

COUPONS VARY BY AREA

MONEY-SAVING COUPONS INSIDE

UP TO \$707

SUNDAY Orlando Sentinel

OrlandoSentinel.com OS

CENTRAL FLORIDA MANSIONS

PRICIEST HOMES, WEALTH SHIFTING



NO. 1
VINCE LAMAR CARTER
9472 Blanche Cove Dr,
Windermere
■ \$9,983,656
■ 30,742 square feet
■ 10.44 acres

Lake Nona loses some prestige as Disney's Golden Oaks gains

BY MARY SHANKLIN | Staff Writer

Windermere firmed its position as the spot for Central Florida's most expensive homes in 2014, while Walt Disney Co.'s new Golden Oak gained some mansion cachet last year — and Lake Nona lost some.

Previously, the mansions of the Orlando region had three dominant addresses: Winter Park, Windermere and Lake Nona.

But to end 2014, Lake Nona barely clung to the list of the 100 most expensive houses in the four-county Orlando area,

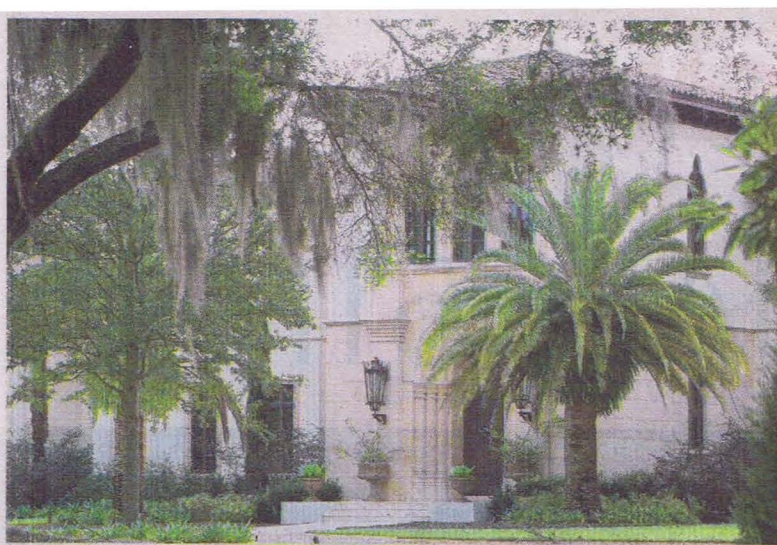
and Golden Oak debuted on the list, which was compiled for the Orlando Sentinel from property records by Potomac Land Co.

Once again, former Orlando Magic player Vince Carter's \$10 million lakefront estate in the exclusive Isleworth community led the list. The rest of the top 10



NO. 2
RICHARD ULLMAN
9508 Windy Ridge Rd,
Windermere
■ \$8,265,519
■ 26,023 square feet
■ 18.16 acres

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RED HUBER/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Cruise-travel entrepreneur Wayne Heller's home is Winter Park's largest, with more than 20,000 square feet of living area on 3.5 acres. It replaced Casa Feliz, which got moved.



NO. 3
JEFFREY B GELMAN
9912 Lake Louise Dr,
Windermere
■ \$8,616,563
■ 27,509 square feet
■ 3.19 acres

OS Online: More on local mansions

The Orlando area's top 100 houses show a few shifts from 2013. See photos of the top 25 and an interactive map of the priciest 100 homes in each of seven Central Florida counties: OrlandoSentinel.com/mansions

COURTESY OF Y6 AERIALS LLC

HOUSES

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were also in the Windermere area. In fact, Windermere was the home address of almost half the homes on the list of high-value houses.

Winter Park was home to about a third of the houses; Orlando had 14 of them. Celebration, Daytona Beach, Longwood and Maitland each had a house on the list.

"When you're at parties, the people in Winter Park can't understand why anyone would live in Windermere, and the people in Windermere can't understand why anyone would live in Winter Park," said Bill Sullivan, owner of Potomac Land.

While the Windermere area is known for gated communities and sprawling estates, Winter Park has the charm of Park Avenue shopping, local parks and Rollins College, said Scott Hillman, a longtime Winter Park real-estate broker.

"We still have a lot of distressed properties to go through, and a lot of them are pending sales," Hillman said of the Winter Park market.

Lake Nona still has the estate of professional golfer Annika Sörenstam, which is ranked 31st on the list with a value of \$4.7 million. But market values dropped significantly enough in the Medical City area to push several houses off this year's list.

Orange County Property Appraiser Rick Singh shaved off 26 percent of the market value of a Lake Nona country-club estate home that had been valued at

\$4.3 million in 2013. And the appraiser's office reduced the market value of the mansion next to it by 19 percent. The office cited falling prices among sales of comparable multimillion-dollar houses in that neighborhood.

