward a mid-2026 Phase A opening with the first 14 gates; the full build-out to 23 gates and over 300,000 square feet of dining, retail and lounge space will follow by decade's end. The \$19-billion JFK program is a bet on New York's long-term primacy as a global gateway... and a reminder that the region builds big when it matters.



MANHATTAN BRIDGE

At street level, the country's most watched mobility experiment is, well, moving traffic. After its early-2025 launch, Manhattan's congestion pricing produced an immediate double-digit drop in cars south of 60th Street and faster bus travel, while first-month tolls delivered tens of millions in revenue. That cash helps anchor the MTA's \$68.4-billion 2025–2029 capital program, which is now accelerating signal modernization, putting design dollars into the Interborough Express and adding elevators at more than 60 stations to make over half the system accessible. The technology upgrades continue as OMNY becomes ubiquitous and the fare-gate refresh expands to high-traffic stations.

The skyline keeps sprouting. And re-using. JPMorgan Chase's 1,388-foot headquarters has crowned Park Avenue again, and Brookfield's Two Manhattan West has filled out its eight-acre campus with a roster of blue-chip tenants. More consequential for the city's social math are the conversions: the former Pfizer headquarters in Midtown is being transformed into the 1,602-unit Nexus in what is now America's largest office-to-residential conversion, and 5 Times Square is green-lit to deliver up to 1,250 mixed-income homes starting later this decade using new

state tools like the 467-m Initiative and the lifted FAR cap. The city's "City of Yes" reforms and fresh conversion incentives have shifted adaptive reuse from press-conference talking point to a replicable pro-forma, unlocking older Class B/C stock and pointing Midtown and FiDi toward a denser, 24/7 future.

Even the masterplans are maturing.

Related has pivoted Hudson Yards' second phase away from a casino bid and toward housing, parkland and offices around the future Hudson Green – an encouraging sign that the West Side's long-promised park-forward finish is within reach. Across the riverfront, the River Ring and Domino Park district in Williamsburg are setting the pace for climate-resilient shoreline design, and in Queens, the long arc of Sunnyside Yard planning is back in public view with fresh momentum tied to the housing deal in Albany. These are long-term plans.

"We are pleased that New York City is included on Resonance's 2025 World's Best Cities list," said Julie Coker, NYC Tourism + Conventions President and CEO. "This recognition is a testament to NYC's unmatched energy, cultural vibrancy, and world-class experiences

across the five boroughs that keep us firmly positioned as a must-visit global destination. With major events including Sail4th 250 celebrating America's Semiquincentennial and the FIFA World Cup matches next year, we look forward to sharing the spirit of NYC with visitors from around the world."

NYC's culture (ranking #2 in our Theaters & Concerts subcategory) has rarely been hotter. The Studio Museum in Harlem reopens this fall in its purpose-built home, reaffirming Uptown's centrality to American art.

The New Museum is expanding on the Bowery with an OMA-designed tower opening by the time you read this, while The Met's \$550-million modern wing moves through design milestones en route to a 2030 reveal. The city's Top 5 Museums ranking is well earned.

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– JULIE COKER, NYC TOURISM + CONVENTIONS PRESIDENT AND CEO



3

Paris

France

PLACE POWER™ SCORE

- 1 Livability
- 1 Lovability
- 4 Prosperity

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 2 Google Trends
- 3 Museums

POPULATION

Metro 13,171,000



EIFFEL TOWER

Few cities coax global attention from so many. From entrepreneurs to tastemakers to bucket-listers, Paris blows minds. Today increasingly so, with future-focused urban reinvention the likes of which the world has never seen but can't wait to experience.

Paris is still the most compelling urban symphony on the planet – at once historic and progressive, elegant and gritty, intimate and global. The 2024 Olympic spotlight revealed not just athletic excellence, but a city that has remade itself on its own terms: slowed down for walking, calm for biking, lush for breathing and resilient for learning.

The transformation is as palpable as it is measurable. The city-wide 30 kph (18.6 mph) speed limit, once controversial, now feels inevitable. Parisians navigate more than 600 miles of bike lanes as of mid-2025, with cycling rates nearly doubling in two years. What were once car-dominated thoroughfares have become extended terraces and silent school zones – part of nearly 250 acres of new pedestrian space since 2020, with another 250 planned by 2030. The Plan Vélo's second phase, launching later this year, promises bike maintenance hubs and tourism liaisons across all 20 arrondissements.

Infrastructure is following suit. Phase 1 of the Grand Paris Express opened in mid-2024, delivering new stations including new suburban lines and an extended Line 14, bringing Seine-Saint-Denis within 40 minutes of Orly Airport. Lines 16 and 17 will begin

service by 2027, creating one of Europe's densest transit networks. Metro redesigns – slimmed trains and extended operating hours – blend with this expansion to make the system feel both more accessible and decidedly more futuristic.

The housing equation, long Paris's Achilles heel, shows signs of recalibration. The 2024 land credit reform streamlined permitting across the inner ring, enabling delivery of 4,500 new affordable and mixed-income units by mid-2025, particularly in developments like Chapelle International and Fleury-Marcadet. Real estate prices remain more tempered than London's, with a modest 2%-3% rise this spring, thanks to zoning reforms and social-housing commitments.

Famed Parisian retail has long mirrored the city's refined instincts, and is keeping up high-heeled step for step these days, too. The renovated Galeries Lafayette Champs-Élysées anchors the avenue's revival with its rotating design galleries hosting new brand pop-ups.

Cultural infrastructure moves with characteristic ambition. The Louvre's \$936-million "New Renaissance" renovation, approved in early 2025, will open in 2031



PONT NEUF

with the Mona Lisa in her own luminous chamber and a reimagined Seine-side entrance, anchoring a century-long vision. Next year brings the Musée d'Orsay's new 13,000-square-foot wing, housing Impressionist narratives in new light. The Bourse de Commerce welcomes major retrospectives while the Giacometti Museum and School will open in the former Gare des Invalides train station in 2028. Expect the city's Top 3 Museums ranking to challenge Tokyo's top spot soon.

Long-neglected airport infrastructure (ranked #4 globally) is also getting overdue attention, with the planned 2027 launch of the CDG Express, a high-speed train connecting the airport to central Paris. High-speed rail connections are also multiplying, with Milan overnight plans for 2027.

The investment community has taken notice. Paris ranks second only to London in European prosperity indices, with in-country FDI reaching more than \$15B in 2024 (with the Paris region grabbing a healthy chunk), concentrated in AI, cleantech and quantum research. The France 2030 initiative has created over 30 unicorns since 2021, most of them Paris-based. Station F expanded this

year to support 1,000 incubated companies as well. It's no wonder Paris ranks #4 in our overall Prosperity index, led by its #8 ranking in our Large Companies subcategory and #11 for Business Ecosystem. The city also ranks #7 globally in the 2025 World's Wealthiest Cities Report (not one of ours), with 22 billionaires who call the city home.

Despite the Parisian economic miracle, income and opportunity disparities persist as entrenched challenges. Northeastern districts maintain unemployment rates near 12%, cratering the city's rankings for Unemployment Rate (#272) and Labor Force Participation (#159). The city is trying to spread the wealth through 5,000 new training positions in technology and hospitality distributed across Zones Franches Urbaines, with converted warehouses becoming Youth Employment Hubs offering hospitality skills and digital job training.

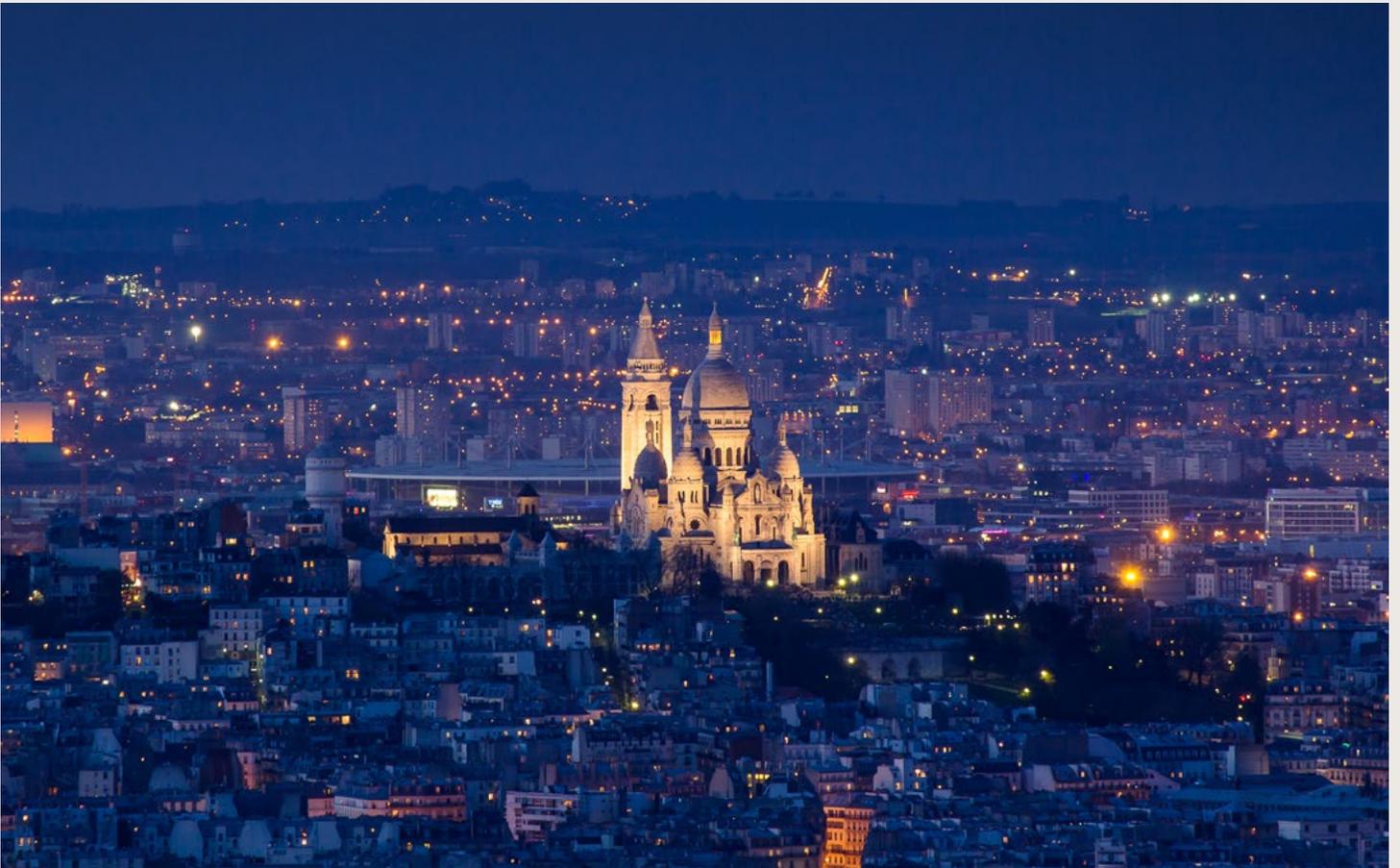
Tourism, after all, has also never been more lucrative. After the Olympic-fueled 2024 surge, 2025 is anticipated to see 51 million visitors with strengthening spend patterns. New culinary destinations like Le Grand Café within the newly reopened Grand Palais complement evening-opened museums

that draw locals and visitors alike, and help the city rank #11 in our Restaurants subcategory. The city now hosts 123 Michelin-starred restaurants, including Sushi Yoshinaga, a new two-star Japanese restaurant, located halfway between the Opéra and Paris' Japanese Quarter, while sustainable-star recognition reinforces Paris's gastronomic leadership.



LOUVRE MUSEUM COURTYARD

Next year brings the Musée d'Orsay's new 13,000-square-foot wing, housing Impressionist narratives in new light. The Bourse de Commerce welcomes major retrospectives while the Giacometti Museum and School will open in the former Gare des Invalides train station in 2028. Expect the city's Top 3 Museums ranking to challenge Tokyo's top spot soon.



BASILICA OF THE SACRÉ-COEUR

4 Tokyo Japan

PLACE POWER™ SCORE

- 3 Prosperity
- 4 Livability
- 4 Lovability

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Restaurants
- 1 Museums

POPULATION

Metro 36,635,000



SHINJUKU SHOPPING DISTRICT

Tokyo keeps rewriting the playbook for megacities, and 2025 has only sharpened its edge: methodical, experimental and relentlessly tuned to human scale, even at its dizzying size.

Visitor numbers are smashing records on the back of a weak yen, with Japan welcoming almost 37 million international arrivals in 2024 and seeing monthly highs throughout 2025. The global voraciousness for the capital (it ranks Top 10 in our Google Trends subcategory) has it doubling down on access, wayfinding and crowd-friendly public space. The Haneda Airport Access Line is under full construction for a 2031 debut and a 20-minute connection to the city, while airport capacity and wayfinding upgrades continue apace for the world's most punctual big-city air hub.

Street level, the headline is the city's High Line-style makeover: the Tokyo Expressway (KK Line) is being transformed into the Tokyo Sky Corridor, an elevated green promenade now in the design and activation phases, with initial openings targeted later this decade as companion works relocate adjacent expressway segments underground at Nihonbashi. Expect test programming and phased sections to animate Ginza and Kyōbashi well before full build-out. The Shibuya district's once-in-a-century rebuild advances toward its 2027–28 milestone with new pedestrian decks, retail and office towers stitching together one of the busiest rail hubs on earth. This being Tokyo (where Nature & Parks ranks #7 globally)

there's still considered, human-scale urban layering and beloved interventions like the Kanda River revitalization and waterfront pilot projects in Odaiba.

Autonomous mobility trials scaled in 2025, with robotaxi pilots in Odaiba and Nishi-Shinjuku and ongoing hydrogen/electric fleet trials supporting the capital's low-carbon push.

Hospitality had its own banner year. Janu Tokyo (Aman's sister brand) settled into Azabudai Hills in 2024 with 122 rooms and a 43,000-sq-ft wellness center, joining The Tokyo EDITION, Ginza and a swelling roster of luxury flags. Azabudai's retail gravity also jumped with the opening of a major Hermès flagship, while teamLab Borderless returned in 2024 as the district's magnetic cultural anchor, which helps the city top our Museums subcategory globally). Together, these openings are pulling luxury spend and footfall south from Marunouchi and east from Roppongi.

The shopping-dining-culture halo extends to Ginza (with the EDITION's rooftop crowd and perennial Ginza Six traffic) and west to Shibuya's Miyashita Park, now fully normalized as a day-to-night urban resort that has a lot to live up to given Tokyo's top spot in our Restaurants subcategory.

5 Madrid Spain

PLACE POWER™ SCORE

- 6** Lovability
- 7** Livability
- 10** Prosperity

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 2** Nightlife
- 7** Theaters & Concerts

POPULATION

Metro 6,983,000



CUATRO TORRES BUSINESS AREA (CTBA)

Madrid's sustainability-driven investment in its bounteous urban and natural assets is an ode to reuse and the conviction that everything old can be new again.

This summer, as Spain's capital baked under record temperatures, the city's ambitious green transformation offered both respite and hope. The Bosque Metropolitano, Madrid's audacious attempt to create Europe's largest metropolitan forest, continues its steady advance around the city's perimeter, promising a 47-mile ring of trees that will reshape both climate and character (and improve the already impressive #20 Nature & Parks ranking). The forest will feature over 450,000 new trees and other vegetation, part of a broader urban rewilding that includes the recently completed Santander Park and an expanding network of cycle lanes (Biking ranks #42). Madrid's electric bus fleet, now among Europe's most extensive, hums quietly through streets where plane trees offer precious shade. This isn't merely environmental theater: it's public transit infrastructure with intent (ranking #11 globally).

Yet it is Madrid Nuevo Norte that represents the city's most brazen gambit. Stretching across 570 acres of former railway land, the first residential construction may begin in 2027, marking the start of Europe's second-largest urban regeneration project. The scheme promises 10,500 new homes, millions of square feet of office space and a reimagined Chamartín station that will anchor Madrid's claim as a

continental transport hub. Global tech and finance firms are already scouting locations along what will become Madrid's new business spine. Lucky for them, Madrileños rank #40 in our Educational Attainment subcategory.

Cultural ambitions are equally impressive. The Royal Collections Gallery, which opened to considerable fanfare in 2023, has settled into its role as a magnet for international visitors and a boon to the city's #8 Museums ranking. Meanwhile, neighborhood venues like Cines Embajadores continue their quiet renaissance, part of Madrid's broader cultural ecosystem spanning expanded spaces at CaixaForum and Matadero Madrid to a planned cultural hub in Carabanchel, scheduled for 2026.

The hospitality sector reads these signs with characteristic opportunism. Gran Vía's Belle Époque buildings are being reborn as boutique hotels, while new properties in Lavapiés and Chamberí opened mid-year to meet demand from visitors drawn by Madrid's cultural magnetism. Global hotel operators have staked claims across the city's southern districts, anticipating the passenger flows that will follow #38-ranked Barajas airport's \$2.8-billion expansion, a project that begins interim improvements in 2026.

6 Singapore Singapore

PLACE POWER™ SCORE

- 5 Prosperity
- 9 Livability
- 12 Lovability

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Standard of Living
- 4 University

POPULATION

Metro 6,038,000



MARINA BAY SANDS

Emerging from its origins as a free-spirited trading port, Singapore has undergone a remarkable transformation to emerge as one of Asia's most modern, well-organized and captivating urban centers. With dining and shopping to match.

Singapore may top our Standard of Living subcategory, but the city is pursuing so much more. Orchard Road continues its reinvention with the opening of mixed-use luxury towers and retail concepts blending sustainability and experience-first shopping (ranking #28), while the long-anticipated QT Singapore, which debuted in late 2024 in a historic 1927 building, is already buzzing as a nightlife anchor. AIR CCCC, the city's experiment in circular gastronomy, keeps drawing global attention with its mix of culinary innovation and sustainability education, underscoring how food culture here is as progressive as it is indulgent, helping with the #14 Restaurants ranking.

The city-state's skyline and waterfront remain works in progress. Marina Bay Sands has advanced construction on its fourth hotel tower and 15,000-seat arena, both now targeting a 2031 debut, while across the harbor, NS Square – slated to open in 2027 – will anchor downtown with a new outdoor venue replacing the floating platform. The Great Southern Waterfront project, reimagining almost 5,000 acres of prime coast, passed key planning milestones this year, with the first tranche of 9,000 homes expected to break ground in 2026.

Singapore's green push warrants its #9 Nature & Parks ranking. Over 40% of land is already green, but the Park Connector Network now links more than 230 miles of trails, and new vertical gardens are being integrated into upcoming residential districts. Tuas Mega Port's phased rollout continues, with automation advances in 2025 cementing its role as a global logistics hub and just one of the many reasons Singapore finished Top 5 in our overall Prosperity index. Bolstered by \$5 billion in Google cloud infrastructure investment and parallel expansions by Microsoft and Apple, Singapore's once-stealthy tech might is having its moment. Add in the Changi East Industrial Zone and airport expansion, and the city is poised to improve its already impressive Top 10 rankings for both Unemployment Rate (#8) and Large Companies (#9).

The hospitality and cultural sectors are surging in tandem. High-profile restaurant groups from Tokyo and Paris opened in Robertson Quay this year, while luxury operators are extending their reach into secondary districts like Katong and Jurong. Meanwhile, the city's museums are planning expansions, with the National Museum of Singapore unveiling two newly renovated wings in 2026, sure to improve the city's #43 Museums ranking.

7 Rome Italy

PLACE POWER™ SCORE

- 5** Livability
- 5** Lovability
- 34** Prosperity

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 4** Sights & Landmarks
- 11** Museums

POPULATION

Metro 4,306,000



COLOSSEUM

The Eternal City has always been coveted. These days, the bounty is an immersive step back in time in a city investing in ambitious upgrades for both residents and visitors, kicked off by the millions of pilgrims who descended here for the 2025 Jubilee.

