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Dog Friendly

What are the safest/most dog friendly places to live in/around Seattle?

I'm a web programmer from Los Angeles looking to work and live around Seattle, Washington. My wife is a singer, so she'll be looking to perform at coffee shops, etc. We also have a little 15lbs. dog, so we're looking for a place that is safe, not too expensive, and is friendly to dogs. Can anyone suggest some good neighborhoods to live in that isn't too far from the city? Thanks!

Redmond strikes me as a good starting place, based on your criteria. I'm sure you've heard of it, if for no other reason than because it's the home of Microsoft. It's a suburb: not the closest one, but only about 15 miles (as the car drives) from downtown Seattle.

- Safe: no problem there. Typical suburban environment, with a higher concentration of McMansions and techies than most.

- Not too expensive: It's hardly cheap, but the other options that are potentially more inspiring are generally going to be even more expensive. A good neighborhood in Seattle proper is outlandishly expensive nowadays.

- Friendly to dogs: Redmond is home to the largest off-leash dog park in the Seattle area, at Marymoor Park. While it's not nearly as much a doggie-Eden as it was ten years ago, it's still sufficiently attractive that people from Seattle drive out for the afternoon. There are other off-leash areas in Seattle and scattered about, but they're not wildly attractive, generally.

- Not too far from the city: A bit of a tougher call. It's not in Seattle, and - by local standards - would be considered "out there." The primary route to Seattle is Highway 520 across the Evergreen Point Floating Bridge, which is not the most favorable route from a traffic standpoint. On the other hand, some positives:

* If you're used to driving around Los Angeles, I suspect you'll consider it a piece of cake.

* The traffic issue really is at its worst at rush hour. Somewhat oddly, the traffic is worse going from Seattle to Redmond in the morning, and vice-versa in the evening (apparently Seattle is more a bedroom community to Redmond than the reverse, nowadays).

* Of course, if you wind up working in Redmond, or elsewhere on the Eastside (which seems somewhat likely, considering your field), you're avoiding a traffic issue instead of creating one by living in Redmond.

* So far as going to Seattle for nightlife, you'll generally avoid the worst traffic, at least so long as there's not a major event going on.

The performing-in-coffee-shops scene in Redmond is, I think, fairly minimal. That's going to be more right in Seattle. Being geographically separated from "the scene" would probably be a handicap, though your wife could drive to downtown/Belltown/the U District or wherever without major difficulty.

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