

LIVING IN

Larchmont, N.Y.: An Affluent Suburb on Long Island Sound

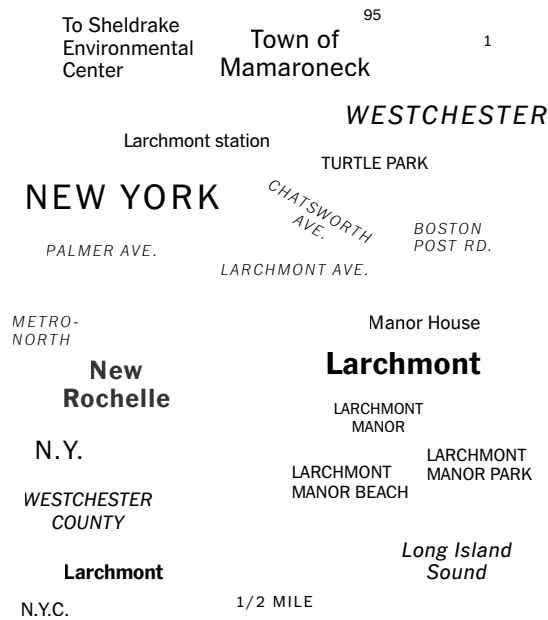
With a walkable downtown, spacious homes and proximity to Manhattan, this Westchester village has seen an influx of city buyers during the pandemic.

By Janine Clements

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When New York City went into lockdown in March, Lauren and Jason Laschewer fled Brooklyn with their three children for Westchester County.

Mrs. Laschewer, 37, a senior account executive at a promotional marketing agency, had recently learned she was pregnant, and she and Mr. Laschewer, 38, a global business development manager for Amazon Web Services, realized they were outgrowing their tiny apartment in Carroll Gardens.



By The New York Times

“We didn’t want to let go of the Brooklyn lifestyle, but needed extra space,” she said. “We wanted to live somewhere where there was a short commute to the city, with a town and shops you could walk to.”

The 10-year-old, five-bedroom colonial they bought for \$1.8 million in the Brook neighborhood near Larchmont Village was move-in ready. “We had only seen two other properties, but it checked all the boxes, so we jumped on it,” Mrs. Laschewer said. “It was completely out of character for me to make such a speedy decision on something so important, but it was the perfect house in the perfect neighborhood.”

Larchmont — an affluent, walkable suburb on Long Island Sound situated about 20 miles from Midtown Manhattan — and the larger area within the 10538 ZIP code served by the Larchmont post office have seen an influx of buyers like the Laschewers, who made their move sooner than intended during the pandemic, drawn by the spacious homes with big yards, waterfront access, good schools and a vibrant downtown.

During the 19th century, the village was a popular summer retreat for wealthy Manhattanites. Today, it is one of the wealthiest areas in the country, offering a friendly and sophisticated small-town atmosphere to those who can afford the homes and the property taxes.

“Life in Larchmont mimics the lifestyle we were used to. We can still walk to get a coffee and go to the shops or the park, but we have much more space and a yard for our children to play in,” Mrs. Laschewer said. “I love the laid-back, small-town vibe and how much easier it has been to make friends compared with living in Brooklyn, despite being in a pandemic. Everyone has gone out of their way to make us feel very welcome.”



Boston Post Road, a main thoroughfare in the village, offers a variety of shops and restaurants. Jane Beiles for The New York Times

Elka Raved, 48, an agent with Douglas Elliman, has lived in the Larchmont area for 15 years. Her husband, Scott Raved, 50, who manages construction projects for a music-venue company, grew up there, and “when we first met in the city,” she said, “we would go sailing in Larchmont every weekend.”

They ended up buying a 1920s cottage in Larchmont Gardens for \$650,000 and renovating it. They still live there, with their two children and two dogs.

“Where else can you live where there’s a beach that’s so close to the city?” Mrs. Raved said. “It also has everything you could possibly want, whether it’s somewhere great to eat or buy clothes for your kids. You can even get a tailored suit if you go to Mancino’s.”

A strong sense of community is also part of Larchmont’s appeal, she noted: “The volunteering effort in Larchmont is incredible. Whenever there are food or clothing drives, there is a flood of help from the community.”

That support has been crucial during the pandemic, as restaurants in particular have struggled to remain open. One Larchmont, a nonprofit focused on revitalizing the business district, founded in 2019 by locals Melissa Manice and her husband, Charles Manice, has worked with the village’s mayor, Lorraine Walsh, to develop creative solutions for outdoor dining.

“Because of the incredible generosity of the community,” Mrs. Manice said, “we raised almost \$350,000 to keep restaurants open through summer, and have been able to provide igloos and greenhouses for the winter.”



1 BEACH AVENUE | A six-bedroom waterfront house with five full bathrooms and two half bathrooms, built in 1901 on 0.61 acres, listed for \$5.695 million. 914-772-5389 Jane Beiles for The New York Times

What You'll Find

The village of Larchmont is in the town of Mamaroneck, in southeastern Westchester, with a population of nearly 6,100. The 1.1-square-mile area is bounded by the Metro-North Railroad tracks to the north, Long Island Sound to the south and the city of New Rochelle to the southwest. Boston Post Road, a main thoroughfare, divides the Larchmont Manor area to the south from the business district to the north.

“Houses in Larchmont tend to be a mix of Tudors, Victorians and colonials, as well as split-levels, and some condos,” said Mrs. Raved, of Douglas Elliman. The Larchmont Manor neighborhood, near the water, is where you’ll find many of the grand 19th-century vacation homes, including the Manor House, the oldest home in the village.

