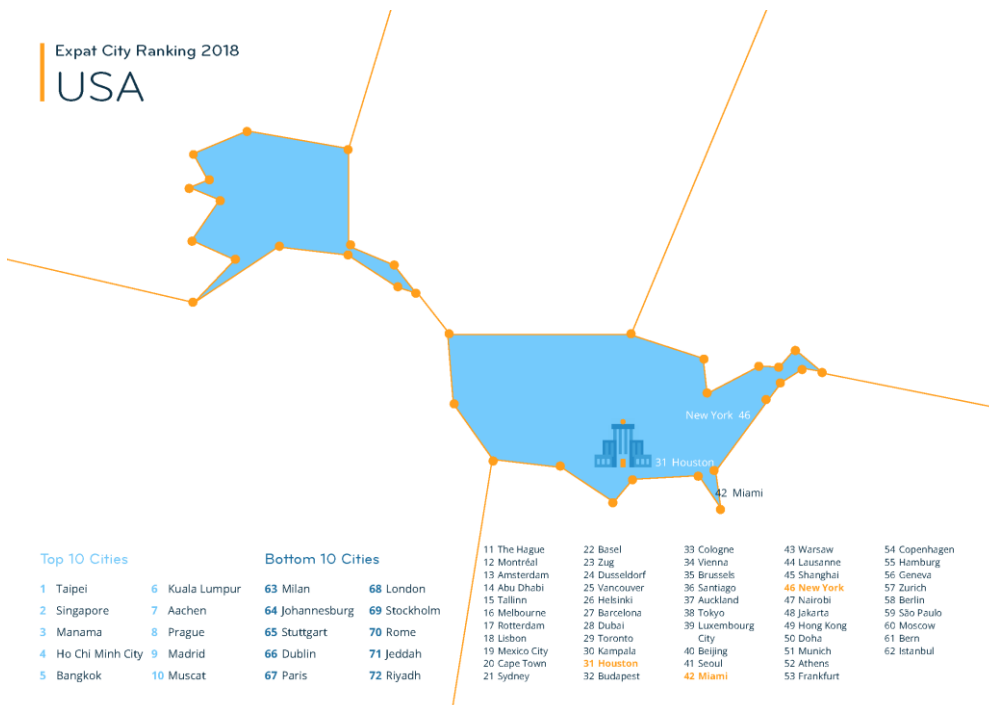


Expatriate City Ranking 2018: Houston Is Perceived as the Best US American City by Expats, Beating Miami and New York City

Houston is great for cost of living, as opposed to New York City, while Miami comes first for climate and weather across the United States.

- *Houston (31st) ranks ahead of Miami (42nd) and New York City (46th) in the Expat City Ranking 2018 by InterNations. The top 10 cities for expats are Taipei, Singapore, Manama, Ho Chi Minh City, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Aachen, Prague, Madrid, and Muscat.*
- *Houston is in the top 3 for local career opportunities and cost of living, but expats are not satisfied with the local transportation (72nd).*
- *Expats in Miami love the great climate (5th) but are unhappy with the healthcare system and the quality of the environment (70th).*
- *New York City is the world's best city for local leisure options but the worst in the world for local cost of living.*

Munich, 20 November 2018 — There are three US American cities featured in this year's Expat City Ranking: Houston, ranking 31st out of 72 cities worldwide, followed by Miami (42nd) and New York City (46th). Expats in all three cities are unsatisfied with the quality of urban living, except for great leisure options in New York (1st) and Miami (6th) as well as the climate in the latter (5th). Houston, on the other hand, does particularly well for the local cost of living (4th), while New York ranks last in the world for this aspect (72nd).



The so-far unpublished Expat City Ranking is based on the [Expatriate Insider 2018 survey](#), conducted by [InterNations](#), the largest expat community worldwide. With more than 18,000 respondents living and working abroad, it is one of the most extensive expat studies in the world. Apart from offering an in-depth analysis of expat life in 72 cities, the survey ranks them by a variety of factors such as quality of urban living, getting settled, urban work life, as well as finance & housing. The top 10 cities for expats

in 2018 are Taipei, Singapore, Manama, Ho Chi Minh City, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Aachen, Prague, Madrid, and Muscat.