Rome's status as the Eternal City has rarely felt more literal. In 2025, the Jubilee placed the city on center stage, drawing an estimated 35 million pilgrims in addition to the millions of annual tourists already thronging its piazzas (over 22 million in 2024). And the intrigue at the Vatican and the new Pope kept Rome in even more global conversations. The result is a capital in full bloom: sacred and secular life converging in an atmosphere thick with ceremony, art and discovery in a city ranked Top 5 in both our overall Livability and Lovability indices.

The Jubilee's "Pilgrims of Hope" theme is being carried through a sweeping beautification push. Streets have been resurfaced, monuments scrubbed and new cultural showcases unveiled. Largo di Torre Argentina (where Julius Caesar met his end) has reopened as a public archaeological park, while Caravaggio's masterpieces are featured in blockbuster exhibitions across the city. These initiatives build on recent reopenings like the National Gallery of Modern and Contemporary Art's enhanced exhibition spaces and the Trevi Fountain's careful restoration. Expect Roma's #4 Sights & Landmarks ranking to improve even more in the coming years.

The hospitality surge that began in 2023 has only accelerated. Palazzo Talia, transformed by filmmaker Luca Guadagnino into a boutique jewel of 26 rooms and suites with restored Renaissance frescoes, has become a must-stay. Bvlgari Roma, Six Senses Rome and the upcoming Thompson Rome anchor a luxury wave joined by Nobu, Corinthia and Rosewood, while the recently debuted Romeo Roma (featuring a glass-bottom spa pool suspended over ruins!) redefines what it means to "sleep in history." Even legacy addresses like Rome Cavalieri remain unmatched, with La Pergola the city's only Michelin three-star jewel.

But investment isn't just confined to hospitality. The long-delayed Metro Line C is adding new stations in 2025, easing movement across the dense historic core, while the city has approved mixed-use redevelopments in Ostiense and Tiburtina aimed at creating creative and residential districts. Global companies, particularly in fashion and mobility, are expanding local hubs, seeing opportunity in both Rome's talent and lower costs relative to Milan.

Expect expanded pedestrian zones around the Colosseum and Piazza Venezia in 2026, and the opening of the Metro Line C Piazza Venezia station in 2032.

8 Dubai UAE

PLACE POWER™ SCORE

- 6 Prosperity
- 9 Lovability
- 17 Livability

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 2 Labor Force Participation
- 2 Facebook Check-ins

POPULATION

Metro 6,000,000



ATLANTIS THE PALM HOTEL AND THE DUBAI SKYLINE

Dubai's default setting is "next" and no other city on earth matches its audacious ambition and relentless growth. The next few years will only widen the gap.

Passenger traffic set fresh records at DXB in 2024 (92.3 million, making it the world's busiest airport) and kept surging in 2025, estimated to end at 96 million, even as the city readies the generational hand-off to a far larger Al Maktoum International (DWC). The \$35-billion DWC build-out (with over 400 aircraft stands and an eventual 260-million-passenger design capacity) moved from rendering to reality this spring, the clearest signal yet of a logistics and visitor economy still in expansion mode. The incumbent, however, still ranks Top 5 in our Airports subcategory.

On the ground, Dubai's 2040 Urban Master Plan is shifting from policy to pilot. Al Barsha 2 is the first "20-minute city" model district, adding more than 10 miles of shaded walking and cycling paths and local mobility hubs to put daily needs within a short stroll or ride. And the 18-mile, 14-station Metro Blue Line should open by late 2029, knitting dense eastern communities and Dubai Creek into the driverless network. It's all good news for a city with Walkability, Biking and Public Transit rankings currently well out of the Top 100.

The skyline keeps grabbing headlines. One Za'abeel's skybridge, The Link, is the world's longest cantilever and anchors a

two-tower mixed-use node where One&Only One Za'abeel opened with a chef-driven dining roster and SIRO next door adding a performance-wellness hotel concept. Dorchester Collection's The Lana debuted along the Dubai Water Canal with a Foster + Partners profile and Dior's first spa in the city. Jumeirah's long-trailed Marsa Al Arab finally opened in March 2025, completing the brand's beachfront trilogy beside Burj Al Arab.

Retail gravity is tilting toward the Creek: Emaar finalized designs for Dubai Square, the next mega-mall at Dubai Creek Harbour, envisioned as the city's No. 2 shopping and entertainment destination and aligned with the next phase of Dubai Creek Tower.

For capital flows, momentum is unmistakable. Dubai posted a record \$207 billion in real estate transactions in 2024 and announced an astonishing 1,117 greenfield FDI projects – strengthening pipelines in finance, AI, cybersecurity and advanced manufacturing. Those numbers translate into cranes, keys and jobs, with the city ranking #6 in our overall Prosperity index, powered by #2 in the Labor Force Participation subcategory.

9 Berlin Germany

PLACE POWER™ SCORE

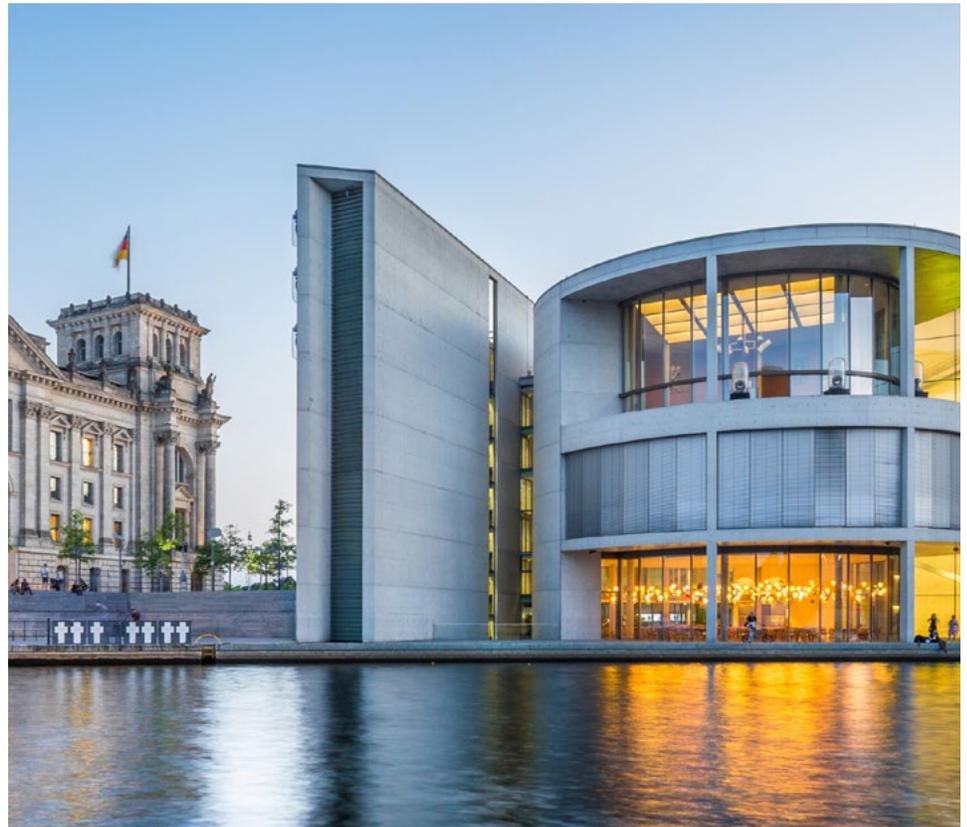
- 7 Prosperity
- 10 Livability
- 10 Lovability

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 4 Biking
- 5 Walkability

POPULATION

Metro 5,106,000



PAUL-LÖBE-HAUS

Tolerance, cultural ambition and coveted talent make Berlin a city you'll be hearing a lot more about over the rest of the decade and beyond. Especially as an increasingly unified Europe gets defensive.

Berlin's hospitality and arts machine is humming (the city's techno culture is now UNESCO-recognized) while its growth story is anchored by projects coming online for residents and curious visitors alike. At the Kulturforum, the long-awaited Museum of the 20th Century (rebranded "berlin modern") is on track for a 2027 opening, a roughly \$500-million investment investment that will finally let Berlin show its 20th-century holdings at full scale beside Mies's Neue Nationalgalerie. The city's already impressive Top 10 Museums ranking should rise accordingly.

Berlin is also protecting its #7 Prosperity ranking, highlighted by its #14-ranked Business Ecosystem. Out in Wustermark, a \$3.4-billion Virtus data-center "megacampus" is rising to serve hyperscalers and AI workloads, underscoring the capital region's role in Europe's cloud build-out. And south of the ring road, Verdion's PremierPark Berlin – a next-gen logistics and production hub – keeps signing advanced manufacturers, a tidy barometer for goods-moving demand.

The biggest urban-economic canvas is the 1,200-plus-acre Berlin TXL redevelopment at the former Tegel Airport. Two districts anchor it: Urban Tech Republic (almost 500 acres

of research/industry infrastructure) and the Schumacher Quartier (more than 5,000 homes for 10,000+ residents). First housing starts were contractually green-lit in early 2025, with vertical construction beginning in 2026 and initial move-ins from 2028. Expect thousands of jobs in clean-energy systems, mobility, circular construction and applied R&D, plus a campus presence from the Berlin University of Applied Sciences, all powered by a low-energy thermal network designed to cut operating carbon at district scale.

Berlin's unique, democratized urban playground is also expanding with projects like the Reethaus – a 40-foot-tall, hand-thatched "modern temple" with MONOM's spatial sound – part of an evolving campus that's putting serious design back on the Spree riverfront. Speaking of which, the Spree cleanup has advanced so much that urban activists now host "swim demos" in the summer.

Add in the city's rail-and-air uplift, durable affordability versus other EU capitals, and a deep bench of creatives and engineers, and Berlin's proposition for capital (and people) looks as vivid as its nightlife (ranked #12 globally).

10

Barcelona

Spain

PLACE POWER™ SCORE

- 6** Livability
- 7** Lovability
- 23** Prosperity

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 3** Public Transit
- 12** Walkability

POPULATION

Metro 5,094,000



EIXAMPLE DISTRICT AND SAGRADA FAMÍLIA

The Catalan capital is as coveted as ever, but today it's welcoming the world on its own terms, doing right by its residents and long-term economic sustainability.

Barcelona, long coveted for its sublime Mediterranean light and Modernist masterpieces, is finally approaching the end of its most audacious project: Antoni Gaudí's Sagrada Família, scheduled for completion in 2026.

The evangelists John and Matthew already pierce the Barcelona skyline, their towers illuminated since 2023, while the crowning 566-foot tower of Jesus Christ awaits its 2026 unveiling. It is a moment that will mark not merely architectural triumph but symbolic closure – the fulfilment of a vision that has outlasted empires, wars and the very concept of what a city might become.

Yet as Gaudí's stone apostles prepare for their final ascent, Barcelona finds itself navigating an altogether more contemporary tension: how to remain globally magnetic while preserving the qualities that made it so. The city's 12 million annual visitors (double its metro population) have returned with post-pandemic vigor, testing some of Europe's most stringent vacation rental regulations (while fueling the planet's 13th-best nightlife). Mayor Jaume Collboni's zero-tolerance approach to short-term rentals represents a calculated gamble: that Barcelona can replenish its housing stock without dimming its allure.

The urban laboratory continues regardless. The \$56-million Consell de Cent corridor, which transformed 21 blocks of major thoroughfare into verdant pedestrian promenade, exemplifies Barcelona's commitment to reclaiming public space through its expanding "superblocks" network. Even court challenges have failed to derail this pedestrian-first vision, a remarkable persistence given that Collboni replaced the more walking-friendly Ada Colau in 2023, and despite the city maintaining the European Union's highest automotive density. Still, the city ranks Top 3 in our Public Transit subcategory and #12 for Walkability.

Today, Barcelona is increasingly confident in its own terms of engagement. Venture capital in Catalonia surged 65.5% in 2024, channeling \$1.25 billion into artificial intelligence, biotechnology, cybersecurity and mobility start-ups. Lufthansa's first southern European digital hub, announced in 2023, expands this year, while American developer Panattoni is committing \$325 million to a data center campus at Parc de l'Alba. Intel's \$435-million partnership with the Barcelona Supercomputing Center signals the city's emerging role in Europe's semiconductor sovereignty ambitions.



11 Sydney Australia

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 8 Air Quality
- 16 University

POPULATION

Metro 5,450,000

Sydneysiders have a lot to be proud of – and increasingly, even more to share with the world.

Sydney's swagger is back, fueled by its 24-Hour Economy strategy moving from policy to pavement, with looser alfresco rules and new entertainment precincts enlivening laneways from the CBD to Moore Park, and late-night transport planning catching up to the crowds these changes are drawing. It'd be a shame to waste the planet's eighth best air quality, after all. Big civic hardware is arriving just as fast. Sydney Metro's City & Southwest line now runs through the new city stations, including Barangaroo and Martin Place, with the Bankstown conversion slated to deliver full metro frequencies across the corridor by 2026. The #8 ranking in our overall Livability index should improve as a result. Western Sydney International Airport is still on track to open in 2026 – with its own metro line following in 2027 – rewiring visitor flows and site-selector maps across the metropolis.

Sydney's overall Prosperity index (ranked #8) will be helped by Atlassian's timber-hybrid headquarters at Central Station opening in 2027, adding torque to a start-up district already knit to universities and rail. Meanwhile, Martin Place's new multi-level dining anchor, The International, is pulling long Friday lunches and corporate cards into the city's sandstone heart.



12 Los Angeles USA

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 3 Instagram Posts
- 3 University

POPULATION

Metro 12,928,000

The planet's city of stories is telling a few of its own these days, even with the nagging trauma of Mother Nature's recent wrath.

Los Angeles is leaning hard into its "Decade of Sport" as it gears up for the 2026 FIFA World Cup, 2027 Super Bowl and 2028 Olympics, but the story is bigger than stadiums. The Rams Village at Warner Center – a 52-acre mixed-use campus in Woodland Hills – will break ground in 2027 with offices, apartments, entertainment venues and nine acres of parks, signaling confidence in the Valley's office-to-residential reinvention (indicated by the #5 Business Ecosystem ranking). Warner Center's 2035 zoning already allows 24 million square feet of new commercial development and 14,000 housing units, putting investors on notice.

Cultural projects are not letting up either. The Natural History Museum's \$75-million NHM Commons opened in Exposition Park, while the Lucas Museum of Narrative Art debuts in 2026 on an 11-acre campus. UCLA's new DataX center has become a magnet for AI and STEM talent. L.A.'s Top 3 University ranking isn't surprising. On the street, the reopened Sixth Street Viaduct has turned the Arts District into Instagram catnip (securing a Top 3 Instagram Posts ranking), with galleries, boutiques and Michelin-starred dining pulling Angelenos eastward. Meanwhile, the rest of the U.S. looks longingly westward as the City of Angels rises resiliently from the deadly fires that swept the city.



13 Seoul South Korea

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 2 Restaurants
- 9 Museums

POPULATION

Metro 24,160,000

Seoul's Hallyu sizzle is enticing visitors and investment to the table.

Let's start with Seoul food. Culinary momentum is peaking in the city ranking #2 globally for its restaurants: the 2025 Michelin Guide elevated Seoul's dining profile again (Mingles now holds three stars), while neighborhoods from Seongsu to Hannam keep turning warehouses into tasting rooms and late-night bars. The city's #9-ranked Museums are powered by daring initiatives like the soon-to-open "Centre Pompidou x Hanwha Seoul" inside Hanwha's landmark 63 Building in Yeouido, bringing rotating shows from Paris during the Pompidou's long renovation. Meanwhile, the National Museum of Korean Literature opens in 2026. On the river (in keeping with the city's #17 Nature & Parks ranking), the Hangang renaissance is moving from renderings to ribbon cuttings, with floating-pool and art-pier activations that will add new reasons to linger along the water after dark. Seoul's business engine hums behind the scenes. SKY-university research pipelines, an expansive start-up hub network, and ongoing hyperscale cloud and semiconductor investments across Greater Seoul all support the city's #13 Educational Attainment ranking. Hospitality is only accelerating as luxury flags continue to refresh product (including the Four Seasons' 2025 sustainability accolades and new bar programming), while design-forward boutique openings in Myeongdong and Itaewon chase Seoul's Instagram-fueled after-hours buzz.



14 Amsterdam Netherlands

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 13 Museums
- 14 Airports

POPULATION

Metro 2,989,000

Amsterdam is done with your partying. But you're welcome to respectfully celebrate its birthday.

Amsterdam is leaning into its 750th year with more intention than indulgence. The city's recalibration – prioritizing residents while welcoming respectful visitors – has only sharpened its edge, resulting in an impressive #11 in our overall Livability index. The headline opening of 2025 is Rosewood Amsterdam, which debuted in May in the 200-year-old Palace of Justice on Prinsengracht with 134 rooms, three restaurants and a pool – another vote of confidence in the historic canal belt's high-end hospitality.

The city's Zuidasdoek district – already branded the “Financial Mile” – is undergoing a transformation with the ambitious (and expensive) initiative to bury a stretch of the A10 South ring road and expand the Zuid station into the city's second-largest rail hub by the early 2030s. Its reinvention into a dense, mixed-use South Axis where corporate towers will share blocks with residential high-rises, cultural venues and green public squares has multinationals like ABN AMRO, Boston Consulting Group and AkzoNobel interested. Amsterdam's highly educated workforce (#39) is the lure. Out of town, the city's #14-ranked Schiphol airport is increasingly a destination, with the recent renovation of the Corendon Amsterdam Schiphol Airport Hotel featuring a retired Boeing 747 in the hotel garden that is open for tours.



15 Beijing China

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 3 Nightlife
- 5 Shopping

POPULATION

Metro 21,312,000

One of China's “Four Ancient Capitals,” Beijing walks a fine line between progress and politics.

China's imperial capital and boardroom to the world is increasingly sharing its fun side. With a global Top 3 Nightlife ranking, the city keeps investing in refreshed promenades along the Liangma River and new speakeasies threaded through Dongcheng's hutongs. The scene stretches from Sanlitun rooftops to late-set “live houses” in 798. Meanwhile, the worship of retail (and the city's Top 5 ranking in our Shopping subcategory) remains as devout as ever, led by SKP and avant-garde sibling SKP-S, while Taikoo Li Sanlitun's newest flagships and upgraded public spaces are pulling footfall east from Wangfujing, where expanded duty-free draws international spend. All that discretionary income is due to the city's #6 ranking in our Large Companies subcategory, with the city still hosting the world's largest concentration of Fortune Global 500 headquarters. The past year has brought fresh commitments in Zhongguancun and the Beijing Economic-Technological Development Area – cloud campuses, EV supply-chain R&D and new data-center capacity – keeping the deal flow brisk. Daxing International (ranked #7) continues to add long-haul capacity, and in the city's east, the Grand Canal cultural district is coalescing, with Tongzhou's canal and parks framing Snøhetta's new ginkgo-forest-inspired Beijing Sub-Center Library.



16 Shanghai China

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 2 Convention Center
- 4 Nightlife

POPULATION

Metro 28,482,000

Shanghai is doubling down on what it does best in 2025: neon nights, family-ready mega-attractions and trade shows few cities can match.

Shanghai for your next family vacation? It's worth considering, given the city's Top 5 Family-Friendly Attractions ranking for places like the year-round Snow World resort in Pudong. Opened with more than one million square feet under one roof, the indoor slope network spans almost a mile, with two on-site hotels (the 289-room Vignette Collection Shanghai Snow World Hotel and the 375-room Crowne Plaza). Across town, Shanghai Disney's Zootopia continues to headline new programming and keeps Miracles Kingdom weekends sold out. The #4-ranked nightlife spans from the Bund's rooftops into the revitalized Suzhou Creek corridor, where new riverwalks and “live houses” (think Yuyintang Park and MAO) are fueling later hours and growing crowds. It shows online, too: the Lujiazui skyline and 28 miles of continuous riverfront paths keep Shanghai among the most-posted skylines in Asia (helping the city rank #6 in our Instagram Posts subcategory). But this city means business, and always has. The National Exhibition and Convention Center in Hongqiao – one of the world's largest, and ranked #2 globally – returns this fall with the China International Import Expo. Meanwhile, the Lingang Special Area is ramping up advanced manufacturing, with Tesla's new Megapack plant and cloud providers adding capacity citywide.



17 Toronto Canada

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 4 Educational Attainment
- 11 University

POPULATION

Metro 7,605,000

Canada’s sensible gateway for immigration and innovation is getting a little wild.

