

MANSION GLOBAL

Small Town, Giant Houses: Inside the Billionaire Haven 20 Minutes From Mar-a-Lago

Manalapan, Florida, is on a streak of trophy-home sales topping \$50 million



Manalapan is home to some of South Florida's most expensive residential sales.
DANIEL PETRONI PHOTOGRAPHY



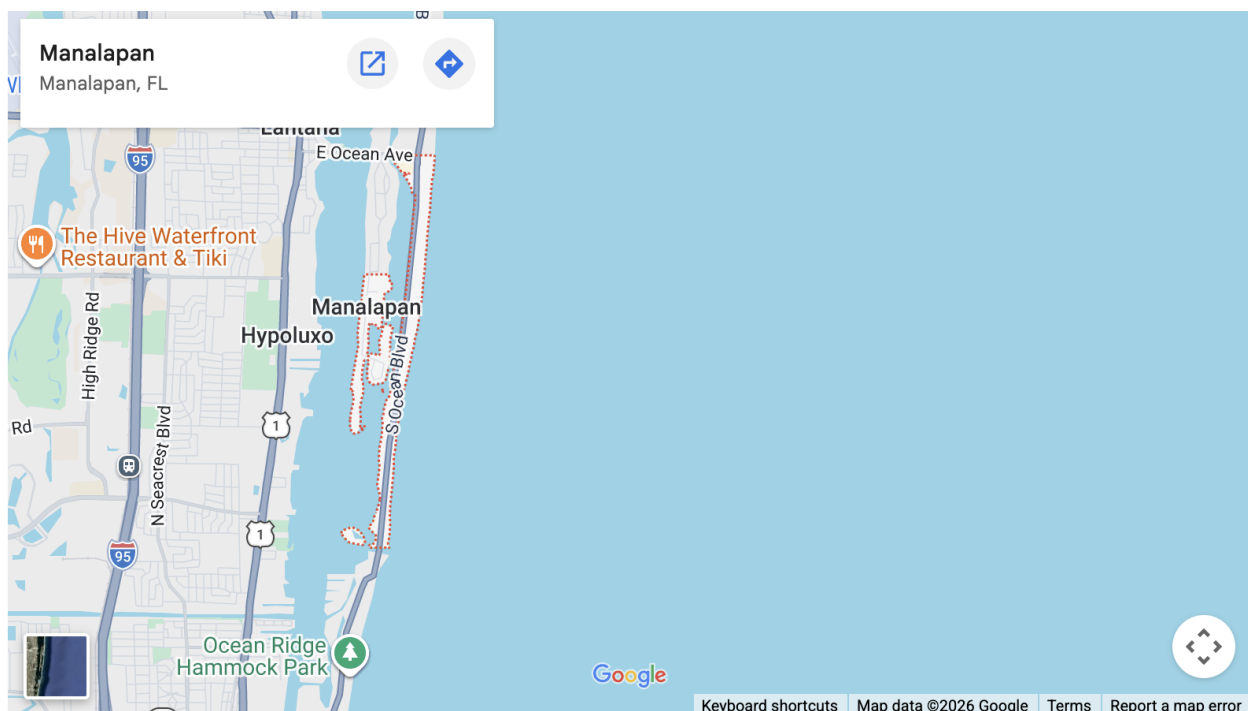
Move over Palm Beach—a little stretch of South Florida coast 13 miles south of Mar-a-Lago has been drawing billionaires and logging a streak of [megamansion](#) sales.

In 2022, Oracle co-founder Larry Ellison set the high-water mark in Manalapan, a tiny town of less than 500 full-time residents between Palm Beach and Boca Raton, when he bought a compound called “Gemini” for \$173 million. And the trophy deals keep rolling in. In December, a [billionaire optometrist](#) paid [\\$65 million](#) for a newly built estate, the

biggest deal since Ellison moved to town. That was eclipsed in short order by a megamansion built on Billy Joel's former Manalapan property, which sold in February for \$68.3 million.

MORE: [The Rich and Famous Are Selling Their Ski Mansions in Secret. Are These Off-Market Deals Worth It?](#)

Reportedly named after the New Jersey town of Manalapan, the area dates to 1889, though the town was officially incorporated in 1931 by yachtsman and railroad executive Harold Stirling Vanderbilt. Today, the coastal enclave is defined by its privacy, sprawling waterfront estates and some of South Florida's most expensive residential sales.