Houston (31st) Is Affordable for Expats and Great for Their Careers

Coming in 31st out of 72 cities in the Expat City Ranking 2018, Houston receives its best ratings in terms of finance & housing (8th) and cost of living (4th). Close to nine in ten respondents (86%) agree that it is easy to find housing (vs. 52% globally), and another 67 percent regard it as affordable, which is 30 percentage points more than the global average (37%). Moreover, 76 percent of expats are satisfied with the local cost of living, compared to 44 percent globally.

The Texan metropolis also ranks second in terms of local career opportunities — only beaten by Prague — with 79 percent of respondents satisfied with this aspect. This is 28 percentage points more than the global average of 51 percent, and twelve percentage points more than the average across the USA. *“Houston has a very active economy,”* says an expat from Lebanon, *“it is a city with a high concentration of brain power and quantitative intelligence”*. However, overall, the city still only ranks 42nd for urban work life, mainly due to a low level of satisfaction with job security (62nd) and working hours (56th). Exactly 30 percent of expats are not happy with their job security (vs. 21% globally), and 26 percent are not satisfied with their working hours, compared to 19 percent globally.

When it comes to the quality of urban living, Houston does not rank well either, coming in 67th worldwide and last out of the American cities surveyed. It is even rated the world’s worst city for local transportation: more than three in five (61%) rate this aspect negatively, which is about three times the global average (19%). Close to one third (32%) even give it the worst possible rating!

Expats Love the Climate in Miami (42nd) but Are Unhappy with their Careers

Ranking 42nd out of 72 cities worldwide, Miami’s biggest perks are its leisure options (6th) and the great climate (5th). When asked what they like best about expat life in the sunny state capital, an expat from Mexico pointed out *“the lifestyle you can enjoy living by the ocean”*. In fact, close to nine in ten respondents (87%) are happy with the local climate and weather, which is 14 percentage points more than the level of satisfaction with this aspect across the US (73%). Moreover, 53 percent of expats could not be any happier with the local leisure options (vs. 34% globally) — however, New York City beats Miami within the US American cities surveyed, with 69 percent of expats giving it the best possible rating.

Despite these good results, Miami still ranks in the bottom 10 cities for the quality of urban living (64th), worse than New York (56th) but better than Houston (67th). The city performs particularly low in terms of health & environment (70th), only ahead of Shanghai (71st) and Jakarta (72nd). Close to one-quarter of respondents in Miami (24%) rate the availability of healthcare negatively (vs. 11% globally), and 13 percent even find it very bad (vs. 3% globally). Miami’s low ranking reflects expats’ dissatisfaction with this aspect across the country, as the USA ranks 56th out of 68 countries in terms of health & well-being in the *Expat Insider 2018* survey. *“Healthcare costs are really high, and public safety is increasingly compromised due to violence and freedom to own a gun,”* states an expat from Malaysia. In fact, 22 percent of expats in Miami worry about their personal safety compared to just nine percent globally.

Lastly, Miami is the worst US American city for urban work life (47th worldwide). This becomes particularly clear when looking at the local career prospects: Miami ranks 47th, which is far behind Houston (2nd) and New York City (6th). In fact, 28 percent of expats in Miami are not satisfied with their local career prospects, compared to 16 percent in NYC and nine percent in Houston. On the

other hand, the city does better when it comes to work-life balance (33rd), beating Houston (54th) and NYC (57th). More than three-quarters (76%) are happy with their working hours in Miami, compared to 61 percent in Houston and 59 percent in New York City. This is despite fact that average working hours in Miami (44.8h per week) are longer than in Houston (43.2h) and NYC (44.0h).

New York City (46th) Is Fun for Those Expats Who Can Afford It

Coming in 46th overall, New York can be found at both ends of the Expat City Ranking 2018: it is the world's best city for leisure options, but the worst in the world for local cost of living. In fact, 78 percent of respondents are unhappy with the local cost of living, compared to just 37 percent globally. This is also 40 percentage points more than the average dissatisfaction across the country regarding the cost of living (38%). Moreover, 35 percent of expats are unsatisfied with their financial situation (vs. 25% globally), and almost four in five respondents (79%) rate the affordability of housing negatively (vs. 44% globally). Close to two in five (36%) even find it very bad. *"Basic living needs, including rent, are very expensive in New York City,"* shares a Canadian expat.