Toronto’s magnetism starts with its brainpower: the University of Toronto, York and Toronto Metropolitan (all combing for a #11 global University ranking) anchor one of North America’s most educated metros. In fact, Toronto boasts the fourth most educated population on the planet. They feed centuries-old companies and a humming start-up scene – momentum that keeps the city among the planet’s most coveted for immigrants, resulting in a populace where the majority of residents were born outside of Canada. You feel the growth in the skyline: more than 150 tower cranes, a renovated Massey Hall, Renzo Piano’s Ontario Court of Justice and Love Park’s heart-shaped pond – all catnip for Instagram, where Toronto consistently ranks among the most-posted cities (#13) and firmly atop Google Trends (#18). On the city’s long-neglected Lake Ontario waterfront, the billion-dollar Port Lands Flood Protection has rerouted the Don River into a new 0.8-mile channel and opened the first 49 acres of Biidaasige Park, with another 15 acres coming online through 2028, cementing Toronto’s impressive #21-ranked Nature & Parks. Big stages are next. BMO Field’s expansion to host FIFA World Cup 2026 matches is underway, and the Metro Toronto Convention Centre pipeline is strengthening citywide events.



18 São Paulo Brazil

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Nightlife
- 1 Instagram Posts

POPULATION

Metro 22,421,000

Known for its open-air museums and open-hearted communities, Sampa is on a roller-coaster ride toward urbanization.

São Paulo is back in full neon, and the momentum now spans nights out, new eats, luxury retail and a popping skyline. The city climbs our global Lovability ranks to #8 on the strength of its famously late and #1-ranked nightlife (Vila Madalena and Baixo Augusta are busy seven nights a week), a flood of #1-ranked Instagram posts from re-energized cultural corridors and a restaurant scene that remains Top 5 worldwide. The Michelin Guide’s return to Brazil re-spotlighted icons like D.O.M., Maní and Evvai, while 2025 brings fresh chef-driven rooms in Pinheiros and Jardins. Shopping is also Top 3 globally, with Oscar Freire’s luxury stretch adding expanded flagships, and JK Iguatemi/Cidade Jardim continuing to court global maisons.

Urban reinvention is equally kinetic. The Anhembi district’s multi-year makeover (new arena, hotel and upgraded convention halls through 2027) strengthens a meetings market already anchored by São Paulo Expo. Along the Pinheiros River, linear parks and bike links keep rolling out, pushing more weekend traffic onto the waterfront and into galleries and clubs. Cloud and fintech expansions around Faria Lima and Berrini signal continued FDI appetite, with new data-center capacity seeding the past few years and blooming as you read this.



19 Hong Kong China

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 4 Google Trends
- 5 Large Companies

POPULATION

Metro 7,617,000

A global business destination fights to reclaim its magnetism and livability by investing in a long-planned cultural renaissance as China’s grip tightens.

Hong Kong’s dynamism has always been rooted in its remarkable diversity. In a single day, visitors can explore a fishing village just an hour from downtown, relax on a sun-drenched beach (enjoying #8-ranked Nature & Parks), shop glittering modern malls and timeless back-alley markets, savor globally renowned cuisine, and end the evening in one of the city’s countless vibrant bars and cafés. Despite its political turbulence and Beijing’s tightening grip, the city still radiates pride and passion. And with a #4 ranking for Google Trends, the world agrees. The city’s #22 spot in our overall Prosperity index is powered by massive investment in #17-ranked Hong Kong International Airport, which fully commissioned its Three-Runway System in late 2024 and will begin reopening an expanded Terminal 2 in late 2025.

AsiaWorld-Expo’s refresh is already paying off with a supercharged 2025 events calendar, and the new 50,000-seat Kai Tak Sports Park debuted this year by hosting the Hong Kong Sevens rugby tournament before scaling up for mega-concerts and indoor conventions. Central’s skyline adds fresh corporate address clout as Zaha Hadid’s The Henderson welcomes more blue-chip tenants, while the Northern Metropolis program advances cross-border innovation space near Shenzhen.



20 Istanbul Türkiye

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Shopping
- 2 Nature & Parks

POPULATION

Metro 14,206,000

Europe's largest city is coming for the crown, and it has the goods to expect nothing less.

Istanbul, Türkiye's – and Europe's – largest city, remains a captivating crossroads of culture and commerce connecting Europe and Asia. Fittingly, the city ranks #1 globally for Shopping and sits in the Top 5 for both Instagram and TikTok posts (and an impressive #14 in our overall Lovability index). Galataport's underground cruise terminal keeps drawing footfall, feeding Renzo Piano's gleaming Istanbul Modern next door and a refreshed luxury stretch from Karaköy to Nişantaşı. Flagship openings and pop-ups along İstiklal and Bağdat keep the fashion carousel spinning, while the Grand Bazaar still sets the standard for "only-in-Istanbul" retail theater. Nature is the city's quiet flex (#2 for Nature & Parks): the 13,600-acre Belgrad Forest, new "Nation's Garden" park phases, and steadily improved Bosphorus promenades yield miles of waterfront walking and cycling. Hospitality has also arrived in full force. Peninsula Istanbul's waterfront compound has matured into a full culinary precinct, and the Tersane (Golden Horn Shipyard) redevelopment continues its phased rollout with galleries, event spaces and a new luxury hotel, turning a historic yard into a cultural-leisure waterfront. The city is also an economic force, with Istanbul Financial Center in Ataşehir bursting with banks, markets and services, while towers in Zorlu, Levent and Maslak are gaining blue-chip tenants and venture-backed start-ups.



21 Melbourne Australia

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 12 Air Quality
- 13 University

POPULATION

Metro 5,207,000

Street art and scenic trails are just the tip of the ice coffee for Australia's second-largest city, which is increasingly ascending as an economic regional power.

Melbourne's secret sauce – laneway grit meets blue-chip brains – keeps drawing in the world. Clear skies (with the planet's 12th-best Air Quality) frame a city doubling down on movement and culture. The Metro Tunnel opens in 2025 with five new stations (Arden, Parkville, State Library, Town Hall and Anzac), slashing cross-city trips and hardwiring the biomedical and university spine – timely for a knowledge base ranked #13 for University and #26 for Educational Attainment.

Along the Yarra, early works on the Greenline are stitching a 2.5-mile sequence of promenades, habitat and public art across the river's north bank, due to roll out in stages through the second half of the decade. A sizzling arts and events scene that powers a #23 finish for Theaters & Concerts keeps humming – from Hamer Hall and the Sidney Myer Music Bowl to big-ticket nights around the Australian Open and Formula 1. Hospitals and labs anchor a health system that places #30 globally, with the Parkville–Arden biomedical corridor adding next-gen research space as the new Arden precinct comes online around its namesake station. FDI and domestic capital are clustering in Docklands and Fishermans Bend for advanced manufacturing and R&D.



22 Bangkok Thailand

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 3 Unemployment Rate
- 4 Facebook Check-ins

POPULATION

Metro 10,891,000

From stag party hotspot to Russian haven, Thailand's capital has flipped the script on its global perception.

Bangkok is shedding caricatures and getting down to business. Ultra-low joblessness (ranking #3 for Unemployment Rate) and high engagement (#7 for Labor Force Participation) keep the service economy humming while the city builds the rails to secure its future faster. Suvarnabhumi's new SAT-1 terminal has just opened with 28 gates and capacity for 15 million passengers, which will likely improve its current #30 Airports ranking.

Downtown, the 150-acre One Bangkok megaproject beside Lumpini Park will open in 2026 with offices, retail and an elevated public realm rolling out first. Two blocks north, Dusit Central Park is unlocking more than 20 acres over the rest of the decade. In keeping with the city's #32 Nature & Parks ranking, a revived, elevated "Green Mile" now stitches Benjakitti Forest Park's wetlands to Lumpini's shade, daily proof of Bangkok's livability pivot. Retail and dining are also firing on all cylinders, no surprise given the city's #8 ranking for both Shopping and Restaurants. The EM District's newest hub continues to fill out with big-ticket tenants and arena programming, while riverside icons at Capella and Four Seasons serve up plenty of content and help the city rank #7 for TikTok Videos.



23 Osaka Japan

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 17 Google Trends
- 19 Family-Friendly Attractions

POPULATION

Metro 16,692,000

From street eats to family fun, Osaka serves up a menu of delights.

Osaka is welcoming the world – and making it easier to savor what locals already love. Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai opened on Yumeshima this spring, with the Osaka Metro Chūō Line extension delivering trains directly to the island and new wayfinding, plazas and family-oriented cultural activities offering plenty upon arrival (hence the #19 ranking for Family-Friendly Attractions). North of Osaka Station, the long-planned Umekita Phase 2 (branded Grand Green Osaka) keeps growing with an 11-acre central park already open and the first residences, luxury hotel and street-level retail targeting a 2027 opening. The result: more reasons to explore a skyline that mixes Osaka Castle and Umeda Sky Building, which helps the #27 Sights & Landmarks ranking.

Food still rules here, indicated by the #22 Restaurants ranking. Expect fresh counters and chef tables around Dojima and at the new Four Seasons Hotel Osaka, while street eats like takoyaki and okonomiyaki keep Kansai comfort at arm's reach. Universal Studios Japan's Super Nintendo World expansion (Donkey Kong Country) is now in full swing, turbocharging family itineraries and search interest (Osaka ranks #17 for Google Trends).

And with a global Top 20 Biking ranking, the city keeps stitching safe riverside links along Nakanoshima and the Yodogawa embankments to complement expanding bike share programs.



24 Oslo Norway

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 14 Climate Risk
- 16 Green Space

POPULATION

Metro 1,651,000

A compact dynamo's secret formula is enchanting global talent.

Oslo's waterfront has never been hotter and locals are literally sweating the details. The city's floating-sauna scene keeps expanding, now with universal access baked in. Trosten, the aluminum-and-terrazzo showpiece moored in Bjørvika, set a new bar for inclusive design and put Oslo's year-round fjord dips on the global map. The city's active lifestyle and low-emission habits underpin its high rank for Health (#17), while a nearly six-mile harbor promenade, pocket parks and quick escapes into the forested Marka sustain Oslo's standout Green Space (#16) and Walkability (#19) credentials.

Transit is the 2025 headline. To stitch the new Fornebubanen into the network, Oslo is executing its biggest metro works in 60 years: summer closures and a rebuilt Majorstuen hub will unlock a 4.8-mile line later this decade. The payoff is massive: faster commutes, new jobs and a surge of mixed-use development at Fornebu, all aligning with the city's coveted workforce and bike-first mobility push.

Culture also matters here, with the MUNCH and National Museum keeping the exhibition calendar packed through 2026 and the reimagined Museum of the Viking Age reopening in 2027.



25 Stockholm Sweden

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 8 Educational Attainment
- 14 Green Space

POPULATION

Metro 2,455,000

Ambitious tech and housing investment activate an enterprising and educated citizenry.

Sweden's 14-island capital is an urban feast of brainpower and livability, with 2026 serving up even more reasons to live and visit here. The headliner is Stockholm Wood City in Sickla, the world's largest planned mass-timber neighborhood, which just started construction and targets first move-ins by 2027. Thousands of homes and workplaces in low-carbon timber neatly reinforce a city already ranked high for Green Space (#14) and celebrated for getting nature into daily life, from miles of waterfront paths to quick ferry hops into the archipelago.

Deal flow is matching the urbanism. Foreign direct investment surged recently, capped by Coherent's plan to establishing the world's first six-inch indium-phosphide wafer capability in the region (fuel for optical communications and AI interconnects). It's a vote of confidence in Stockholm's elite universities (KTH, Karolinska and Stockholm University) and its deep talent bench, reflected in its #8 ranking for Educational Attainment and #14-ranked Labor Force Participation. Health innovation is clustering in Hagastaden, where the Forskaren life-science hub fills with tenants through 2025 alongside new labs, eateries and pocket parks that keep the district walkable and family-friendly.



26 Miami USA

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 11 Airports
- 15 Air Quality

POPULATION

Metro 6,458,000

Miami’s creativity is powered by its arms-wide-open acceptance of newcomers.

Miami’s magnetic fusion of tropical beauty and financial might continues strengthening its position as America’s premier global gateway. The city ranks Top 30 across our overall Livability, Lovability and Prosperity indices, powered by its incredible outdoor bounty (#15 for Air Quality and #26 for Nature & Parks) that fuels a torrent of social media love (Instagram Posts ranks #16 globally). And the word of mouth is working. University of Florida projections show Miami-Dade’s population – which currently boasts the nation’s largest concentration of foreign-born talent – growing by an astonishing 15% by 2030. This lifestyle and demographic advantage has attracted high-profile residents like Jeff Bezos, whose three Indian Creek property acquisitions now exceed \$237 million in value. The local economy demonstrates remarkable resilience, with the Beacon Council’s latest scorecard tallying over 10,000 new jobs and over \$806 million in capital investment last fiscal year, while Amazon has leased 50,000 square feet in trendy Wynwood for its expanding 400-person hub. Investment capital is dramatically reshaping the skyline at unprecedented scale. PMG’s Waldorf Astoria broke ground with a record \$668-million condo construction loan, while hedge fund titan Ken Griffin’s 1,032-foot Citadel headquarters should begin construction this fall, cementing Brickell’s status as “Wall Street South.”



27 Vienna Austria

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 4 Biking
- 7 Health

POPULATION

Metro 3,136,000

The Austrian capital is done waiting for others to save the planet.

Vienna has long been an urban lab of human-scale streets and social housing at scale. In 2025, the Nordbahnhof (North Station) build-out is delivering new blocks of mixed-income housing, offices and parks, while the lakeside Aspern Seestadt adds mid-rise homes and schools, both served by expanding protected lanes that reinforce Vienna’s #4 Biking and #12 Walkability rankings. The U2/U5 metro works push on, with the first driverless U5 segment targeted for the back half of 2026, tightening commutes between the historic core and fast-growing districts. Culture is as vibrant as ever, with the revamped Wien Museum on Karlsplatz anchoring 2025 programming that threads the Ringstraße with St. Stephen’s, Schönbrunn and the MuseumsQuartier – steady fuel for a #30 Sights & Landmarks showing. Wellness is baked into daily life (and a #7 Health ranking), from the Danube Island’s 13 miles of car-free shoreline to the city’s inclusive floating sauna villages on the inner harbor. Life-science expansions around the Vienna BioCenter and steady European FDI into clean-tech and data infrastructure are lifting lab, flex and hotel demand. Polished boutique conversions along the Ring and new rooms near Hauptbahnhof serve both congress traffic and weekenders, as Vienna International Airport advances terminal upgrades into 2027.



28 San Francisco USA

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Business Ecosystem (Tied)
- 2 Economic Output

POPULATION

Metro 4,648,000

The golden city is getting up off the mat after a difficult post-Covid recovery.

Despite the panicky (and even warranted) headlines, San Francisco is experiencing a renaissance fueled by AI innovation and bold urban reinvention. After weathering pandemic-era commercial vacancies, the city’s recovery is gaining momentum through adaptive strategies now transforming its downtown core – driven by the city’s #1 ranking in our Business Ecosystem subcategory – and #2 in Economic Output.

New Mayor Daniel Lurie has recently announced ambitious initiatives – from a Breaking the Cycle plan to address homelessness and addiction to his Family Zoning Plan to reform neighborhood zoning and add up to 36,000 new homes by 2031, dramatically reshaping San Francisco’s urban fabric (already ranked #4 for Standard of Living). The city is consistently rolling out daring bike and pedestrian infrastructure like few other U.S. cities. Transit is also growing, with BART upgrades ranging from downtown escalator replacements to tap-and-go Clipper payments that ease commutes. The Top 5 global Air Quality ranking won’t protect itself.

The tech sector remains the city’s economic engine: Bay Area start-ups attracted \$90 billion in venture capital in 2024 – 57% of all U.S. VC funding. The #6 University ranking (led by Stanford) ensures a talent pipeline to keep the future-defining innovation in town.



29 Bengaluru India

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Sights & Landmarks
- 1 Family-Friendly Attractions

POPULATION

Metro 13,172,000

India's tech powerhouse and vibrant cultural melting pot plays as hard as it works.

It's easy to see why Bengaluru is called the "Silicon Valley of India." And why it's quickly catching up to the original. The city's #9 Business Ecosystem ranking is obvious with Foxconn producing the iPhone 17 at a new \$2.8-billion campus near the airport, accelerating a fast-growing local electronics cluster and deepening supplier footprints across North Bengaluru. In 2025, Colliers ranked the city among the world's top tech hubs, underscoring Bengaluru's hiring moat. However, this a city that works to live, with a #1 Family-Friendly Attractions ranking (powered by Bannerghatta's wildlife encounters and Wonderla's coasters) and a #4 for Nature & Parks. A big reason for the latter? The 240-acre Lalbagh Botanical Garden and 197-acre Cubbon Park bookend the core, with Nandi Hills just up the road. All that activity works up local appetites and Bengaluru's #3 global Restaurants ranking delivers – from heritage seafood at Karavalli to progressive kitchens in Indiranagar. Meanwhile, retail depth behind #6 Shopping runs from UB City's luxury to the vast Phoenix Mall of Asia. (And yes, the photogenic Vidhana Soudha and Bangalore Palace still earn that #1 Sights & Landmarks swagger on your feed.) The long-awaited (and just-opened) Yellow Line stitches together this urban gem that is ranked #19 in our overall Lovability index.



30 Mexico City Mexico

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Theaters & Concerts
- 1 Nature & Parks

POPULATION

Metro 20,535,000

CDMX captures global hearts by leaving it all on its streets as it prepares to host the World Cup in 2026.

Mexico City's well-documented magnetism is best felt outdoors. The 1,700-acre Bosque de Chapultepec keeps growing under the "Naturaleza y Cultura" program, with new trails, cultural venues and the Cablebús Chapultepec aerial link. The initiative bolsters the Mexican capital's #1 Nature & Parks stature and its #3 Family-Friendly Attractions. East of town, the Lake Texcoco Ecological Park is opening wetlands, bike paths and birding areas – tens of thousands of acres of new recreation within an easy drive of the Centro. The ancient city's #13 Sights & Landmarks are highlighted by the Centro Histórico's Templo Mayor archeological digs that keep yielding surprises. Xochimilco's canals still launch trajineras at dawn and the Palacio de Bellas Artes, Auditorio Nacional, Arena CDMX and the revamped Estadio GNP Seguros (the former Foro Sol) sustain a year-round mega-tour calendar that underlines a #1 Theaters & Concerts ranking. Mexico City's first Michelin Guide supercharged our #5 Restaurants ranking, with Pujol, Quintonil, Rosetta and Sud 777 joined by buzzy 2025 openings across Roma-Condesa and Polanco. Investment like the Vallejo-i innovation district adds last-mile and light-manufacturing tenants, while nearshoring brings new showrooms and studios to Santa Fe and Reforma. The 2026 World Cup is also refreshing the Estadio Azteca district.



31 Munich Germany

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 4 Biking
- 5 Walkability

POPULATION

Metro 3,066,000

Bavaria's party capital is also a business behemoth – and a magnetic hometown.

Munich's tech flywheel keeps spinning: Apple's European Silicon Design Center downtown is in the middle of a second, roughly \$1-billion expansion through 2027, while BMW is retooling its city plant to launch the Neue Klasse in 2026 en route to all-electric production by 2027. That momentum underwrites Munich's #19 overall Prosperity standing and a steady pipeline of life-science and software start-ups tapping Technical University of Munich and Ludwig Maximilian University talent (Munich ranks #15 in our University subcategory). The city is leaning into its #4 Biking and #5 Walkability rankings, with new protected links on the Altstadt bike ring, calmer streets around the 910-acre Englischer Garten and fresh Isar riverbank promenades that tie leisure trails to daily commutes. Meetings mean business here, too. Messe München – over 2 million square feet of halls – hosts BAU 2025, EXPO REAL 2025 and the returning IAA Mobility, reinforcing a #17 Convention Center finish. Connectivity upgrades include the multi-year Terminal 1 expansion at Munich Airport – advancing toward completion in 2026 – and the continuing work on the long-awaited second S-Bahn tunnel beneath the historic city center, part of a \$9-billion project that will double rail capacity and better connect the airport and suburbs.