The village center, north of Boston Post Road, is filled with independently owned boutiques, restaurants, gourmet takeout spots, gift shops and art galleries. Starbucks has also claimed a spot. While a few storefronts are empty, new businesses like the Idea Kitchen, a co-working space, have sprung up during the pandemic, and the weekend farmers’ market is always bustling.

The slew of restaurants offers assorted cuisine options, from classic Italian at Lusardi’s, a village stalwart, to Indian food at Coriander and pastries at La Parisienne French Bakery Cafe. New additions include the Grange, a cafe on Larchmont Avenue, and Billy & Pete’s Social, a family-friendly restaurant near the train station in Mamaroneck.



6 PRYER LANE | A five-bedroom waterfront house with four bathrooms and two half bathrooms, built in 1929 on 1.02 acres, listed for \$5.5 million. 914-833-0420 Jane Beiles for The New York Times

Larchmont also offers a variety of recreational activities. Residents have access to an ice rink and swimming pool at the middle school, as well as multiple parks with sports fields, tennis courts, playgrounds and picnic areas. Larchmont Manor Park, a 13-acre green space, overlooks the Sound, with meandering paths and rock formations along the shoreline.

North of the railroad tracks is the Leatherstocking Trail, a 2.5-mile walking trail, and Sheldrake Environmental Center, a wildlife sanctuary.

During warm weather, sailing, paddle-boarding and kayaking are all popular, and Larchmont residents can join Manor Beach, a small beach with a variety of facilities. There are also a couple of private clubs: Larchmont Yacht Club, home to the annual Larchmont Race Week, and Larchmont Shore Club, which stretches along seven acres of shoreline.

What You'll Pay

In early January, Trulia showed 54 homes listed for sale in Larchmont, from a one-bedroom condo on Palmer Avenue for \$149,500 to a six-bedroom house on the water for \$5.695 million, with \$94,000 in annual property taxes.

The average sales price for a single-family home in 2020, through late November, was just over \$1.2 million, up from \$1.13 million in December 2019, according to Trulia.



520 HOMMOCKS ROAD | A five-bedroom house with four full bathrooms and two half bathrooms, built in 1953 on 0.7 acres, listed for \$2.295 million. 914-263-4210 Jane Beiles for The New York Times

“When the pandemic hit, everything sold quickly,” Mrs. Raved said. “Even the houses over \$4 million that were sitting empty were snapped up by families desperate to move out of the city.” Months later, inventory remains low, “partly due to the market being slow over the holidays, but also due to the Covid pandemic,” she said. “However, we’re are expecting a very busy second quarter.”

The Vibe

Larchmont is a place where people make an effort to know their neighbors and live locally, as Billy Roosen was reminded during the pandemic.

Mr. Roosen, 47, who works in finance, has lived in Larchmont with his wife, Axelle Roosen, 48, and their two children for nine years. As the pandemic raged, he began baking bread and pastries. “After friends in the neighborhood tried what I was making, they encouraged me to set up on my own,” said Mr. Roosen, who started a bakery called Grain Works Bread out of his home in October.

“I never expected it to be so successful,” he said. “The community is really supportive to small businesses and start-ups.”

The Schools

The Mamaroneck Union Free School District serves about 5,554 students in the village of Larchmont, the town of Mamaroneck and part of the village of Mamaroneck. One of the six schools in the district, the Chatsworth Avenue School, is in Larchmont,

serving students in kindergarten through fifth grade. The student population is 68 percent white, 22 percent Hispanic, 3.4 percent Asian, 2.4 percent Black and 4.2 percent multiracial.

On 2019 state tests, 72 percent of students met standards in math, compared with 47 percent statewide; 68 percent met standards in English language arts, compared with 45 percent statewide.

In 2020, Mamaroneck High School enrolled 1,664 students. Mean SAT scores in 2019 were 600 in reading and writing, compared with 531 statewide, and 604 in math, compared with 533 statewide.

The French-American School of New York, a private bilingual school, has a campus on Larchmont Avenue. Another private option is Saints John and Paul School, a coed Catholic school for students in kindergarten through eighth grade.



Restaurants along Larchmont Avenue have been able to stay open this winter despite the pandemic, thanks to plastic igloos that allow outdoor dining. Jane Beiles for The New York Times

The Commute

A big appeal of living in Larchmont is its proximity to the city, even if many residents are currently working from home. The trip from Larchmont to Grand Central Terminal on the Metro-North New Haven line takes about 40 minutes, although morning and evening express trains will get you there in 33

minutes. Drivers can take I-95, which runs through Larchmont and straight into the city. The Hutchinson River Parkway is also easily accessible.

The History

Larchmont got its name from the larch trees growing around the Manor House, built around 1797 as the country home of Peter Jay Munro, a nephew of John Jay, the second governor of New York State and first chief justice of the United States. The house faced Boston Post Road, so Munro's Scottish gardener imported some larch seeds from Scotland and planted them to screen the property from the dusty road. Edward Knight Collins, who bought the estate in 1845, called it Larchmont; the village was incorporated in 1891.

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A correction was made on Jan. 15, 2021: An earlier version of this article misidentified the place in which the homes of several families, a restaurant, a house for sale and a school are. It also misstated the number of students served by a school district, the number of the district's schools in the Village of Larchmont and who can join a beach. The homes of the Laschewer and the Raved families, Billy & Pete's Social, the house at 515 Weaver Street and Saint John and Paul School are in The Town of

Mamaroneck, not the Village of Larchmont (the photo of the house for sale has been removed). One school in the Mamaroneck Union Free School District is in the Village of Larchmont, not six; the district serves 5,554 students, not 1,800; and Manor Beach is open to the residents of the Village of Larchmont, but is not public.

When we learn of a mistake, we acknowledge it with a correction. If you spot an error, please let us know at corrections@nytimes.com. [Learn more](#)

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