On the bright side, New York ranks fourth for expats' job & career, only beaten by Prague (1st), Taipei (2nd), and Ho Chi Minh City (3rd). Close to three-quarters of respondents (73%) are satisfied with their job in general (vs. 65% globally), and 71 percent are happy with the local career opportunities (vs. 51% globally). Still, the city only comes in 33rd in terms of urban work life as a whole, mainly due to bad or average ratings for work-life balance and job security. Compared to a global 20 percent, 31 percent of expats in New York are unhappy with their work-life balance, while 23 percent are not satisfied with job security (vs. 21% globally).

This year, expats find it even more difficult to find new friends in the city: in 2017, 32 percent said that it is not easy to make friends, while this year 42 percent state the same. *"It is difficult to make tight and true friends,"* an expat from Italy states. In fact, New York City (43rd worldwide) ranks behind Houston (35th) and Miami (20th) for the ease of finding new friends. New York is also the worst American city in terms of general friendliness: 21 percent of respondents rate this aspect negatively, compared to 15 percent in Miami and only six percent in Houston. When it comes to feeling at home, only 18 percent are not happy in NYC and Houston (vs. 23% globally), while 28 percent do not feel at home in Miami.

The Best and Worst Cities for Expats

Taipei (1st), Singapore (2nd), and Manama (3rd) top the list of the Expat City Ranking 2018. This is largely due to how easy expats find it to settle in to life in these cities. This might be related to the friendliness of the local population and the personal safety in the cities. In fact, Taipei is rated the world's friendliest city by expats, with 94 percent finding the local residents friendly. *"People here are so friendly and always want to help,"* shares an expat from the Netherlands. The majority of expats in Manama (87%) also agrees that there is a friendly attitude toward foreign residents in the city, compared to 62 percent globally. Personal safety is one of the biggest perks of expat life in Singapore: 88 percent state to feel completely safe in the city (vs. 48% globally). *"It is easy for everyone to enjoy life here without worrying about safety,"* shares an expat from India.

On the other hand, Riyadh (72nd), Jeddah (71st), and Rome (70th) rank at the bottom of the list. While all three cities receive low ratings across the board, they seem to be particularly disappointing in terms of urban work life: close to three in five expats in Rome (58%) are dissatisfied with the local career opportunities (vs. 27% globally). An Albanian expat states that *"career opportunities are non-existent"*. Meanwhile, Jeddah and Riyadh are rated the two worst cities in the world for work-life balance: 34 and 38 percent, respectively, are unsatisfied with this factor (vs. 20% globally).

Read More about the Best and Worst Cities for Expats



Best & Worst
Cities for Expats



Quality of Urban
Living Index



Getting Settled
Index



Urban Work Life
Index



Finance &
Housing Index

About the Expat City Ranking 2018

For its annual [Expat Insider survey](#), InterNations asked more than 18,000 expatriates representing 178 nationalities and living in 187 countries or territories to provide information on various aspects of expat life, as well as their gender, age, and nationality. In 2018, the fifth year the survey was conducted, respondents were also invited to share their opinions on the city they are currently living in.

Participants were asked to rate more than 25 different aspects of urban life abroad on a scale of one to seven. The rating process emphasized the respondents' personal satisfaction with these aspects and considered both emotional topics as well as more factual aspects with equal weight. The respondents' ratings of the individual factors were then bundled in various combinations for a total of 13 subcategories, and their mean values were used to draw up four topical indices: Quality of Urban Living, Getting Settled, Urban Work Life, and Finance & Housing. These were further averaged in order to rank 72 cities worldwide. In 2018, the top 10 cities for expats are Taipei, Singapore, Manama, Ho Chi Minh City, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Aachen, Prague, Madrid, and Muscat.

In total, the responses used for the city ranking represent 11,966 expats living in 55 countries. For a city to be featured in the Expat City Ranking 2018, a sample size of at least 45 survey participants per city was required; 72 cities in 47 different countries made this threshold in 2018.

About InterNations

With 3.3 million members in 420 cities around the world, InterNations (www.internations.org) is the largest global community and information site for people who live and work abroad. InterNations offers global and local networking both online and face-to-face. At around 6,000 official events and activities per month, expatriates have the opportunity to meet other global minds. Online services include country and city guides created by a team of professional writers, guest contributions about life abroad, and discussion forums to help members with topics such as the local job or housing search. InterNations membership is by approval only to ensure we remain a community of trust.

The InterNations app is available for Android and iOS and can be downloaded for free on [Google Play](#) and the [App Store](#).

Find more information about InterNations on our [press pages](#), [company website](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), or in our [Expat Magazine](#).

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