32 Dublin Ireland

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 2 Standard of Living
- 4 Biking

POPULATION

Metro 2,267,000

The storied capital has always attracted flâneurs and entrepreneurs. They're just more flush these days.

Dublin's knack for mixing storytellers with start-ups keeps paying off – on the streets and in the stats. Standard of Living ranks #2 globally, and you feel it in a compact core that's #5 for Walkability and surging to #4 for Biking, with the Dublin City Centre Transport Plan trimming through-traffic and stringing together safer cycle spines from the Docklands to the Grand Canal.

The business story is equally kinetic. Economic Output sits at #10, with big tech and biopharma investing in cloud campuses on the west side as the Grange Castle life-sciences cluster adds capacity. Educational Attainment at #9 keeps multinationals anchored in "Silicon Docks," while Trinity and UCD feed a steady pipeline of researchers and founders. It adds up to an overall Prosperity index rank of #25 (and #23 for Livability). Tourism and hospitality are pivoting upscale. The Leinster near Merrion Square hit its stride in 2024 and this year brought refreshed rooms and new dining at heritage addresses across the Georgian core, while Clerys Quarter and North Dock retail continues to fill with global flagships. Dublin Airport – now leveraging its newer north runway – continues its terminal upgrades aimed at smoothing peak flows into 2026.



33 Copenhagen Denmark

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Biking (Tied)
- 2 Walkability

POPULATION

Metro 2,198,000

One of Europe's most buzzed-about capitals is only getting started.

Copenhagen keeps proving how a city built for people – and bikes – stays ahead. The harbor is swimmable, the sidewalks lively and 2025 brings more connective tissue: the M4 Sydhavn metro extension that opened with five new stations now knits Enghave Brygge and Sydhavnen to the city core in minutes, reinforcing the capital's #1 Biking and #2 Walkability pedigree globally. Urban investment is everywhere, highlighted by the groundbreakings at Jernbanebyen, 150+ acres of former rail yards just west of the central station that will unlock a long-planned mixed-use district sized for families and start-ups alike. Green growth is also prioritized, with Fælledby, the 45-acre timber-forward neighborhood northwest of Ørestad, continuing its build-out with new public spaces while preserving about 40% as natural habitat. And out in the harbor, Lynetteholm's 680-acre storm-surge island hit a 2025 milestone as its stone embankments rose from the water – long-horizon climate protection with future transit and housing baked in. Tourism and connectivity are surging. Copenhagen Airport handled 29.9 million passengers last year, and July 2025 set a new monthly record, momentum that keeps the city easy to reach and easier to love. The 8.1-mile Harbour Circle ties those arrivals straight into waterfront parks, bridges and boardwalks.



34 Zürich Switzerland

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Biking (Tied)
- 1 Walkability

POPULATION

Metro 1,613,000

Zürich is exactly the kind of place you'd want to call home: efficient, clean, educated, safe and officially happy.

Switzerland's largest city keeps refining the art of livability (for which it ranks Top 20) as efficient, green and gloriously car-light. It tops our global rankings for Biking and Walkability, yet still wants more: the 2030 bike plan is rolling out more cycle lanes and cyclist-first signals, while the 2040 mobility strategy advances the Tramtangente Nord orbital tram to link fast-growing northern and western districts without funneling through downtown. Downtown retail is repositioning for the next cycle. Swiss Prime Site's Destination Jelmolli redevelopment keeps its protected façade and is slated to reopen in 2027 with food, fashion and culture stacked above refreshed public passages, prime validation of Zürich's shopper magnetism. Hospitality is poised for a big 2026, with Moxy Zürich Letzigrund adding playful, mid-scale keys near the city's event axis. Nationally, hotels posted record 2024 overnights, and Zürich is riding that wave into next year. Corporate investment remains steady, with Microsoft committing an additional \$400 million in 2025 to expand Swiss cloud capacity, including at sites near Zürich, and a business ecosystem where ETH Zürich and the University of Zürich anchor a Top 10 University ranking and spin out start-ups that drew \$971 million in 2023 alone.



35 Chicago USA

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 7 Google Trends
- 8 Airport

POPULATION

Metro 9,409,000

Few cities on the planet are firing on all cylinders like America’s great Midwest metropolis.

Chicago's reputation as America's most quietly productive metropolis has crystallized into a 2025 growth story built on hard infrastructure, a deep tech surge and the country's steadiest stream of corporate expansions. Two once-in-a-generation infrastructure projects are now fully financed and moving forward. At O'Hare International (ranked #8), Satellite Concourse 1 is set for completion in 2028 and Studio Gang's Global Terminal in 2030 – a 25% gate capacity lift for the country's second-busiest domestic hub. On the ground, the CTA Red Line Extension, a 5.6-mile, \$5.3-billion venture linking the Far South Side to the Loop, will break ground in 2026 for completion by 2030. Together, these projects widen the labor catchment by more than 100,000 potential employees and cut commute times from the suburbs and South Side neighborhoods by up to 30 minutes, likely boosting the already impressive #14-ranked Economic Output. Chicagoland also topped Site Selection Magazine's Tier-1 metro rankings for an astonishing 12th straight year, with a project pipeline nearly 100 deals larger than its nearest competitor. The city is leaner and more efficient than ever, boasting the second-highest number of Fortune 500 headquarters in the country, behind only New York (and ranking #14 globally in our Large Companies subcategory).



36 Milan Italy

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 2 Walkability
- 4 Biking

POPULATION

Metro 4,981,000

A no-nonsense devotion to the finer things makes Italy’s northern power a globally coveted vanguard.

Milan's current glow-up is wonderfully ground-level: #2 Walkability meets #4 Biking as the city rolls out its “Città 30” slow-street program and designs a region-wide cycling superhighway network (Cambio) to bind suburbs to the core. The fully opened, 9.3-mile M4 metro now links Linate Airport to San Babila in about 12 minutes and runs end-to-end to San Cristoforo: game-changing for airport-to-Duomo transfers and daily commutes. That helps validate Milan's #6 Airport strength.

The #7-ranked Allianz MiCo – Europe's largest convention venue – keeps the calendar packed, while the 14,000-seat Santa Giulia Arena targets late-2025 delivery ahead of Milano-Cortina 2026. Culture keeps compounding: Brera's Grande Brera project opened Palazzo Citterio in December 2024, stitching 19th and 20th-century masters into a reborn circuit. And a different kind of wellness arrived with April's debut of the vast De Montel thermal park, an all-season urban spa that underpins Milan's improving #25 Health showing. Real estate momentum is tangible. The Olympic Village at Porta Romana hit major 2025 milestones; after the Games it becomes Italy's largest publicly supported student-housing complex (about 1,700 beds) fortifying a diversified, #31 Prosperity economy. Meanwhile, the MIND innovation district keeps clustering life-science tenants.



37 Lisbon Portugal

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 4 Biking
- 5 Public Transit

POPULATION

Metro 3,115,000

You're not imagining it: everyone you know is going to Lisbon, and never wants to leave.

Lisbon's pivot from best-kept secret to urban benchmark is only accelerating. Bikes and trains rule: new protected lanes and a bigger Gira bike share bolster a top-five global standing for biking, while Metro's Circular Line targets 2026 service via the Estrela and Santos stations, tightening everyday commutes and weekend family trips.

The planet's Top 5 transit network turned tragic when the city's funicular accident claimed 16 lives and shattered the city's well-earned sense of safety. But Lisboaets marched on, buoyed by daring new openings like the MACAM modern art museum in a reimagined palace, as well as Hyatt's Andaz Lisbon upcoming debut on Praça do Comércio.

Good thing tourism is booming, with Portugal posting record travel-service exports in 2024 and likely again in 2025. The city's gateways are expanding to meet the demand as well. After choosing Alcochete for the region's next international airport, officials this year asked ANA to accelerate capacity at Humberto Delgado while the new field is completed. More visitors and new residents will keep flying in – for the family-friendly waterfront parks and attractions, for the Top 20 global Health ranking, and some of the most epic sunsets on the planet.



38 Prague Czechia

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 5 Health
- 6 Standard of Living

POPULATION

Metro 2,217,000

Focusing on resident needs created a more accessible city while tourists weren't looking.

Prague's post-pandemic reset is paying off in 2025, with quality-of-life fundamentals like Top 5 Health and #6 Standard of Living rankings meeting a steady buildout of culture and mobility. Along the Vltava, the city keeps investing in people-first riverfronts: Náplavka's vaulted bays hum with markets and galleries, while the Čapadlo embankment hosts open-air concerts that validate a #16 ranking for Sights & Landmarks and #17 for Nightlife. Museum programming is equally magnetic: Kunsthalle Praha, DOX and the National Gallery's citywide venues sustain a #16 Museums finish and a year-round calendar that spills into the streets at Signal Festival each fall. Urban buildout also continues, with tunneling on the new Metro D line advancing south from Pankrác, and the Smíchov City regeneration adding mixed-income housing and offices toward a new intermodal terminal. Around Masaryk Station, Zaha Hadid's Masaryčka has created a destination retail-and-office scene, while the Savarin Palace revival off Wenceslas Square opened recently. Hospitality investment continues with the W Prague reanimating the Grand Hotel Evropa on Wenceslas Square; and the riverfront Fairmont Golden Prague opened in April 2025. With a Top 25 spot in our overall Livability index, Prague's future shines bright.



39 Buenos Aires Argentina

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 5 Nature & Parks
- 6 Nightlife

POPULATION

Metro 15,365,000

River breezes by day; galleries, steak and vinyl 'til late in the storied, sprawling Argentine capital.

Buenos Aires is turning its post-pandemic comeback into a waterfront renaissance, while investing in what locals love most: parks by the river, late-night culture and big-tent arts. Along the Río de la Plata, the old party strip is stirring again. Costa 7070 – chef Pedro Bargeró and bar icon Inés de los Santos's two-level resto-club on Avenida Costanera – is hitting capacity most nights and anchors a 2025 wave of openings that's pulling diners and DJs back to the shore, validating the city's #6-ranked global Nightlife. Nature keeps the aire bueno: the 865-acre Costanera Sur Ecological Reserve is refreshing trails and wayfinding, while new green spines knit urban forests together, supporting a Top 5 Nature & Parks finish. The city's famed culture is radiant as always. Teatro Colón's stacked 2025 season and Movistar Arena's international calendar back a #6 ranking for Theaters & Concerts, and MALBA and the National Museum of Fine Arts finish #6 in the Museums subcategory with blockbuster rotations. #21 overall Lovability index finish isn't surprising. In Núñez, the 30-acre Parque de la Innovación advances with first plots activating labs and university outposts; downtown, the Microcentro Downtown Transformation Plan is pushing office-to-residential starts and street-level retail refreshes.



40 Mumbai India

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 3 Sights & Landmarks
- 4 Large Companies

POPULATION

Metro 20,947,000

Glamor, grit and an infrastructure boom power India's financial heart.

Mumbai is knitting its diverse urbanism together with hard infrastructure and fresh culture. The 13.5-mile Mumbai Trans Harbour Link, opened last year, is already shrinking commutes to Navi Mumbai and unlocking logistics and housing sites, while construction on the underground Metro Line 3 (Colaba-Bandra-SEEPZ) has moved into advanced testing on key segments. Along Marine Drive, the ongoing Coastal Road works are adding seaside promenades and lookouts that will only burnish Mumbai's Top-5 Sights & Landmarks standing and its #11 Nature & Parks finish alongside the 40-square-mile Sanjay Gandhi National Park. Business is also torrid (Mumbai ranks #4 for Large Companies) with Reliance, Tata, ICICI and global banks expanding footprints around Bandra-Kurla Complex and the Jio World campus. Jio World Plaza kept drawing luxury flagships through 2025, affirming the city's retail center of gravity. Looking ahead, airfield and terminal works at Navi Mumbai International Airport continue toward mid-decade commissioning, and Mumbai-Ahmedabad high-speed rail construction advances, with early service milestones targeted later this decade. The city's #11 Family-Friendly Attractions are seen in the 100,000-square-foot Museum of Solutions in Lower Parel, humming with STEAM programming, and the Nita Mukesh Ambani Cultural Centre's youth workshops.



41 Vancouver Canada

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 5 Air Quality
- 6 Educational Attainment

POPULATION

Metro 2,731,000

Gorgeous and smart, Vancouver is embracing its global reputation as a coveted, livable destination.

Vancouver's talent magnetism keeps pulling them in, coaxing global talent and students with clean air (Top 5 globally) and seawall sunsets. They come for the #19-ranked Universities, powered by UBC and SFU, while companies salivate over the #6 Educational Attainment already in town, feeding a #40 Business Ecosystem. The town sometimes referred to as "No Fun City" is buzzing these days, with the long-awaited opening of Oakridge Park's revived retail, dining and cultural district wrapped around a new nine-acre park: a fresh anchor on the Cambie Corridor and a timely boost to local spend. With visitor demand rising, City Hall adopted a Hotel Development Policy to unlock new rooms after a years-long hotel shortfall highlighted by Destination Vancouver; expect more projects near transit specifically. The Pattullo Bridge replacement should be open soon, easing goods and commuter flows across the Fraser River. The Broadway Subway follows in 2027, knitting the region's busiest corridor into rapid transit that (city leaders hope) will connect all the way to UBC's coveted talent pool (and the Jericho Lands forthcoming 13,000 homes, 30 acres of parks and a future SkyTrain station). The new St. Paul's Hospital lands in the False Creek Flats by 2027, expanding research and acute care minutes from downtown.



42 Rio de Janeiro Brazil

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 11 Nightlife
- 11 Theater & Concerts

POPULATION

Metro 13,630,000

Cidade Maravilhosa is where the party never stops – for locals and for travelers.

Rio is revving again – on the beach, on stage and in the boardroom. After 1.6 million fans packed Copacabana for Madonna in 2024, the city doubled down: 2025's beach mega-shows (Lady Gaga drew an estimated 2.1 million) injected tens of millions into the visitor economy and reminded the world why Rio ranks #11 for Nightlife and #11 for Theaters & Concerts. International air access has also been improved ahead of Brazil's 2027 FIFA Women's World Cup, where Rio's Maracanã is a confirmed venue. The city's smoldering culture is finally getting global press with Copacabana's 1938 Roxy returned as the Roxy Dinner Show – Art Deco reborn with a four-hour, live-music spectacle – while the long-stalled Museum of Image and Sound on the beachfront is targeting completion in early 2026. The Museum of Tomorrow, centerpiece of Porto Maravilha, is rolling out its 10-year anniversary program into 2025, reinforcing Rio's #21 Museums finish. Urban reinvention at Gasômetro's new stadium and leisure district builds momentum for a waterfront already humming with restaurants, arts spaces and the #14 Shopping. For families, Tijuca National Park's trails and beaches help the global beach city with rainforest at the doorstep, ranks #12 for Nature & Parks.



43 Warsaw Poland

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 7 Educational Attainment
- 8 Health

POPULATION

Metro 3,395,000

Poland's capital city is an ascendant economic and entrepreneurial hotbed.

Warsaw's surge is obvious in the skyline and on the street. The Museum of Modern Art's permanent galleries opened in early 2025 on Plac Defilad, completing a bold new cultural anchor beside the Palace of Culture and Science, strengthening the #17-ranked Museums subcategory. A few blocks away, TR Warszawa signed its construction contract in June and broke ground in August 2025 on its long-planned home, cementing a year-round stage pipeline and fresh footfall for central retail and dining. Appropriately, Visa's expanding technology and product hub continues to scale local headcount, underscoring Warsaw's deep bench of highly educated talent (ranked #7 globally for Educational Attainment) and strong Health (#8). At Varso, the EU's tallest tower, the new observation deck adds a fresh destination for tenants, tourists and Instagrammers, a quick walk from Central Station. Speaking of mobility, the new Central Transportation Hub (CPK) is aiming for a 2032 opening target, while Metro Line M2's western extension to Karolin advances toward a 2026 finish, expanding the Top 20 Biking and Walkability. Hospitality is following the city's prosperity, with PURO Warsaw Old Town opened in 2025, bringing design-forward rooms and a rooftop bar, as mixed-use stalwarts like Elektrownia Powiśle and Norblin keep refreshing their tenant mix and programming.



44 Hamburg Germany

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 7 Climate Risk
- 9 Standard of Living

POPULATION

Metro 3,493,000

Germany's second city is as creative as it is ethical.

Hamburg's maritime swagger is translating into hard assets... and fresh reasons to linger between the Alster and Elbe. The city's #9 ranking for Standard of Living and #13 for Health aren't abstractions, they're experienced in the streets of HafenCity, Europe's largest inner-city redevelopment. This year, the 100-acre Westfield Hamburg-Überseequartier is opening in phases: flagship retail, dining, and the Port des Lumières immersive arts venue, with the HafenCity Cruise Center just opened to berth ships directly into the district. Hotels will follow, with Novotel and ibis Styles adding hundreds of rooms by 2026. Hamburg's overall Prosperity index (#43 globally) isn't just about lifestyle. The city remains a semiconductor hub, with Nexperia investing another \$200 million to scale next-gen silicon-carbide and gallium-nitride chips. Mobility is also a priority as the driverless U5 metro line and the S4 suburban rail extension come online by the end of the decade. Culture is thriving, too. The Reverb by Hard Rock has opened atop St. Pauli's WWII bunker, adding a rooftop garden to a city that already punches above its weight in Theaters & Concerts (#22). The stunning Elbphilharmonie is a key driver: 3 million people visit its plaza alone annually. And at Hamburg Airport, a \$22-million near-term upgrade ensures connectivity for one of Europe's most future-ready port cities.



45 Shenzhen China

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 3 Convention Center
- 4 Shopping

POPULATION

Metro 12,819,000

The "Silicon Valley of China" welcomes the world to its city-sized innovation district.

Nowhere is Shenzhen's "Silicon Valley of China" moniker more appropriate than when strolling the city's Huaqiangbei district. It buzzes with tech enthusiasts, inventors and global buyers, all drawn to its legendary electronics markets. You'll see cutting-edge developments in everything from drones to smartphones, with tech giants like Huawei and Tencent innovating globally here. The impressive #19 Business Ecosystem ranking is bolstered by the Qianhai Shenzhen-Hong Kong Modern Service Industry Cooperation Zone's 2025 measures to smooth cross-border e-commerce and finance with Hong Kong. Meanwhile, the Shenzhen Bay Super Headquarters Base (about 290 acres of next-gen offices and housing) continues to advance, anchoring long-term HQ demand. The city's retail firepower (#4 Shopping) levels up in Shekou's Prince Bay, where the art-driven K11 ECOAST began phased openings in 2025, fusing galleries, chef-led dining and waterfront promenades made for #18-ranked Instagram moments. Trade floors are packed, validating a #3 Convention Center ranking: Shenzhen World hosts 2025's Shenzhen International Semiconductor Exhibition & IC Exhibition and Shenzhen International Industrial Automation & Robotics Expo (SIA), pulling global buyers a short hop from the airport. Speaking of which, Airport (#17) is climbing fast: Bao'an's third runway ran trial flights in August.



46 Montreal Canada

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 9 Educational Attainment
- 20 Biking

POPULATION

Metro 4,637,000

You're about to hear a lot more about Canada's laid-back second city (and North America's most European).

Montreal's enticing lore is finally going global. You can feel it from Mile-Ex labs to Old Port cobble as the city is increasingly lauded for urban initiatives like its #20 Biking ranking with fresh segments of its protected REV corridors. Then there's the continued funding for nine pedestrian-only main streets, each backed by about \$700,000 per year, alongside a previously announced \$22-million boost for cycling. Those safer streets support a #36 Overall Livability finish – and the café-lined urbanism that locals (and increasingly, enlightened visitors) love. And talent: a #20 University ranking and #9 Educational Attainment, anchored by McGill, Université de Montréal/Polytechnique/HEC, and feed-Ax-C, the new downtown innovation hub opened in 2025 to co-locate founders, researchers and capital. AI and video-game studios continue to scale, building on a transport backbone that still puts the continent within reach from the St. Lawrence. Riverfront reinvention powers the buzzing real-estate market. The Quartier Molson bridging the Old Port toward the Jacques Cartier Bridge broke ground in 2025 as a \$2.5-billion, multi-phase district that preserves brewery heritage while adding housing, offices, retail and riverfront public space. The revitalized Espace St-Denis is programming new shows in the Latin Quarter, and the Quartier des Spectacles keeps blowing global minds.