Overall, Singh did not increase the market value of mansions as much as appraisers elsewhere in the state increased value of pricey residential real estate. The office could not address why high-end real estate in Orlando would appreciate less than in South Florida.

"I can't figure out why it would happen," Sullivan said. "It's an anomaly, and it doesn't make any sense."

In Central Florida — primarily Orange County — the median market value of the top 100 houses was \$4.7 million, up 2 percent from a year earlier. Across the state — and mostly in South Florida — the median price for the top 500 houses was \$16.9 million, and that was up 9 percent from a year earlier, according to Potomac Land.

Though the top 100 houses increased only 2 percent in value on the tax rolls from 2013 to 2014, all single-family houses in Orange County increased 14 percent during that time, according to the Orange Property Appraiser's Office. The office did not indicate why higher-end properties were slower to recover from the downturn, but those houses have not attracted investor buyers the way lower-end houses have. Values of multimillion-dollar houses in Lake Nona were downgraded to reflect the market there, the office stated.

New to the list this year are the home of longtime baseball pitcher Frank Viola, houses in Disney's Golden Oak community and a mansion that accidentally spawned a Central Florida top spot for weddings.

The best-known and most valuable of this year's new mansions has been 14 years in the making. The property was also the center of a controversy that had rocked Winter Park.

Cruise-travel entrepreneur Wayne Heller and his wife purchased a property on the Winter Park Chain of Lakes in 2000 and began demolishing the historic, French farmhouse-style home located there. The 70-year-old house had been designed by acclaimed architect James Gamble Rogers during the 1930s. After local residents protested the demolition, the city halted wrecking crews, and then a group raised funds to move it across Interlachen Drive.

The relocated house, known as Casa Feliz, has become one of Central Florida's most popular venues for weddings and other events.

In its place is Heller's new home, which reflects the architecture of nearby Rollins College and the eclectic Vizcaya estate in Miami. Heller served as the general contractor on what is now Winter Park's largest house, with more than 20,000 square feet of living area on 3.5 acres.

"Two years from now, people will say, 'Wow,'" Heller said in 2011. "It will be twice as large as the Gamble Rogers house, and we're taking great care to see that the detail is appropriate."

Valued at \$6.4 million, Heller's house ranks 14th on the list of 100.

Also new on this year's list happens to be another house designed by Rogers. Merrywood, as the house at 1020 Palmer Ave. in Winter Park is known, is about the same age as Casa Feliz. It has more than 7,300 square feet and got bumped onto the list this year because of a substantial increase in Winter Park land values. At 10.8 acres, the land is worth about three times more than the house. The land and house together came in at 92nd on the list of 100.

Rising land values also boosted the estate of three-time All Star pitcher Frank Viola onto the list. Situated on more than 13 acres fronting the Butler Chain of Lakes off South Apopka-Vineland Road in south Orange, the famed pitcher's house includes more than 11,000 square feet, a pool, spa, tennis courts, boat-house and summer kitchen. Even with all the water views, acreage, space and amenities, the 15-year-old house ranked only 94th on the list.

Also new to the list are two landlocked houses known more for their neighborhood than anything else.

The houses, both completed in 2013, are in the gated residential development named for the Los Angeles-area ranch that once belonged to Walt Disney: Golden Oak. Located next to Disney's Fort Wilderness campsites, the gated Golden Oak development offers buyers perks including passes to Disney theme parks, access to early and late park hours, and transportation to the parks.

The Golden Oak houses are not owned by people who live there year-round. In fact, only 45 percent of the Orlando-area houses on the list are owner-occupied, homestead-exemption records show. In Windermere, slightly more than half of owners are full-timers. And in Winter Park, 78 percent of the mansion owners claimed those houses as their primary residences.

mshanklin@tribune.com or 407-420-5538

Central Florida's 10 Most Valuable Homes

- \$9.98M**
Owner: Vince Carter
Where: Isleworth
Size: 30,742 s.f.
- \$8.6M**
Owner: Richard Ullman
Where: Isleworth
Size: 27,509 s.f.
- \$8.26M**
Owner: Jeffery Gelman
Where: Windermere
Size: 26,023 s.f.
- \$8.25M**
Owner: Raju Mantena
Where: Windermere
Size: 23,493 s.f.
- \$8.0M**
Owner: Anthony Palma
Where: Windermere
Size: 22,234 s.f.
- \$7.7M**
Owner: Bettie Whitaker
Where: Isleworth
Size: 27,074 s.f.
- \$7.58M**
Owner: Shaquille O'Neal
Where: Isleworth
Size: 28,926 s.f.
- \$7.5M**
Owner: Mark Holecek
Where: Isleworth
Size: 19,256 s.f.
- \$7.2M**
Owner: Grant Hill
Where: Isleworth
Size: 18,239 s.f.
- \$7.1M**
Owner: Richard Workman
Where: Isleworth
Size: 17,098