47 Budapest Hungary

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 12 Health
- 17 Educational Attainment

POPULATION

Metro 2,969,000

Fresh investment momentum validates global confidence in the Hungarian capital.

Budapest continues its magnetic pull for digital nomads and bold enterprises seeking European vibrancy with first-mover economics. The Danube-split city delivered big in 2025: medieval Buda's hills house those #25-ranked Sights & Landmarks, while modern Pest buzzes with new energy around its revamped City Park and expanding hospitality scene. The past year has been busy for new hotels, including Hungary's first Radisson Collection and the anticipated Kimpton BEM Budapest from IHG, with 22 more hotels and 3,000 additional rooms planned over five years. The investment surge reflects Budapest's climbing rankings: Health ranks impressively at #12 globally, supporting the #31 Family-Friendly Attractions rating that attracts international talent. Most compelling for businesses: unemployment is low (#19 globally), while Educational Attainment ranks #17 worldwide. The UAE's committed \$5 to \$6 billion mega-development at the old Rakosrendezo train station grounds promises Europe's tallest skyscraper, while foreign investors eye billions in real estate investments through 2025. That buzz extends to culture, where the Museum of Ethnography and House of Music Hungary continue elevating the city's appeal. Budapest's leaders remain protective of urban character, successfully blocking government attempts to overdevelop historic areas while welcoming sustainable growth that strengthens the city's #31 ranking in our overall Livability index.



48 Brussels Belgium

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 8 Standard of Living
- 19 Airports

POPULATION

Metro 3,408,000

Belgium's capital welcomes the world as one of the continent's fastest-growing tourism markets.

Belgium's capital closed 2025 with record-breaking tourism momentum and enters 2026 positioned for transformative infrastructure investment and sustained real estate expansion. The iconic Grand Place anchors a city ranking 27th globally for Walkability and 20th for Biking, while strategic investments are positioning Brussels for its next growth phase. The construction boom that delivered much-needed housing through 2025 sets the stage for continued expansion, with property analysts projecting steady 3% annual price growth through 2027. The tourism sector's remarkable 2025 performance creates future momentum, while Brussels Airport's ambitious Hub 3.0 expansion begins construction in early 2027, featuring terminal expansion, an intermodal hub, and new hotel facilities scheduled for phased completion by 2032. This \$600-million investment reinforces the city's 19th-ranked Airports while supporting future passenger growth.

As the EU's administrative center ranking 8th globally for Standard of Living, Brussels attracts international talent that feeds its cultural landscape, featuring 24th-ranked Museums and diverse neighborhoods. The city's Top 25 universities help produce the 24th-highest Educational Attainment globally, powering Brussels to combine European institutional stability with dynamic investment opportunities well into the future.



49 Riyadh Saudi Arabia

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 3 Nature & Parks
- 4 TikTok Videos

POPULATION

Metro 7,531,000

The Kingdom's crown jewel is radiant and insiders know this is just the beginning.

The unprecedented momentum reshaping Saudi's business capital is accelerating. The W Riyadh is scheduled to open in 2025 in the KAFD area, offering 210 guest rooms and suites, seven dining venues, retail spaces and event facilities, joining a hospitality boom that saw Riyadh's Average Daily Rate outpace Dubai, Hong Kong, and Madrid in 2024. The Jawharat Riyadh mixed-use development is set to open in the coming months, while Armani Hotel Diriyah will comprise 70 elegantly appointed rooms with private spas and swimming pools as part of the \$63 billion Diriyah Gate project. The capital's office market tells an equally compelling story, powered by #26-ranked Large Companies and Top 25 Labor Force Participation. Premium office rents jumped 21% year-on-year in Q1 2025 as hundreds of companies relocated to Riyadh in 2024 under the Regional Headquarters program. Grade A office vacancy sits under 4%, with the King Abdullah Financial District now fully operational and drawing major multinational tenants. Vision 2030's crown jewels are taking shape as the New Murabba is projected to add \$48 billion to non-oil GDP and create 334,000 jobs by 2030. The project's centerpiece, The Mukaab – a 400-meter cube-shaped structure – will anchor the blooming, booming skyline of the desert metropolis.



50 Kuala Lumpur Malaysia

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 5 Labor Force Participation
- 20 Standard of Living

POPULATION

Metro 8,410,000

Deep traditions and fearless innovation weave a dense tapestry in Malaysia’s buzzing capital.

KL’s blend of tradition and audacity hit a new stride in 2025, powered by a Top 5 Labor Force Participation ranking that keeps talent – and investment – circulating. The Tun Razak Exchange (TRX) financial district, with its 10-acre rooftop city park and The Exchange TRX mall (home to Malaysia’s first Apple store), creates steady footfall that feeds the #33 Facebook Check-ins ranking. Merdeka 118, the second-tallest building in the world, will open its observation deck this fall, and Park Hyatt Kuala Lumpur – floors 75 and up – opened in August 2025. Meanwhile, Conrad Kuala Lumpur will also open in 2026 near the city’s twin-harbor icons, boosting the hospitality panorama.

Bukit Bintang City Centre continues to densify around LaLaport and the Zepp concert hall, tightening the entertainment loop from KLCC Park (50 acres) to Petaling Street night markets. The ambitious billion-dollar River of Life program, designed to rehabilitate into the Gombak and Klang rivers, advances slowly toward resident and tourist-pleasing clean waterways, miles of new promenades, and lighting and wayfinding that stitch neighborhoods together, vital wins to keep KL’s Standard of Living ranking Top 20. Helping, too, are the mobility upgrades, from rail extensions feeding KL Sentral to ongoing KLIA modernizations (biometrics and people-mover replacement) that streamline international access.



51 Bogotá Colombia

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 8 Nightlife
- 24 Shopping

POPULATION

Metro 9,389,000

Life in the night meets livability around the clock in this city of surprises.

Bogotá’s after-hours reputation is going global, with late-night spots – from Zona T to Chapinero’s mega-club circuit – earning the city a #8 ranking for Nightlife. The around-the-clock activity also earns the city a #25 Theaters & Concerts ranking, led by the humming Movistar Arena.

Daylight brings families into parks and onto bikes every Sunday for Ciclovía, when 75 miles of main roads are closed to traffic and open to inclusive activities, supporting a #27 finish for Family-Friendly Attractions. Enjoyment builds with retail densifying around Andino–El Retiro–Atlantis to validate a #24 Shopping ranking. The new Green Cities Law prioritizes the creation and connection of natural spaces to improve livability and reduce the impacts of climate change. Quality of life is boosting business, too. In Q1 2025, the city posted a surge in foreign investment projects, led by retail, software/IT and corporate services, with North America and Europe dominant. Bogotá is the third most attractive city in Latin America for FDI – surpassed only by Mexico City and São Paulo – and should soon see its #32 for Labor Force Participation rising. Tourism is taking off, too: Colombia attracted 6.7 million international visitors in 2024, with Bogotá the primary gateway, and the “El Dorado Max” plan will lift annual capacity to over 60 million passengers by 2035.



52 Guangzhou China

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Convention Center
- 9 Shopping

POPULATION

Metro 13,949,000

China’s southern deal-room marries dim sum and megadeals, and 2025 doubles down on both.

The twice-yearly Canton Fair is back at full pre-pandemic strength, attracting a record 288,938 overseas buyers from 219 countries and regions in spring 2025 to 3.6 million square feet of indoor exhibition halls at the Pazhou complex, cementing a #1 Convention Center ranking. Retail is equally abuzz, with the #9 Shopping ranking feeling right as Taikoo Hui, Parc Central and K11 roll out refreshed flagships and chef-driven food halls; and riverfront districts light up nightly, feeding the city’s Top 10 Instagram buzz.

On the plate, Guangzhou’s #15 Restaurants pedigree shows in next-gen teahouses and 21 Michelin-starred Cantonese kitchens. Curtain time is robust, too: the Zaha Hadid-designed Guangzhou Opera House, the Xinghai Concert Hall and the stages on Haixinsha Island keep the #15-ranked Theaters & Concerts scene lively. Business fundamentals are also strong, with Nansha’s free-trade zone and Sino-Singapore Guangzhou Knowledge City continuing to deliver R&D parks and headquarter space. Baiyun International Airport’s ongoing airfield and terminal upgrades sharpen global access, while new metro and intercity rail segments slated through the rest of the decade will tighten links to Foshan, Zhongshan, Zhuhai and Shenzhen across the Greater Bay Area.



53 Jakarta Indonesia

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 7 Family-Friendly Attractions
- 8 TikTok Videos

POPULATION

Metro 32,260,000

The planet’s second-most-populous metropolis is sinking, but it’s not done yet.

Yes, the national capital is moving to Nusantara, but Jakarta’s economic gravity isn’t. In a city ranked #28 in the world for Lovability, the next year brings better mobility, Old Town streetscapes and kid-centric museum upgrades, future-proofing a megacity that still writes Southeast Asia’s most-watched urban story.

The capital’s festivals and photogenic districts (see Kota Tua’s refreshed squares, SCBD rooftops and PIK’s waterfront boardwalks) power Jakarta to a global Top 10 finish in our Shopping and Family-Friendly Attractions subcategories and drive a Top 10 social buzz (#9 for Instagram Posts and #8 for TikTok Videos). Connectivity is quietly compounding, easing notorious traffic. LRT Jabodebek – launched pre-2025 – steps up frequencies and feeder links this year, and MRT Jakarta’s northbound Phase 2 advances toward Kota through the second half of the decade. The Airport Rail Link’s direct runs to key central stations streamline Soekarno-Hatta trips as terminal modernization continues. Investment is flowing across the metro. Data-center campuses in the Bekasi-Cikarang corridor expand to serve cloud and AI demand, while Grade-A towers and mixed-use projects densify Gurugram-style nodes in Sudirman-Thamrin, Kuningan and TB Simatupang.



54 Delhi India

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 5 Sights & Landmarks
- 7 Facebook Check-ins

POPULATION

Metro 32,023,000

India’s capital wants to celebrate the past... and own its dynamic business.

Delhi’s power move is marrying millennia of spectacle with a future-looking growth engine. The city’s icons – Qutub Minar, Humayun’s Tomb, the Red Fort and Akshardham among them – keep Delhi firmly in the global Top 5 for Sights & Landmarks, and its charged calendar of religious, national and cultural festivals drives Top 10 finishes for Facebook Check-ins (#7), Instagram Posts (#8) and Google Trends (#10). Family-Friendly Attractions rank #10, including upgraded Sabarmati-style riverfront promenades: no wonder the city ranks an impressive #23 in our overall Lovability index. Business is just as kinetic. Delhi’s corporate heft (#12 Large Companies) and a deep, diversified deal flow (#12 Business Ecosystem) are concentrated across the region: Aerocity’s office-and-dining hub keeps expanding, while Gurugram and Noida add Grade-A towers and built-to-suit tech space. Hyperscale data-center pipelines in Noida/Greater Noida continue to attract U.S. and Asia-Pacific capital in 2025, tailwinds for cloud, fintech and automotive software suppliers.

Connectivity is the force multiplier. The much-delayed Noida International Airport (Jewar) targets initial operations in 2025, adding a southern air gate to the region and boosting #64-ranked Indira Gandhi International. More than 600 miles of the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway have opened and new segments follow, tightening logistics. The 50 mile RAPIDX Delhi-Meerut line begins staged service in 2025.



55 Las Vegas USA

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 13 Google Trends
- 14 Convention Center

POPULATION

Metro 2,399,000

Las Vegas keeps betting big, even as 2025 delivers a reality check from its most loyal visitors.

After a banner 2024, reports of softer visitation and spend in mid-2025 (outside marquee weekends) have fed the “Vegas is empty” meme, a warning sign for a city built on momentum. Yet the engine room still hums: the destination’s digital heat holds with a #13 Google Trends finish, and the Las Vegas Convention Center (#14) continues to anchor a robust calendar even when leisure ebbs.

The skyline is popping off, too. The 660-foot Hard Rock Guitar tower is rising on the former Mirage site toward a 2027 debut, while the 33,000-seat climate-smart MLB ballpark for the A’s on the Strip, designed by Bjarke Ingels Group, broke ground in June 2025 and will feature an 18,000-square-foot Jumbotron, the league’s biggest. Brightline West’s high-speed rail broke ground, targeting a two-hour L.A. to Vegas run – half the time of a car ride – by 2028, in time for the Olympics. Underground, the permitted Vegas Loop network crawls toward an eventual 68 miles of tunnels linking the airport, Strip, downtown and UNLV. Nightlife (ranked #43) stays loud where it counts: headliner residencies, dayclubs and the Sphere’s spectacle continue to mint viral moments, supporting the city’s #40 Theaters & Concerts standing. In Vegas, reality bites, but not too hard: British-born Real Housewives star Lisa Vanderpump has joined forces with Caesar’s to transform the Cromwell into the first-ever Vanderpump.



56 Boston USA

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Weather
- 1 University

POPULATION

Metro 5,026,000

America’s oldest big city continues to redefine the nation’s intellectual and innovation landscape.

Boston’s famed brainpower still starts with Harvard – #1 in our University subcategory – but the real story is who stays after graduation. A deep bench of grads powers the city’s #14 Educational Attainment and #6 Business Ecosystem rankings, with founders and funders choosing to build careers (and companies) here. Incredibly, Boston now ranks #1 in our Weather subcategory, with outdoor time well supported by a #19 Green Space finish and a #24 for Air Quality.

Beantown is building on a good thing. Logan International Airport’s Terminal E expansion added smart-glass gates and next-gen processing to handle record traffic, while the 51-story South Station Tower is nearing completion, stacking 166 condos and offices directly atop Amtrak, MBTA and intercity buses – an everyday upgrade to urban mobility that underpins Boston’s #18 ranking for Standard of Living and #29 for Health. The hospitality and cultural pipeline is equally ambitious. Raffles Boston’s 2023 debut reset luxury expectations, adding to a surprisingly robust number of plush stays. On the innovation waterfront, Eli Lilly’s state-of-the-art \$700-million Seaport Innovation Center opened in 2024, anchoring genetic-medicine R&D and Gateway Labs space for biotech start-ups and collaboration – evidence of Boston’s impressive #4 rank for Economic Output.



57 Washington D.C. USA

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Educational Attainment
- 2 Health

POPULATION

Metro 6,436,000

Few global cities are as paramount in our collective psyche as the U.S. capital.

Washington’s story today is written as much in cranes and term sheets as in C-SPAN sound bites. The Smithsonian breaks ground this year on the Perkins & Will-designed Bezos Learning Center, funded by a portion of Jeff Bezos’s \$200-million gift and set to crown the revamped Air & Space Museum by 2027.

The hotel pipeline included the debut of lifestyle brand Arlo Washington DC’s 445 rooms in late 2024 inside the landmark Harrison Apartments, with rooftop views from its ART DC lounge, while Marriott’s Canal House of Georgetown opened in February 2025 with townhome-style suites on the C&O Canal. Destination DC’s announcement of a record 27 million visitors in 2024 (and \$11.4 billion in spend) fares well for the capacity.

Developers are betting big, too. Canada’s PSP Investments acquired The Wharf in April 2025, affirming global faith in the 3.5-million-square-foot waterfront development. Across the river, St. Elizabeths East has delivered housing and retail and has a 20,000-square-foot library in the plans. Green space expansion – already earning the city a Top 10 ranking – remains a key part of its growth. Capital is following the planet’s most-educated residents, with billions in investment ranging from corporations to the Commanders of the NFL (and their new RFK Stadium revitalization).



58 Houston USA

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 16 Large Companies
- 19 Economic Output

POPULATION

Metro 7,796,000

H-Town is a coveted hometown for the best and brightest on earth. And beyond.

Houston keeps defying gravity. The metro added nearly 200,000 residents last year, pushing the population above 7.8 million. Chevron’s shift of its headquarters from California to Houston, backed by \$100 million in renovations, crowns relocations drawn by record 2024 Port Houston throughput of more than four million containers and a projected 71,000 new jobs in 2025. Watch the #37 Standard of Living ranking keep climbing.

The HyVelocity Hydrogen Hub just locked in up to \$1.2 billion from the U.S. DOE, targeting 45,000 jobs and slicing 7.7 million tons of CO₂ a year. Chevron will break ground on a \$5 billion blue hydrogen and ammonia facility in 2027. Incredibly, Zillow pegged the 2024 median home value around \$265,000 – well below the U.S. norm, despite Houston’s #16 global ranking for Large Companies and its #19 finish for Economic Output. Energy transition dollars are cascading. West Houston’s Greenside will convert 35,000 square feet of warehouses into a retail, restaurant and community hub around a one-acre park by 2026, while America’s inaugural Ismaili Center remains on schedule for later this year. The gathering place for the community and home for programs promoting understanding of Islam and the Ismaili community is another cultural jewel for the country’s most proudly diverse major city.



59 Auckland New Zealand

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 3 Air Quality
- 17 Labor Force Participation

POPULATION

Metro 1,666,000

Coast-to-coast distilled urbanism in a naturally endowed environment of breathing space and balance.

New Zealand's largest city is leaning into what it does best: breathing room and balance. Auckland boasts the #3 ranking for global air quality, a daily luxury that makes even its busiest intersections feel calmer than those of other cities. Recent waterfront upgrades at Viaduct Harbour and Wynyard Quarter keep that lifestyle in focus, with new chef-led restaurants and community events bringing residents and visitors down to the water's edge.

Green space remains a defining advantage. From the volcanic slopes of Mount Eden to the Auckland Domain, the city ranks #18 for Nature & Parks globally, with investments underway to expand coastal walkways and restore storm-damaged tracks. Te Wānanga, the striking harborside public space unveiled along Quay Street, now anchors the CBD's connection to Waitematā Harbour. The City Rail Link, tracking for 2026 completion, will reshape mobility, with Te Waihorotiu (Aotea) station set to become the country's busiest transit hub. Around it, the Victoria Street "Te Hā Noa" project is transforming Midtown into a linear park stitched with cycleways and shaded plazas. Hotels are following demand: Horizon by SkyCity opened in 2024, while Park Hyatt and InterContinental keep the waterfront humming. With strong labor force participation (#17 globally) and clean air, Auckland continues to balance growth with livability.



60 San Jose USA

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Economic Output
- 1 Business Ecosystem (Tied)

POPULATION

Metro 1,995,000

More downtown beds, better transit and booming AI are powering the urban heart of Silicon Valley.

San Jose's quiet superpower is that the numbers back the buzz: #1 for Economic Output, #1 for Business Ecosystem and #4 for Standard of Living, which combine to power the city to #20 in our overall Prosperity index. That heft doesn't mean that Silicon Valley doesn't struggle with remote work. In early 2025, developer to tech titans Jay Paul began pivoting CityView Plaza from a stalled office megaproject into one of the Bay Area's largest office-to-residential conversions: four existing towers refit as 320 homes now, with a 293-foot apartment high-rise to follow (about 680 residences in total), giving downtown a badly needed housing jolt, enlivening ground floors, and eventually, adding more commercial space.

Much-needed transit is moving via the BART Silicon Valley Phase II, with major tunneling set to follow on the six-mile, four-station extension using a single-bore tunnel. VTA's 2025 update pegs first passenger service in the 2036-2037 window, a longer horizon, but clearer certainty for site selectors and lenders mapping Diridon-area bets. Hospitality is equally abuzz. A new TownePlace Suites just opened downtown, adding extended-stay capacity steps from the SAP Center and Convention Center, while Westfield Valley Fair's 2025 openings (headlined by Canada's Joey Restaurants) signal durable consumer demand on the Santana Row/Valley Fair corridor.



61 Helsinki Finland

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 8 Climate Risk
- 13 Air Quality

POPULATION

Metro 1,598,000

Helsinki keeps proving that sensible, people-first urbanism is a luxury that everybody is entitled to.

The capital of the country that topped the World Happiness Report again in 2025 is doubling down on green mobility and culture: the 0.75-mile-long Kruunuvuori Bridge, designed for a 200-year lifespan, will be one of the world's longest bridges built only for trams, pedestrians and cyclists. Pedestrians cross in 2026, trams in 2027. The bridge is part of the \$355-million Crown Bridges project of five spans that are prepping the city for population growth – and elevating the #38 ranking for Public Transit.

Hospitality is leveling up, too. The Hotel Maria, which opened at the end of 2023, is now the only Finnish entry in both the Forbes Travel Guide and Historic Hotels Worldwide; nearby, the new Solo Sokos Hotel Pier 4 anchors the timber-built Katajanokan Laituri waterfront complex – part HQ, part hotel and all climate-forward design. Perfect venues for attendees of the Helsinki Biennale, a summer 2025 highlight bringing outstanding contemporary art to Helsinki's archipelago nature. For investors and site selectors, two national parks on the metro's doorstep (Nuuskio and Sipoonkorpi) and the Baana cycle spine keep talent both happy and close to nature, as does a #13 ranking for Air Quality. A re-energized Makasiiniranta waterfront, with a new museum of architecture and design, will add to the walkable city center.



62 Orlando USA

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 2 Family-Friendly Attractions
- 10 Air Quality

POPULATION

Metro 2,941,000

Tourism, yes, but Orlando is also positioning itself as a place to live, build and invest.

Not for nothing does Orlando rank #2 for Family-Friendly Attractions: Universal's 750-acre Epic Universe opened in May with three huge new attractions, lifting the whole corridor. Visitors are coming fast: Brightline's Miami-Orlando service hums, and an approved Tampa extension will reduce travel time between the cities to an hour, bringing visitors and employees to a Central Florida that logged a record \$92.5-billion tourism impact in 2024.

Terminal C is expanding, lifting the #33 ranking for Airports. Downtown, the \$500-million Westcourt district will bring a Kimpton, apartments, offices and a state-of-the-art entertainment venue. But Orlando works as hard as it plays, leading every large U.S. region for job creation in 2024 by adding 37,500 positions for 2.5% growth. That's welcome traction for the 1,000 newcomers arriving each week, en route to a projected metro population of 5.2 million by 2030. The Economic Output ranking (#45) will continue to rise. In Lake Nona, UCF's 90,000-square-foot Dr. Phillips College of Nursing pavilion opened for the 2025-26 academic year, feeding Central Florida's health-tech and life-sciences pipeline. And Siemens Energy's North American HQ anchors a varied corporate roster that will only grow as word about local talent and ROI spreads.



63 Taipei Taiwan

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 16 Restaurants
- 17 Family-Friendly Attractions

POPULATION

Metro 2,741,000

Taipei boasts a balanced landscape of future-defining tech manufacturing and a coveted good life.

Tourism and air access are equally ascendant in Taipei. Taoyuan International's Terminal 3 begins a phased debut, bringing more visitors for #16-ranked Restaurants – and pan-Asia award-winning cocktail bars – and for #17-ranked Family-Friendly Attractions.

Mobility investment is also flowing in the streets. The Wanda-Zhonghe-Shulin Line advanced through 2025 testing after new trainsets arrived, a step toward first-phase service and better south-west coverage; expect continued trial runs before opening. Ground has broken on a \$56.5-million Tamsui Riverfront upgrade that will add bike paths and walkways – the city already enjoys a #20 ranking for Biking and #27 for Walkability – along with wharf enhancements, fireworks festival viewing platforms and much more. Two hotel plays add to the work-hard, play-hard allure: the Capella Taipei, the first luxury hotel in a decade, opened in spring 2025, and the Sky Taipei – the third-tallest building in the city with 56 floors and an Andaz, Park Hyatt, urban club and retail podium – cemented Xinyi's status as the city's hospitality-retail core. Retail energy is spreading beyond Xinyi: City Hall's "East District Gateway" program is mid-rollout, a targeted boost to the classic shopping streets around Zhongxiao East Road that's already seeding new leases and streetscape upgrades.



64 Frankfurt Germany

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 6 Convention Center
- 21 Airports

POPULATION

Metro 2,722,000

Frankfurt knows work but also life and leisure. And the pipeline indicates good things ahead.

Frankfurt is leaning into its moment as Europe's business capital and indicators show the upswing is durable. The city has a deep bench when it comes to business: more than 200 banks anchor the downtown, including 170 international firms, as well as the European Central Bank and the Frankfurt Stock Exchange, Germany's largest. Capital flow is torrential. Through November 2024, foreign investors announced a record \$5.2 billion of projects, outpacing every other German market and setting the tone for 2025 dealmaking across finance, real assets and digital infrastructure.

Diversification? Sanofi's \$1.4-billion insulin plant in the Höchst district (for 2029) cements life-sciences manufacturing as a growth engine. Phase 1 of CyrusOne's \$1.07-billion data center campus, coming in 2026, reinforces Frankfurt's status as Germany's prime server market and cloud gateway. And getting in and out is getting easier. The \$4-billion Terminal 3 at FRA will eventually boost capacity by 25 million passengers – from the current 70 million – and elevate Frankfurt's #21 ranking for Airports. Now life and leisure are moving in: the FOUR Frankfurt quarter on the Deutsche Bank site is a complete community with four interconnected towers, green spaces, 600 apartments and a view from 764 feet, signaling to talent that this economic powerhouse isn't all work and no play.



65 Lima Peru

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 10 Nature & Parks
- 10 Nightlife

POPULATION

Metro 11,037,000

Peru’s ancient capital is embracing its heritage and new ‘It’ city status simultaneously.

The moniker Lima La Fea (Ugly Lima) is but a distant memory as the Peruvian capital’s surfto-ceviche days on the cliffs, salsa-flavored nightclubs in Barranco and Miraflores, and steady drumbeat of new infrastructure and hospitality catch global attention.

The biggest summer 2025 flex was the opening of the new Jorge Chávez terminal – with a second runway already live – bringing more gates, faster transfers and a terminal-sized food hall of Peruvian hits. A metro station is slated later in the decade as Line 4 advances. Nature is being stitched even tighter into city life (worthy of the Top 10 Nature & Parks ranking) as the Miraflores district green-lit a cable car from mountaintop to beach to address climate action, urban inequality and tourism development, making the neighborhood as progressive as it is hip. San Isidro’s Bicentenario Park kept adding native gardens, lighting and play areas around Huaca Huallamarca, part of a broader “green streets” push. The city’s stealthy nightlife (ranked #10 globally) and shopping (#11) keep pulling visitors, while Maido, a Peruvian-Japanese blend, topped The World’s 50 Best Restaurants list, boosting local pride and an already impressive #17 rank for restaurants.



66 Atlanta USA

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 6 Green Space
- 20 Large Companies

POPULATION

Metro 6,411,000

The growth engine of the Big Peach is humming on all cylinders... and in every neighborhood.

Corporate investment is fast tracking and tech-driven in Atlanta: Elon Musk has set up a data center that will house \$700 million in accelerated computing hardware: \$442 million allocated to X, and \$258 million to xAI. Amazon Web Services’ multi-billion-dollar Georgia build-out and AIG’s 2026 innovation hub in Brookhaven – which triples its Atlanta office space – are all reasons for a #20 ranking for Large Companies. Hartsfield-Jackson reclaimed the “world’s busiest” airport title with 108.1 million passengers in 2024; ATLNext’s modernization program continues with a much-enlarged \$1.4-billion Concourse D running through 2029. The hospitality lights were turned on in the 50-acre Centennial Yards with Hotel Phoenix in mid-2025, the first ground-up hotel downtown in decades, while South Downtown added Wyndham’s 204-room boutique Origin Hotel in July.

On the Westside, June’s opening of a new BeltLine segment brought the pedestrian and cycle pathway to 12.6 miles – closer to the planned 22-mile loop ahead of the 2026 FIFA World Cup – and a boost for Atlanta’s impressive #6 ranking for Green Space. Tourism is surging: Discover Atlanta tallied 51 million visitors and \$20 billion in 2024 spend, and the city will host eight FIFA World Cup 2026 matches, including a semifinal at Mercedes-Benz Stadium.



67 Seattle USA

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 3 Economic Output
- 4 Air Quality

POPULATION

Metro 4,145,000

America’s understated West Coast urban wonderland is blossoming into a talent and visitor magnet.

Seattle’s momentum is visible in both skyline and street life. Following the 2024 opening of the Aquarium’s Ocean Pavilion and Overlook Walk, fall 2025 brought the debut of Pier 62’s performance stage expansion and a revamped Colman Dock ferry terminal, smoothing daily transit while doubling as a cultural draw. Downtown logged more than 100 new ground-floor businesses in 2025, while South Lake Union is welcoming its latest mixed-use project: a 42-story tower blending 750 apartments with lab space for biotech tenants. Given all that, perhaps Seattle’s astonishing Top 3 global ranking for Economic Output isn’t surprising.

Hospitality is hot, too. The past few years have featured the 208-room InterContinental Bellevue, the 200-room AC Hotel Seattle Downtown, the Hotel Westland Pioneer Square and the Thompson Redmond, catering to both visitors and the growing Eastside corporate base. The city’s surging convention demand is sated by Seattle’s convention center expansion’s Summit addition in 2023. Connectivity drives it all. Sound Transit’s 2 Line extension linking Bellevue to Seattle’s core will open in 2026, slashing commutes (and protecting the city’s #4-ranked air quality). Sea-Tac’s Concourse C expansion, slated for 2026, will add 145,000 square feet and new gates, while Terminal 5’s \$500-million modernization now positions Seattle as a Pacific freight powerhouse.



68 Perth Australia

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 5 Air Quality
- 7 Standard of Living

POPULATION

Metro 2,309,000

Resilience, wealth, culture and nature converge on Australia’s far-flung west coast.

Australia’s fourth-largest city continues its transformation from resource powerhouse to diversified innovation hub. Perth’s economy – long driven by mining and energy – has embraced tech, life sciences and clean energy, helping power its #7 ranking for Standard of Living.

Visitation is booming, and Perth Airport’s \$5-billion expansion, including a new parallel runway by 2028, will boost international capacity – directly linking to the Indian Ocean Rim’s fast-growing economies, and improving the #206 Airports ranking. The cultural scene is also ascending. The WA Museum Boola Bardip continues to grow visitor numbers, while the Perth Cultural Centre’s \$55-million renewal – adding theaters, Indigenous cultural spaces and landscaped plazas – will open in stages through 2026. Kings Park, at more than 990 acres, remains one of the world’s largest inner-city parks, anchoring Perth’s outdoor lifestyle and contributing to a Top 5 ranking for Air Quality. Population growth of nearly 2% annually keeps housing demand high, with median home values climbing 18% in 2025 – among the strongest nationwide.



69 Manchester United Kingdom

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 9 Climate Risk
- 12 Airports

POPULATION

Metro 3,399,000

A creative and economic rebirth buzzes from arenas to FDI in England’s worker bee city.

The historic engine of English industry – and UNESCO City of Literature – is shifting into high gear across both culture and development. The 2024 opening of the 23,500-seat Co-op Live arena, the largest indoor arena in Europe, attracted one million fans in less than a year, and earned kudos as the Top UK Concert Venue and winner of a Greener Arena award. Watch the Theaters and Concerts ranking (a middling #60) climb the charts. Urban reinvention is afoot with a newly centralized “single pipeline for growth” now coordinating more than \$1.2 billion of planned annual investment across six Growth Locations. Among the boldest is the regeneration of Old Trafford around Manchester United’s stadium, projected to create thousands of homes, over 90,000 jobs and a 100,000-seat Norman Foster-designed stadium. Victoria North, the \$5.5-billion, 15,000-home redevelopment north of the city center, will bring new communities in phased delivery from 2027.

Manchester’s \$100-billion economy, up 50% since 2000, now leads the nation in FDI outside London. Tech and life sciences are driving new investment into the Oxford Road Corridor, with Bruntsford SciTech’s 2025 expansion adding flexible lab and office space and building on a respectable #35 ranking for Economic Output. Meanwhile, Manchester Airport’s \$1.7-billion terminal overhaul cements its #12 ranking for global connectivity.



70 Cape Town South Africa

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 14 Nature & Parks
- 46 TikTok Videos

POPULATION

Metro 3,740,000

A new waterfront and urban development show off natural assets and growing wealth.

Visitor access to Cape Town is surging on all fronts. The city closed its record 2024/25 cruise season with 83 ship calls and a 16% passenger/crew increase; airlines are following suit, with Norse Atlantic extending its London–Cape Town season and scaling to up to six weekly flights at peak. Expect the city’s dismal Airports ranking to improve in short order, especially as Cape Town International begins a multi-year runway and terminal expansion in 2026.

On the ground, the city is packaging new urban infill and burnishing a #14 ranking for Nature & Parks. A mixed-use project in Green Point started public consultation in 2025, steps from the Sea Point Promenade and DHL Stadium, prime placemaking between the CBD and the Waterfront. The Table Bay Hotel’s full refit relaunches as InterContinental Table Bay in December 2025, anchoring a wider push on the V&A Waterfront, the oldest working harbor in the Southern Hemisphere. International brands from Dolce & Gabbana to the LVMH stable and Gucci will inhabit a new, dedicated luxury wing that’s three times as large as previously – a reflection of growing wealth in South Africa’s second city. On the longer timeline is a proposed \$1-billion Granger Bay land reclamation plan now moving through approvals.



71 Kraków Poland

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 22 Museums
- 32 Unemployment Rate

POPULATION

Metro 1,501,000

Poland’s historic soul offers a walkable trip back in time but clearly shows its future.

Few European cities wear their history as vividly as Kraków, where Wawel Castle rises above the Vistula and the Cloth Hall continues trading, just as it has for centuries. Yet behind the Gothic façades, the city is fast becoming one of Europe’s most dynamic modern economies. Tourism has rebounded strongly, with Ryanair’s \$800-million expansion of its Kraków base driving record passenger numbers at John Paul II International in 2025. On the cultural front, a museum devoted to the brilliant, beloved polymath Stanisław Wyspiański anchors a growing arts corridor and burnishes a #22 ranking for Museums.

Business confidence remains equally high. Western Europe accounted for 83% of Kraków’s 2024 FDI, with R&D and tech leading the charge. Heineken’s shared services center expansion is adding 400 skilled jobs, while UBS and Volvo’s EV tech hub are deepening Kraków’s position as Central Europe’s talent magnet, as is Google’s ongoing investment in AI research. A #37 ranking for Nightlife means young talent has space to play, too. Sustainable transport is advancing: the long-awaited metro system won’t arrive until the end of the decade, but a 2026 commuter rail upgrade will cut airport-to-downtown travel time. With high employment – ranking #32 for Unemployment Rate – and residential investment accelerating, Kraków is balancing heritage and innovation with rare finesse.



72 Valencia Spain

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 15 Convention Center
- 20 Biking

POPULATION

Metro 1,776,000

Valencia is entering its next chapter as an exemplary, sustainable second city.

Valencia heads into 2026 with its 2024 European Green Capital credentials intact and its resilience tested. The devastating late-2024 floods disrupted operations and upended lives, but the port and tourism infrastructure have been stabilized... and the beaches have lived to delight another day. Sustainability remains central. In 2025, the City of Arts and Sciences began installing a geothermal plant to slash energy use and emissions, reinforcing Valencia’s role as the first city in the world to verify the carbon footprint of its entire tourism sector.

Flagship projects like Parque Central’s first 28 acres of reclaimed rail yard green space have matured into a vital public anchor, while Calatrava’s CaixaForum València and the new Centro de Arte Hortensia Herrero contribute to Valencia’s #36 rank for Museums. Infrastructure development is accelerating. The new pedestrian and future tram tunnel linking Xàtiva and Alacant stations is set for completion by the end of 2025, a key step in pulling Line 10 closer to the historic core. Walkability (at #35) and Biking (at #20) are exemplary. Connectivity is also surging. Summer 2025 saw record air service, with more than 100 destinations, 37 airlines and 3.6 million inbound seats, including the return of Montreal flights and a new Oslo link. And 2026 is expected to bring even more Nordic and long-haul capacity.



73 Ottawa Canada

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 4 Educational Attainment
- 30 Weather

POPULATION

Metro 1,591,000

Confident Ottawa enters 2026 as a cosmopolitan global city in its own right.

Long overshadowed by Toronto and Montreal, Ottawa has been quietly but decisively reinventing itself and is now asserting its own cosmopolitan edge, powered by talent, innovation and urban reinvestment. A globally respected new prime minister only adds to the swagger. Educational attainment remains Ottawa’s calling card – ranking #4 on the planet – with a quarter of residents born abroad and fueling growth in knowledge industries from cleantech to aerospace. More than 2,000 firms now operate in this ecosystem, with 2025 seeing fresh investment in AI, defense technology and life sciences around Kanata North and the downtown innovation district.

Momentum is building at the 207-acre, mixed-use LeBreton Flats on the western edge of downtown. The master-planned four-district area will include a long-awaited event center: The Ottawa Senators NHL team agreed to buy an 11-acre site in summer 2025. Residential projects along the LRT corridor continue to absorb growth, reflecting both rising immigration and a preference for central, transit-connected neighborhoods. Culture and leisure are equally ascendant. The weather cooperated for winter festivities on the Rideau Canal this past year – the first time in years as the climate warms – and the National Capital Commission rejuvenated Westboro Beach, restoring a beloved summer hub on the Ottawa River and polishing a #38 ranking for green space.



74 Athens Greece

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 3 Health
- 20 Biking

POPULATION

Metro 3,594,000

The 2,500-year-old cradle of Western civilization is also Europe’s new It City (again).

Athens is having another moment, and this time it feels built to last. Along the Riviera, the Ellinikon megaproject is hitting visible milestones: Riviera Tower is rising to be the tallest building in Greece at 50 stories; the first coastal park sections and marinas are advancing for a 2026 reveal, and the Riviera Galleria retail/dining hub is slated to follow by mid-2027. In Glyfada, One&Only Aesthesis has settled in, anchoring a steady uptick in high-end stays across the coast. Wellbeing is more than marketing here; Athens ranks an astonishing #3 in our Health subcategory.

Closer to the Acropolis, the landmark Hilton Athens has been reimagined and reborn as The Ilisian Athens, with a Conrad hotel and branded residences. The Olympia Municipal Music Theatre Maria Callas is now a notable cultural anchor (helping with the #36 Theaters & Concerts ranking). Tourism numbers set records in 2024 (nearly eight million visitors), with 2025 pacing strong amid new air capacity, a sure boost to the #66-ranked airport – and a challenge for balancing short-term rentals with housing.

Mobility is the quiet revolution; Athens ranks #27 for Walkability and #20 for Biking. Metro Line 4 advancements and Line 7 tram and pedestrian upgrades promise to ease congestion.



75 Santiago Chile

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 18 Shopping
- 19 Nature & Parks

POPULATION

Metro 8,213,000

Chile’s capital is solving local problems and becoming tomorrow’s digital anchor.

Santiago’s March 2025 opening of the first phase of Mapocho Río Park delivered 129 acres of revitalized riverfront along 5.6 miles of the Mapocho, reinforcing a #19 ranking for Nature & Parks, repairing industrial sprawl and enhancing everyday life for a quarter million people. Air Quality (#202) should improve with game-changing mobility projects – from the Teleférico Pío Nono to the much larger Teleférico Bicentenario and the largest transit project in decades: Metro Line 7, stretching 16.2 miles across eight communes.

Retail and mixed-use investments, like Parque Arauco Kennedy’s \$500-million expansion, are redefining Las Condes, and an April 2025 acquisition of Open Plaza Kennedy for \$173 million consolidates the district as a luxury shopping powerhouse. A \$4-million renovation of the Santiago Marriott in Las Condes is refreshing 280 rooms for the first time in a generation. Meanwhile, tourism is booming: 3.9 million international arrivals in 2024, with early 2025 traffic already exceeding forecasts – a sure boost for the #21 Instagram Posts ranking. Global funds are also flowing in. Chile’s 2024 \$56.2-billion portfolio of active investment projects was up 68% year over year, with Santiago at its center. Microsoft’s June 2025 launch of its 100% renewably-powered “Chile Central” cloud region will reshape both Chile’s economy and the balance of hyperscale power in Latin America.



76 Medellín Colombia

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 7 Public Transit
- 19 Nightlife

POPULATION

Metro 4,124,000

South America’s dynamic urban lab makes its Top 100 debut, attracting visitors, nomads, and investment.

Medellín has emerged as a compelling Latin American destination for expats and nomads. Social media (#36 for TikTok Videos) brims with plant-lined balconies in El Poblado and café co-working scenes in Laureles. The #19-ranked Nightlife surely doesn’t hurt either. In the first half of 2025, Medellín secured \$168 million in Foreign Direct Investment across 18 projects, which are expected to generate more than 8,100 jobs in technology, agritech, creative industries, manufacturing and logistics. Infrastructure development maintains momentum, with improved access to Rionegro’s airport dramatically reducing commute times. The Metro de la 80 light rail project secured funding this year, targeting a 2028 opening to link western barrios with the established metro network; Medellín’s already impressive #7 ranking for Public Transit will rise further.

Real estate markets show signs of maturation. Property values are forecast to rise at a measured 3%-7% in 2025, a correction from last year’s blistering 17% surge, while El Poblado and Laureles continue to attract high-yield short-term rental investment. Across the city, 1,500 public works projects were launched in 2025 under a \$1.5-billion investment program to upgrade parks, roadways and public facilities across all 16 comunas.



77 Cologne Germany

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 10 Convention Center
- 20 Biking

POPULATION

Metro 2,234,000

Cologne connects to its culturally rich past and poised future, while focusing on business and pleasure.

Cologne is a 2,000-year-old city as undersung as it is spectacular. Its twin-spired cathedral, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of Europe's most visited landmarks, still dominates the skyline, yet the city's future story is increasingly told in glass towers, R&D labs and buzzing riverfront districts. Cologne demonstrated its inclusivity in July 2025 with a record 1.4 million attendees for ColognePride, one of Europe's largest Pride celebrations. The coming year will see the reopening of the 130-room Althoff Dom Hotel just steps from the cathedral, signaling investor confidence in the city's economic vitality and tourism appeal. Cologne's matchless mobility – #35-ranked Walkability, #20-ranked Biking and #22-ranked Airports – will keep crowds moving.

The KölnMesse convention complex (currently #10 for Convention Centers) is in the midst of an \$810-million renovation, securing its top-tier ranking. The Ford Cologne Electric Vehicle Center has begun rolling out the new all-electric Explorer SUV, one of Europe's largest EV investments and a milestone in Cologne's industrial reinvention. Cologne is also leaning into its role as a logistics and aerospace hub, with the European Astronaut Centre and autonomous shipping pilots keeping the city firmly on the frontier. Good times? Cologne also hosts the world's largest video game trade fair.



78 Dallas USA

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 8 Weather
- 10 Airports

POPULATION

Metro 8,344,000

Maverick spirit runs through new investment, luxury and the population, starting at the airport.

Dallas keeps scaling up its ambitions – and lately, the skyline can barely keep pace. At the airport with the third-highest passenger count in the world, American Airlines and DFW just greenlit a \$4-billion Terminal F that will double gate capacity by 2030, with Terminal C's current refresh aimed at 2026 FIFA World Cup crowds. The city's global Top 10 Airports ranking will keep ascending. Downtown, Goldman Sachs' 800,000-square-foot riverview campus is rising, while Wells Fargo's Las Colinas campus – self-described as timeless, organic and sustainable – is designed to bring 3,000 employees back to the office.

The hospitality sector is booming: Harwood District flaunts a Swiss-Texan swagger with Kengo Kuma's 22-story Michelin Key Hôtel Swexan; the JW Marriott opened in the country's largest contiguous Arts District in 2023; and a flurry of flagships are in the works. Investors tracking fundamentals see that DFW added 59,000 jobs since March 2024 – second only to New York – and finance jobs now outpace Wall Street on what locals call "Y'all Street" (watch the #20 ranking for Economic Output and #23 for Large Companies rise). The Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center replacement will improve the city's #60 ranking in the space, and a \$1.6-billion plan to trench the I-345 promises fresh, developable acreage and long-overdue neighborhood reconnection.



79 Brisbane Australia

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 2 Air Quality
- 4 Weather

POPULATION

Metro 2,707,000

Rugged and refined, Brisbane is Australia's stealthy, thriving cultural hub.

Australia's third-largest city isn't just the sunny gateway to the Gold and Sunshine coasts, it's a fast-evolving capital of investment, culture and innovation. Brisbane ranks second in the world for Air Quality, and its subtropical lifestyle (aided by a #4 ranking for Weather) continues to draw new residents. But what's happening along the riverbanks today points to a more ambitious tomorrow. The \$3.6-billion Queen's Wharf Brisbane development began phased openings in late 2024, aiming to make the city an entertainment, hospitality and tourism powerhouse. South Bank's new 1,500-seat Glasshouse Theatre, opening in 2026, will add cultural muscle to an arts precinct already buzzing with the Queensland Gallery of Modern Art and festivals, including the beloved International Cake Show Australia.

Yet Brisbane is as smart as it is fun, with a #27 University ranking led by UQ, which racks up recognition for both teaching and research. Major infrastructure like the Cross River Rail, now slated for completion in 2029, will double peak capacity through the CBD; airport upgrades are preparing for passenger surges leading into the 2032 Olympic Games, and are designed to benefit all of Queensland. With residential towers under construction in Fortitude Valley and West End, demand remains strong, though moderated by higher interest rates, with median apartment prices up over 10% year on year in mid-2025.



80 Hangzhou China

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 19 Weather
- 22 University

POPULATION

Metro 8,035,000

In one of China’s most beautiful environments, the new tigers of AI and robotics are flourishing.

Hangzhou is where ancient romance meets modern-day ingenuity – and it’s where scenery rules: the legendary West Lake is the backdrop to China’s most famous love story – “Madame White Snake” – and a contributor to a #24 Instagram Posts ranking. The tidal bore along the Qiantang River also contributes to a #44 Nature & Parks ranking. But behind the scenery is China’s AI powerhouse, home to tech giants like Alibaba, DeepSeek and hundreds of start-ups, earning a #33 spot in our Business Ecosystem subcategory.

The city accelerated its digital economy with the 2024 Global AI Conference (a #27-ranked convention center helped), positioning itself as a key player in AI and advanced computing. The government has been pouring support into start-ups for a decade, and now the six tigers of Hangzhou – key AI and robotics blue chips – find themselves caught between staying within the Chinese market or trying to raise capital from foreign investors, a fraught proposition. Still, young, educated professionals are pouring in, according to government numbers. In 2023, Hangzhou led Chinese cities in net talent inflow, welcoming 400,000 new residents under the age of 35 with college degrees, and the city added more than 306,000 new jobs last year. The #22-ranked Zhejiang University pumps out coders, and the stunning environment and moderate living costs keep dreams of AI stardom alive.



81 San Diego USA

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 15 Economic Output
- 18 University

POPULATION

Metro 3,299,000

SoCal’s urban paradise is doubling down on binational innovation without losing its beachy glow.

America’s beach town is prioritizing its downtown these days. Life-sciences developer IQHQ is investing over \$1.5 billion to build its 1.7-million-square-foot RaDD bayfront district, a bellwether for the sector even as leasing remains selective. On the biotech front, dealflow is brisk: Novartis moved to acquire San Diego-born Regulus Therapeutics in a transaction valued at up to \$1.7 billion, while local biotech Creyon Bio inked a \$1-billion multi-target RNA partnership with Eli Lilly. With universities ranked #18 and Business Ecosystem at #25, expect more innovation and local M&A.

Tourism and mega-projects track the same ascent. San Diego International’s new Terminal 1 opens 19 gates in late 2025, with another 11 gates scheduled by 2028. Smoothing 24/7 cross-border trade, the Siembra Viva bridge and roadway for the Otay Mesa East port of entry opened in 2025, with the full tolled connector advancing toward a 2028 debut. Gaylord’s first California property, the 1,600-room Pacific Resort & Convention Center, opened in May 2025, adding nearly a half-million square feet of meeting space on the Chula Vista waterfront. SeaWorld’s “Jewels of the Sea” jellyfish pavilion just opened, a boost for the #40-ranked Family-Friendly Attractions, and the San Diego Museum of Art in Balboa Park has tapped Foster + Partners for a west-wing expansion to enhance galleries and access.



82 Hyderabad India

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 2 Sights & Landmarks
- 4 Family-Friendly Attractions

POPULATION

Metro 10,521,000

A harmonious, high-speed blend of historic grandeur and cutting-edge innovation.

Hyderabad’s City of Pearls moniker now shares billing with “Cyberabad,” as its regal past meets an ambitious, tech-driven future. In the Old City, the Charminar’s silhouette still anchors Laad Bazaar’s jewelry stalls (which fuel the #20 Shopping ranking), while Golconda Fort and Mecca Masjid keep the Nizam’s grandeur – and #2 Sights & Landmarks ranking – alive.

The skyline around HITEC City gained new prominence with Microsoft’s expanded India Development Center, and Google’s three-million-square-foot campus opens in 2026. Both are among the firm’s largest facilities outside the U.S. Amazon now has 1.6 million square feet of office and tech space in the city, while the T-Hub 2.0 innovation campus is hosting more than 800 start-ups. The 19,000-acre Pharma City – touted as the world’s largest life-sciences manufacturing cluster – will begin phased operations in 2025. Genome Valley is home to both 200 biotech and pharma companies from 18 countries and six of the world’s Top 10 R&D companies. An impressive #36 ranking for Large Companies will only rise: FDI dollars in the back half of 2024 added up to nearly \$2.7 billion in Telangana state. And Hyderabad already produces one-third of the world’s vaccines.



83 Chengdu China

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 6 Internet Infrastructure
- 17 Convention Center

POPULATION

Metro 9,470,000

Sichuan’s capital blends laid-back tea house culture with fast-moving tech infrastructure.

Chengdu is a magnet for multinationals: 2025 brought new R&D facilities from Huawei and Sanofi, alongside Intel’s expanded chip packaging and testing facility and new investments in the Chengdu Hi-Tech Industrial Development Zone, home to more than 3,200 tech and Fortune 500 firms. Small wonder the city is #6 in internet connectivity. Logistics is expanding in lockstep. Chengdu Tianfu International Airport (#26) is on track to surpass 60 million annual passengers in 2025, with a third terminal in advanced planning for 2027. The Chengdu–Zigong high-speed rail line has trimmed travel times to under an hour, and this year, 95% of Chinese cities with a population of 500,000 or more are scheduled to have a high-speed rail system.

Urban livability is getting a dramatic boost from the Tianfu Greenway Project, which will add 10,500 miles (!) of interconnected parks and paths by 2035, with major riverfront sections completed by 2026. Retail and hospitality are also blooming, with IFS and Taikoo Li malls adding luxury flagships, and the iHotel Indigo Chengdu Financial City, which seamlessly blends business and leisure, opening this year. And play took center stage at the World Games 2025, with more than 4,000 athletes from 118 countries competing in non-Olympic sports.



84 Denver USA

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 9 Economic Output
- 16 Labor Force Participation

POPULATION

Metro 3,052,000

Lifestyle matters, and The Mile High City is selling it to a new mobile, ascendant investment class.

Metro Denver is steering confidently toward its projected 3.6 million residents by 2030, with job growth holding near 1.2% in 2025 and unemployment staying under 4%. That stability is luring investment and fueling a #9 ranking in Economic Output and #16 in Labor Force Participation. Austria-based VertiGIS has opened its U.S. utilities HQ downtown, citing the metro’s deep geospatial tech talent, while the \$29-million bond-funded conversion of a vacant Tech Center office into 143 attainable apartments is the first of several office-to-residential pilots set to deliver by 2026.

Hospitality is on the rise. The carbon-positive, biophilic Populus tower with its 265 rooms has been attracting conference attendees and theatergoers since its October 2024 debut, burnishing a #63 ranking for Theaters and Concerts. A 1,500-key pipeline includes Virgin Hotels Denver Fox Park (opening in late 2025). Retail expansion mirrors the growth: two new Costco stores are landing in the coming year, and LoDo’s Dairy Block is adding new spots. On the South Platte, infrastructure work starts on The River Mile megaproject in 2025 to prep for mixed-use towers, parks and a new aquarium by the early 2030s. At Denver International Airport, 2024’s record 82.3 million passengers have fast-tracked the Vision 100 plan, with Concourse A and B expansions due by 2026.



85 Calgary Canada

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 9 Educational Attainment
- 30 Labor Force Participation

POPULATION

Metro 1,679,000

Youthful energy and big infrastructure are gushing at the foot of the Canadian Rockies.

Canada’s energy capital is building its future with youthful vigor. With a median age of just 38 years in 2021, Calgary ranks among the country’s youngest major cities, a powerful foundation for its fast-growing tech and creative sectors.

In June 2024, Calgary unveiled the \$500-million expansion of the BMO Centre in Stampede Park, immediately elevating its profile among top-tier North American convention destinations, which will give wings to the current #122 ranking for Convention Centers. On-site, the Stampede Park Hotel, a 320-key luxury development, is set to open in 2028, further enhancing the event ecosystem. The transformation of downtown is also underway. A refreshed Stephen Avenue pedestrian corridor will be revealed in June 2026, in time for the world-famous Calgary Stampede. In East Village, new residential towers and the transformed Arts Commons and Olympic Plaza are cementing cultural energy downtown. Thanks to over \$250 million in incentive-backed office-to-residential conversions, more than 1,200 new units are expected in the heart of the city by 2026, helping maintain Calgary’s strong price-to-income affordability index. Talent remains the city’s secret sauce, with its #9 global ranking in our Educational Attainment subcategory fueling new life sciences, ag-tech and clean-energy ventures. The Green Line LRT will bring game-changing north-south transit when it opens in 2031.



86 Abu Dhabi UAE

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 2 Labor Force Participation
- 12 Standard of Living

POPULATION

Metro 1,539,000

Abu Dhabi's economy is transforming, and a new resort and unified visa will put it into hyperdrive.

The UAE's capital is in full diversification mode, stacking sports, culture and high-end hospitality alongside its oil wealth – and enjoying a #2 ranking for Labor Force Participation and #12 for Standard of Living. On Hdayriyat Island, Surf Abu Dhabi, the world's largest artificial wave pool, opened in late 2024. Kelly Slater's 755-yard-long, 21-million-gallon seawater tank already hosted the first-ever Middle East stop on the World Surf League Championship Tour. Bigger than the wave was the announcement of a new Disney theme park resort coming to Yas Island. And then there's the new Schengen-style GCC Unified Tourism Visa, allowing free movement across the UAE, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia under a single entry permit. Game-changing for a city within a four-hour flight of one-third of the world's population. Liftoff: end of 2025.

Urban investment stretches across the mainland and islands. The Saadiyat Cultural District is nearing a 2026 crescendo with the Zayed National Museum, Guggenheim Abu Dhabi and Natural History Museum Abu Dhabi all in advanced stages. In 2025, new hotel and real estate offerings, from the Mandarin Oriental Residences to boutique resorts on Nurai Island, are adding more than 1,700 keys. Real estate remains active, with prime waterfront selling out phases in days, buoyed by robust foreign investment incentives.



87 Austin USA

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 12 Economic Output
- 18 Business Ecosystem

POPULATION

Metro 2,551,000

The American dream still has an address on the Colorado River. The buy-in just got a little easier

The Austin metro is growing faster than anywhere in the U.S., and added roughly 29,000 jobs in 2024, pushing toward a projected three million residents by 2030. Median list prices in March 2025 hovered around \$510,000, down more than 7% year over year, with active listings up 28% and new construction completions up 10%. The skyline keeps reaching. Sixth and Guadalupe – the city's second-tallest tower – now hums with office tenants and residents, while the 74-story Waterline has just topped out for a 2026 debut as the tallest building in the state, with a hotel, residences and office space. Office vacancies remain above 25%, but growth in creative media, AI, and the chip sector are expected to tighten that in 2025–26. One potential caveat might be the dwindling water supply: the Texas Legislature is proposing annual allocations of \$1 billion to the Texas Water Fund over the next two decades to maintain the flow of water, people and money.

Austin's #19 Labor Force Participation, #12 Economic Output and #18 Business Ecosystem rankings are backed by megaprojects. Samsung's \$17-billion Taylor fab chip factory is targeting mass production in late 2026, and Tesla is adding 5.2 million square feet to Gigafactory Texas for long-promised affordable EVs and robotaxis. At Austin-Bergstrom International, 2024's 21.8 million passengers have kicked terminal expansion into high gear.



88 Philadelphia USA

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 4 University
- 25 Weather

POPULATION

Metro 6,330,000

The City of Brotherly Love stands apart in ways to learn, work, and play.

Philadelphia is ranked #4 for universities, and all of them have suffered massive research funding cuts since the beginning of 2025 – Drexel, Penn and its associated Children's Hospital of Philadelphia have seen tens of millions in funding paused. Drexel, for one, has found other revenue streams. It is a partner in University City, the first lab tower in the 14-acre, \$3.5-billion Schuylkill Yards; a second tower is now being proposed to meet the life sciences demand that keeps Philly among the nation's top five bio hubs. South at the Ballpark District/Navy Yard, 614 apartments, 250,000 square feet of R&D space and fresh greenways are coming in 2026.

Housing values are steady: the median sale price in early 2025 sits at around \$265,000 (up ~4% year over year), with strong buyer activity in neighborhoods tied to transit and university anchors. Job growth remains broad-based – 28,000+ net gains last year, led by health care, logistics and higher ed. On the Delaware, a new 1.5-mile riverfront trail segment opens in summer 2025, moving the city closer to a fully connected 500-acre green loop; the #39 Green Space ranking is well earned. Tourism momentum is also strong: 2024's 26.6 million visitors spent a record \$4.5 billion.



89 Baltimore USA

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Health
- 1 Educational Attainment

POPULATION

Metro 2,859,000

Bold moves, big developments and brainpower build confidence in Baltimore.

Charm City's resilience is being fortified in concrete, steel and cranes. The Fort McHenry channel was fully reopened just 11 weeks after the Key Bridge collapse, restoring port traffic months ahead of schedule and reinforcing Baltimore's reputation for hustle. In South Baltimore, the 235-acre Peninsula continues to transform: Under Armour's net-zero, mass-timber headquarters and 24,000-square-foot Brand House opened in late 2024, anchoring a waterfront mix of labs, residences and public space. Downtown, site work is underway on the \$1-billion Harborplace redevelopment, with Gensler-designed towers set to deliver housing, retail and hospitality in phases through 2031. On the trade front, Tradepoint Atlantic's TiL container terminal is ramping up, boosting port capacity by 70% and supporting an estimated 8,000 jobs. Meanwhile, biomedical engineers at Johns Hopkins have grown a whole-brain organoid that can usher in an era of studying the real causes of disorders like autism. Small wonder Baltimore leads the world in our Health ranking, while also ranking #1 in our global Educational Attainment subcategory as the most educated city on earth, fueled by its #8-ranked universities.

And all this comes at a relative bargain. As of early 2025, the median list price was about \$242,000, roughly 30% under the U.S. median.



90 Stuttgart Germany

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 4 Biking
- 12 Walkability

POPULATION

Metro 2,558,000

Urban efficiency meets Swabian hospitality in the wine country, today more than ever.

The Stuttgart 21 rail project was to be a silver bullet for a de-industrializing region, promising jobs, urban renewal, green spaces, residential development, faster trains, shorter commutes and connection to the Paris-Bratislava superroute. But that was three decades and a 360% cost overrun ago. In the meantime, Stuttgart has attained an impressive #4 in our Biking subcategory and #12 for Walkability.

Still, Stuttgart 21 is advancing: the new underground Hauptbahnhof and a linked long-distance station at the airport/Messe could launch by 2026. Real estate is freed up when tracks go underground: The Rosenstein redevelopment is queued up, with plans for up to 5,700 homes, new parks and maker-space blocks. At Messe, rooftop photovoltaics generate several gigawatt-hours annually as the conference venue aims to generate most of its power in-house: watch the #42 Convention Center ranking climb. Hotels are also opening, with Scandic unveiling a 174-room hotel refit downtown later this year, adding Nordic sensibility to design-forward towers and reliable mid-market inventory. Tourism momentum is real after a record 2024, and the city's fun side is ready. Wine is grown in 16 of the 23 city districts, and the annual Wine Village attracts a million visitors.



91 Rotterdam Netherlands

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 14 Airports
- 25 Weather

POPULATION

Metro 1,896,000

Europe's largest port keeps proving that second cities can be first movers.

Europe's largest seaport is a fluid, flavorful and architecturally inspired new world. Katendrecht – a former Chinatown and red-light district – is now Rotterdam's culinary and cultural heart. Museums could move up from #142: FENIX, a migration museum, now rises like a stainless steel tornado from warehouses that welcomed immigrants. The massive port is also built sustainably. The Shore Power Project at the cruise terminal is online and the Maasvlakte 2 expansion positions Rotterdam as a hydrogen ecosystem and offshore wind hub.

Air matters, too: the city's #14 Airports ranking and #85 for public transit could rise as the first public road tests with self-driving buses begin, linking the city center to The Hague Airport.

Across the Maas in M4H, 2025 brings phase one of the Merwe-Vierhavens Circular Makers District, an incubator, testing ground and showcase. Housing supply is diversifying – the contested Feyenoord City plan should result in 9,500 homes and infrastructure, although the fate of a stadium for Feyenoord remains uncertain. Lloydkwartier, a mixed-use district on the site of a former power plant, is home to the mass-timber SAWA, "the healthiest building in the Netherlands".



92 Lyon France

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 4 Biking
- 5 Walkability

POPULATION

Metro 2,309,000

Roman bones, bouchon soul and a future humming along the rivers. Lyon is a taste of the future.

A Roman city founded more than two millennia ago, Lyon is to be savored nose to tail, past to future, literally and figuratively. (And with a Top 5 walkability rank globally, it's ideally also devoured on foot.) The PATLY project seeks to take the gastronomic capital from 4.6% to 15% food autonomy and provide access to healthy food for all by 2030.

At the merging of the Rhône and Saône rivers, La Confluence, the 370-acre masterplanned remake of the city's presqu'île, is creating a community of some 12,000 residents and 15,000 employees with multi-generational housing, climate-ready public realm and the landmark Musée des Confluences. The Voies Lyonnaises public transport cycling network is rolling toward a 220-mile mesh by 2030, with major links from downtown to the suburbs and regional destinations. The investment has given the city the fourth-best Biking ranking on the planet.

Twenty minutes away in Décines, the 50-acre OL Vallée sports and leisure district keeps adding both reasons to linger and economic clout. There's everything from City Surf Park to the 59,000-seat Groupama arena, home to a Ligue 1 men's team and also the OL Lyonnes, the world's best women's football club in a universe of ascending women's sports.



93 The Ruhr Germany

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 7 Weather
- 20 Biking

POPULATION

Metro 5,114,000

German's industrial wasteland is a verdant land of opportunity, and the Ruhr led the way.

Germany's largest metro area by population – 53 cities from Dortmund to Essen and Oberhausen – is proving that post-industrial doesn't mean post-opportunity. Since the last coal mine closed in 2018, the Ruhr has ingeniously adapted its industrial heritage: the Ruhr Museum keeps innovating, while the Landschaftspark Duisburg-Nord unveiled new climbing walls and event lighting, drawing fresh tourism and a #25 Instagram Posts ranking. Tourism momentum is real after a record 2024 for the state, and the region – ranked 26 in our Green Space subcategory – is gearing up for the huge IGA 2027: five garden shows across the metro offering 2.6 million visitors an answer to what people and the city of the future need. The FISU World University Games – in converted and new venues – is another summer highlight. The #7-ranked Weather should cooperate.

Urban transformation continues with Duisburg's 6 Lakes Wedau development, a \$545-million mixed-use project turning 150 acres of rail corridor into 3,000 residential units. In Essen, the Krupp-Belt redevelopment is bringing mixed-use towers and tech-lab space to market by mid-2026. Real estate remains among Western Europe's most affordable, attracting talent, investment and money: 2024-5 FDI projects in clean energy manufacturing and advanced logistics.



94 Busan South Korea

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 31 Restaurants
- 70 Nature & Parks

POPULATION

Metro 3,468,000

South Korea's coastal powerhouse is leaning into its cosmopolitan outdoor allure.

The Miami of South Korea is known for its unrivaled beaches, and Haeundae's 2025 redesign has added wider promenades, shaded seating and upgraded night-lighting, while Gwangalli is debuting a waterfront performance plaza this summer. Trails on Geumjeong Mountain and the temple-studded Beomeosa area are now linked by improved wayfinding and seasonal shuttle loops. Culture keeps leveling up: The Busan Museum of Contemporary Art's 2025 expansion introduces a new digital-media wing, Loop Lab and rooftop sculpture garden, while the Korean War Memorial Museum in Yeongdo is on track for a 2026 opening. The Busan International Film Festival has locked in an expanded program through 2027, cementing its global profile. The #31-ranked Restaurants scene, long influenced by post-Korean War refugees, boasts countless dining rooms and unmatched hwae (seafood).

Economic muscle matches the soft power in a city ranked #37 in our Educational Attainment subcategory. The North Port redevelopment is in full swing, with mixed-use towers, hotels and a cruise terminal opening in phases from late 2025, directly feeding visitor and investor interest. The \$10-billion Busan New Port expansion aims to build the world's largest container handling capacity, boosting current capacity by nearly 50%. Retail and luxury hospitality, like the Lotte Hotels L7, are rising with the tide.



95 Düsseldorf Germany

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 11 Convention Center
- 19 Walkability

POPULATION

Metro 1,482,000

A vibrant economy humming with defense contracts and immigration balances efficiency and revelry.

Few cities balance precision and personality like Düsseldorf. Corporate confidence remains high, with Rheinmetall – a top systems supplier for defense – enjoying record orders in 2025, spurring local supplier growth and anchoring the city's Top 10 ranking for Economic Output. Messe Düsseldorf's local glow-up and new brand has gone hand in hand with ambitious international connections with Türkiye and Mexico and through its new Gulf office in Dubai.

Urban investment is visible along the Rhine. The MedienHafen (Media Harbor) district is home to more than 800 companies and keeps layering new builds onto an architectural postcard. This year brought the completion of more residential and a boutique hotel targeting design-savvy business travelers. North of the city, the sculptural Tadao Ando Campus & Tower hopes to open by the end of the decade with a hotel, museum, food hall, offices and brewery, adding a new design-forward destination. Tourism and culture are riding the same wave. The Kunstsammlung NRW's 2025 program features expanded Japanese contemporary art, deepening ties with Düsseldorf's 8,400-strong Japanese community. Retail streets like Königsallee are seeing refreshed flagships and dining concepts, while luxury residential launches in Oberkassel and Pempelfort are setting per-square-foot sales records.



96 Mecca Saudi Arabia

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 40 Tik Tok Videos
- 49 Sights & Landmarks

POPULATION

Metro 2,113,000

The city's rhythm is measured in pilgrims' footsteps, and the focus is on helping the faithful keep their cool.

Hajj, the arduous pilgrimage to Mecca, in the Hejazi region of western Saudi Arabia, is one of five core practices of the Muslim faith. It's also one of the world's largest annual gatherings of humans, as faith-affirming as it is logistically daunting. In 2025, 1.67 million pilgrims performed Hajj, and the experience was catastrophe-free; Frequency on Haramain high-speed trains from Jeddah Airport – one of the 10 fastest electric trains in the world – was increased 25% to some 4,800 trips; Government insistence on Hajj permits that give pilgrims access to amenities like air-conditioned tents was also key.

Hospitality around Makkah is scaling with growing international and religious tourism ambitions: Jumeirah Jabal Omar Makkah opened in 2024 with 1,121 rooms just steps from Al Haram, signaling luxury confidence. Half a mile north, the Thakher Makkah megaproject is growing to accommodate 30 million visitors to Hajj and Umrah – a lesser, year-round pilgrimage – including the largest Novotel in the world, a Radisson Hotel and Residences, and other flags. Retail and urban expansion includes the Masar corridor, with its grand, green 2.3 pedestrian-oriented miles, while 13 million square feet of development threads together hotels, metro stations and culture; the \$719-million Masar Mall is targeting a 2026 debut.



97 Porto Portugal

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 16 Health
- 55 Public Transit

POPULATION

Metro 1,340,000

Everyone wants a piece of Portugal's king of the north. Especially the world's FDI.

Portugal's northern engine is shifting up again. Francisco Sá Carneiro Airport set a new record in 2024 (almost 16 million passengers) and rolled into the summer with 120+ destinations and added frequencies – including a new Porto-Rome Fiumicino link – broadening talent and visitor flows. Metro do Porto's long-awaited Pink (G) Line is now slated to launch in 2026, easing crosstown trips. On the eastern edge, the transformation of the vast Campanhã slaughterhouse opens in 2026 with offices, galleries, dining and the new Museu das Convergências – Portugal's freshest culture-and-innovation mash-up. Watch the #89 ranking for Museums climb.

Capital is following. Porto drew \$2.8 billion in FDI between 2020 and 2024, attracted by a workforce skilled in tech, logistics and tourism. Housing remains tight: Porto's municipal sale prices averaged roughly \$331 per square foot in early 2025, with new-build premiums around transport corridors and green-certified stock lifting yields for mid-to-long-let strategies. Tourism keeps ascending. The World of Wine (WOW) – seven museums, a wine school and restaurants on the banks of the Duoro – is growing the city's wine rep beyond the Duoro-side port-tasting rooms. The renovated Bolhão Market is back to being the city's daily heartbeat, and coastal escapes remain metro-reachable. Porto is second-city in the very best way.



98 Bucharest Romania

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 11 Health
- 20 Biking

POPULATION

Metro 2,164,000

With a Schengen entry boost, 'Little Paris' isn't just a stop on the way to Transylvania anymore.

Bucharest is leveling up. Easier mobility for Romanians in the Schengen Area has cut friction for visitors and investors, and airports moved a record 16+ million passengers in 2024. Hospitality is surging: a 10-year reno has restored the Corinthia Grand Hotel du Boulevard to just 30 suites and all its stunning Belle Époque grandeur. Mondrian Bucharest is slated for 2026 near the Athenaeum. And the residents of a city ranked #11 for Health and #20 for Biking are now breathing the uncommon air of multi-party democracy.

The food-and-retail scene is getting a statement piece this fall: Marketta Food Hall opens inside One Gallery – the restored 1930s Ford factory – bringing a 65,000-square-foot culinary hub to Floreasca. Bigger retail is coming fast, too: the Promenada Mall mixed-use extension, a \$385-million project adding 592,000 square feet, offices and a hotel, is scheduled to complete by early 2027.

For housing, momentum is real: average listing prices reached about \$190 per square foot by mid-2025, with tight new supply nudging rents and yields higher in well-connected districts. Capital flows back that up – Romania posted a 57% jump in FDI projects in 2024, with Bucharest drawing roughly 40% of them, particularly in manufacturing, tech and business services, the most in Central and Eastern Europe.



99 Birmingham United Kingdom

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 23 Convention Center
- 36 Public Transit

POPULATION

Metro 3,123,000

England's industrial heart is manufacturing momentum, blending history with fresh ambition. Brum is back!

Need proof of Birmingham's ascent? One Eastside, the tallest new tower in the city, just marked a topping-out milestone: the 51-story, \$269-million residential development will offer 667 build-to-rent homes and all the amenity goodies when it opens in 2026. In a close race to the top, the 49-story Octagon skyscraper in the Paradise redevelopment topped out in September 2024, bringing 364 homes to the skyline. Construction is about to begin on the 42-acre Smithfield, with a masterplan that includes over 3,000 homes, office, retail and a scheme for the historic Bull Ring Markets. Digbeth's new Boxpark food and event containers complex starts hopping in 2025.

Infrastructure is weaving Birmingham more tightly together. The Eastside Metro tram extension is to deliver a temporary terminus by 2025-26; a bold \$1.5-billion "necklace of opportunity" tram proposal promises to link the city center to Heartlands Hospital, the airport, NEC and the future Blues stadium. Watch the #36 Public Transit and #50 Airports rankings rise. The innovation ecosystem hums: Bruntwood SciTech's 11 campuses are growing, and in 2024-25 the West Midlands topped FDI outside Greater London with 130 projects producing more than 5,800 jobs – more projects than Scotland, and more than Wales and Northern Ireland combined.



100 Doha Qatar

PLACE POWER™ HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Labor Force Participation
- 1 Unemployment Rate

POPULATION

Metro 2,650,000

Doha's post-World Cup momentum is visible at the airport, on the Corniche... and at the waterpark.

After a World Cup made unforgettable by construction worker controversy and the glory of Messi, tourism in Qatar has set a high-water mark: more than five million arrivals in 2024 and hotel occupancy near 70%. Locals, meanwhile, are at work: Doha is #1 in both Labor Force Participation and Unemployment Rate, meaning there's lots of the former and little of the latter. Hamad International's new D and E concourses lift capacity past 65 million, with new contact gates and luxury retail around the biophilic Orchard. Retail follows suit: Doha Mall soft-opened in Abu Hamour in late 2024, with Najma's Avenue Mall ready soon. Up in Lusail, the City of the Future, Meryal Waterpark attracts families to Qetaifan Island's beaches, marina and the Icon Tower, the world's tallest waterslide.

Investors are diving in. Qatar drew about \$2.74 billion in FDI across 241 greenfield projects in 2024, creating more than 9,000 jobs, while Free Zones added distribution hubs serving ecommerce and light manufacturing. Hospitality-wise, Andaz Doha brought a 306-key tower of rooms and residences to West Bay in February 2025, and Rosewood Doha opened on Lusail Marina in July. The cultural flywheel spins faster in 2026 with the debut of Art Basel Qatar at M7 in Msheireb's Design District – a signal to creatives and brands in the MENA region.

Ranking cities' Place Power™ Score, by category

RANK	CITY	COUNTRY	LIVABILITY	LOVABILITY	PROSPERITY	POPULATION
1	London	United Kingdom	3	2	1	12,451,000
2	New York	USA	2	3	2	19,940,000
3	Paris	France	1	1	4	13,171,000
4	Tokyo	Japan	4	4	3	36,635,000
5	Madrid	Spain	7	6	10	6,983,000
6	Singapore	Singapore	9	12	5	6,038,000
7	Rome	Italy	5	5	34	4,306,000
8	Dubai	UAE	17	9	6	6,000,000
9	Berlin	Germany	10	10	7	5,106,000
10	Barcelona	Spain	6	7	23	5,094,000
11	Sydney	Australia	8	20	8	5,450,000
12	Los Angeles	USA	13	13	13	12,928,000
13	Seoul	South Korea	12	16	16	24,160,000
14	Amsterdam	Netherlands	11	25	14	2,989,000
15	Beijing	China	34	15	12	21,312,000

RANK	CITY	COUNTRY	LIVABILITY	LOVABILITY	PROSPERITY	POPULATION
16	Shanghai	China	40	17	9	28,482,000
17	Toronto	Canada	14	29	15	7,605,000
18	São Paulo	Brazil	54	8	40	22,421,000
19	Hong Kong	China	29	27	22	7,617,000
20	Istanbul	Türkiye	41	14	51	14,206,000
21	Melbourne	Australia	22	42	21	5,207,000
22	Bangkok	Thailand	42	18	42	10,891,000
23	Osaka	Japan	21	24	52	16,692,000
24	Oslo	Norway	15	62	17	1,651,000
25	Stockholm	Sweden	19	56	18	2,455,000
26	Miami	USA	26	30	30	6,458,000
27	Vienna	Austria	18	32	47	3,136,000
28	San Francisco	USA	43	69	11	4,648,000
29	Bengaluru	India	46	19	57	13,172,000
30	Mexico City	Mexico	90	11	77	20,535,000
31	Munich	Germany	27	54	19	3,066,000
32	Dublin	Ireland	23	55	25	2,267,000
33	Copenhagen	Denmark	16	74	27	2,198,000
34	Zürich	Switzerland	20	98	24	1,613,000
35	Chicago	USA	49	38	28	9,409,000
36	Milan	Italy	38	39	31	4,981,000
37	Lisbon	Portugal	24	31	85	3,115,000
38	Prague	Czechia	25	33	81	2,217,000
39	Buenos Aires	Argentina	39	21	127	15,365,000
40	Mumbai	India	65	26	60	20,947,000
41	Vancouver	Canada	28	63	32	2,731,000
42	Rio de Janeiro	Brazil	37	22	142	13,630,000
43	Warsaw	Poland	33	58	29	3,395,000
44	Hamburg	Germany	30	59	43	3,493,000
45	Shenzhen	China	193	34	26	12,819,000
46	Montreal	Canada	36	65	39	4,637,000
47	Budapest	Hungary	31	57	65	2,969,000
48	Brussels	Belgium	44	92	33	3,408,000
49	Riyadh	Saudi Arabia	155	45	35	7,531,000

RANK	CITY	COUNTRY	LIVABILITY	LOVABILITY	PROSPERITY	POPULATION
50	Kuala Lumpur	Malaysia	88	51	44	8,410,000
51	Bogota	Colombia	97	35	80	9,389,000
52	Guangzhou	China	198	40	38	13,949,000
53	Jakarta	Indonesia	238	28	61	32,260,000
54	Delhi	India	252	23	87	32,023,000
55	Las Vegas	USA	149	36	71	2,399,000
56	Boston	USA	53	113	36	5,026,000
57	Washington D.C.	USA	64	100	41	6,436,000
58	Houston	USA	174	48	48	7,796,000
59	Auckland	New Zealand	32	102	75	1,666,000
60	San Jose	USA	104	264	20	1,995,000
61	Helsinki	Finland	35	133	58	1,598,000
62	Orlando	USA	102	52	66	2,941,000
63	Taipei	Taiwan	51	67	83	2,741,000
64	Frankfurt	Germany	62	135	37	2,722,000
65	Lima	Peru	159	37	101	11,037,000
66	Atlanta	USA	135	68	50	6,411,000
67	Seattle	USA	72	110	49	4,145,000
68	Perth	Australia	52	120	56	2,309,000
69	Manchester	United Kingdom	60	109	54	3,399,000
70	Cape Town	South Africa	56	50	147	3,740,000
71	Kraków	Poland	48	79	100	1,501,000
72	Valencia	Spain	45	75	117	1,776,000
73	Ottawa	Canada	47	139	63	1,591,000
74	Athens	Greece	59	47	177	3,594,000
75	Santiago	Chile	95	53	102	8,213,000
76	Medellín	Colombia	80	49	139	4,124,000
77	Cologne	Germany	69	104	64	2,234,000
78	Dallas	USA	180	86	45	8,344,000
79	Brisbane	Australia	66	141	68	2,707,000
80	Hangzhou	China	146	78	74	8,035,000
81	San Diego	USA	120	88	73	3,299,000
82	Hyderabad	India	172	43	149	10,521,000
83	Chengdu	China	141	64	94	9,470,000

RANK	CITY	COUNTRY	LIVABILITY	LOVABILITY	PROSPERITY	POPULATION
84	Denver	USA	109	128	59	3,052,000
85	Calgary	Canada	85	132	70	1,679,000
86	Abu Dhabi	UAE	224	94	46	1,539,000
87	Austin	USA	125	125	62	2,551,000
88	Philadelphia	USA	108	115	76	6,330,000
89	Baltimore	USA	67	222	67	2,859,000
90	Stuttgart	Germany	61	180	88	2,558,000
91	Rotterdam	Netherlands	112	191	55	1,896,000
92	Lyon	France	70	134	105	2,309,000
93	The Ruhr	Germany	73	126	118	5,114,000
94	Busan	South Korea	78	112	126	3,468,000
95	Düsseldorf	Germany	74	193	79	1,482,000
96	Mecca	Saudi Arabia	119	66	166	2,113,000
97	Porto	Portugal	55	123	173	1,340,000
98	Bucharest	Romania	77	137	120	2,164,000
99	Birmingham	United Kingdom	106	174	78	3,123,000
100	Doha	Qatar	185	187	53	2,650,000

Let's talk about why your city ranked where it did. Get in touch for a free, personalized briefing on your city's 2026 performance and the key opportunities you may be overlooking.



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