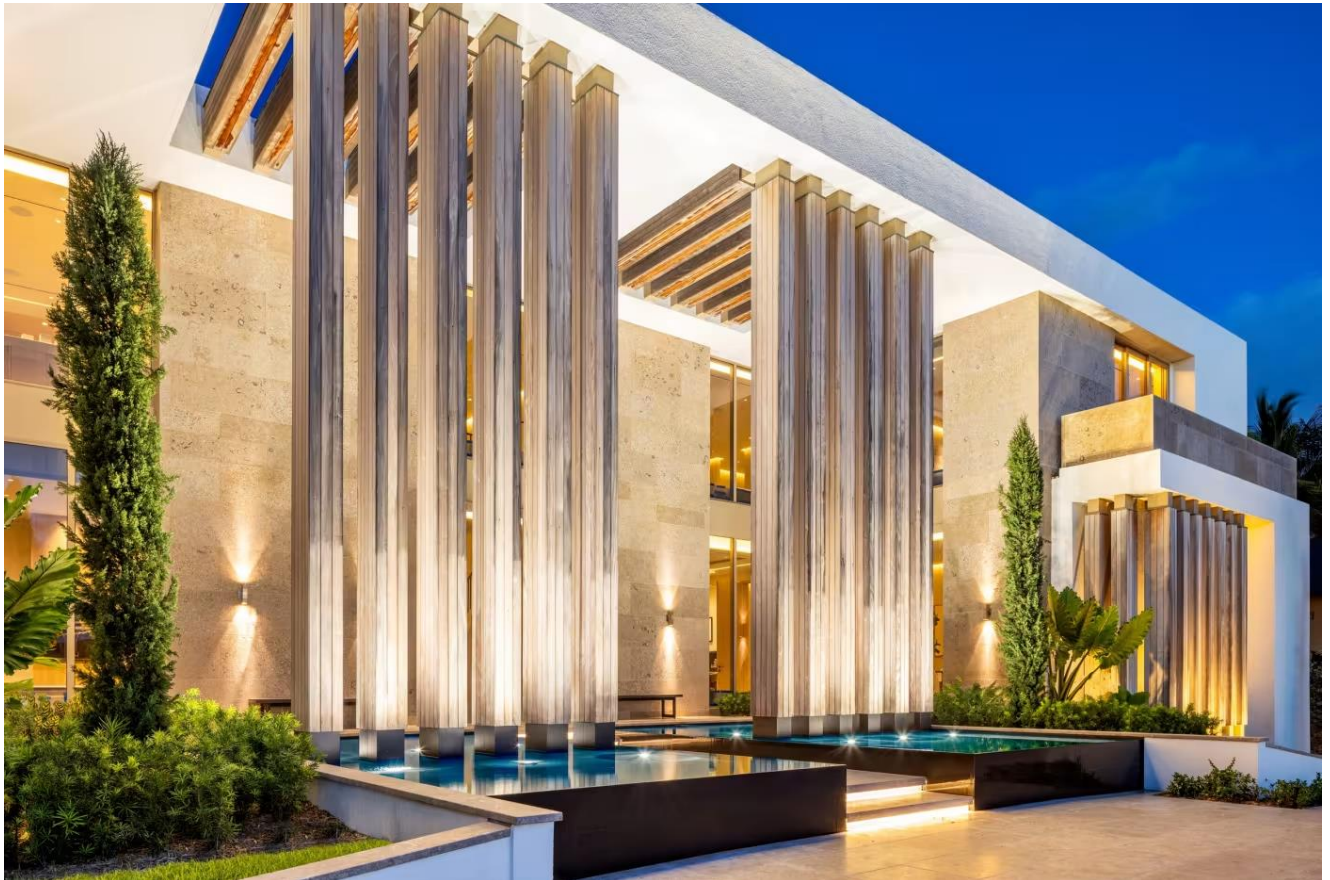
Spanning roughly 2.4 square miles, the community is small even by Palm Beach County standards. The town stretches from the Atlantic Ocean to the Intracoastal Waterway, allowing many homes to command water views on one or both sides—an increasingly rare feature even in South Florida's top-tier markets, according to Connor Faroni, the owner of Re/Max Prestige Realty in Wellington, Florida. The town comprises two areas: a slim stretch of land along Florida State Road A1A and part of Hypoluxo Island.

Manalapan is “designed as a private oasis,” said Margit Brandt, a senior luxury real estate adviser at Premier Estate Properties, Christie's International Real Estate in Palm Beach.

“The estates almost feel like private islands within themselves,” she said.

Prices, Housing Stock and Outlook

Manalapan's housing stock consists almost entirely of single-family homes, with only a handful of [townhouses](#) and [condominiums](#), said Paul Rabinowitz, the managing director of the Agency in Palm Beach. The town has approximately 210 homes—a mix of older legacy estates and modern compounds. Many are on waterfront lots with both Atlantic Ocean and Intracoastal frontage.



Brandt added that parcels can range from 1 to 3 acres with 100 to more than 300 feet of ocean frontage, along with up to 20,000 square feet of living space.

Given its small size and exclusivity, Faroni said that transaction volume is naturally limited, with just 10 recorded sales in 2025, citing MLS data. The median sale price for those deals reached \$8.75 million last year, while the average sale price climbed to \$22.7 million—a 36% increase from 2024.

Mansion Global Boutique: [Looking to Restock Your Kitchen? Oriane Shapira, Chef of Michelin-Starred Shmnoné, Has Advice](#)

At the top of the market, Ellison's Gemini estate spans 16 acres of oceanfront land spanning 85,000 square feet. The home, once owned by the Mexican socialite Gloria Guinness, reportedly has 33 bedrooms and a sports complex.

In recent days, a [sea-to-lake estate built in 2024 traded hands](#) for \$51.67 million. Covering more than 25,500 square feet, the mansion sits on a 1.5-acre double-frontage waterfront lot and offers 172 feet of frontage. It has six bedrooms, eight full bathrooms and five half baths, an outdoor pool, plus another one indoors.

"The town's small size makes overdevelopment virtually impossible, as there is no room for new construction," said Christopher Leavitt of Douglas Elliman, who represented the seller in the \$51.67 million deal.



Given Manalapan's small size and desirable location, Faroni said he doesn't anticipate property prices declining.

Brandt said she expected home prices to appreciate because they offer better value than those in Palm Beach. "Manalapan presents a unique opportunity for people who are not interested in Miami but are interested in Palm Beach," she said. "Yet they want better value on price per square foot as well as more privacy and security that comes with the estates being plotted all the way from the ocean to the lake."

Who Lives There

Manalapan draws a mix of couples, retirees, business leaders, and other ultra-wealthy residents. Besides Ellison, notable homeowners include life coach Tony Robbins, Fox News host [Sean Hannity](#) and WeatherTech founder David F. MacNeil. Billy Joel is a former resident and sold his estate in 2024 for \$42.6 million.

Lifestyle and Amenities

Faroni said that living in Manalapan means enjoying a private, estate-like setting with virtually no commercial development. The enclave maintains its own police department and counts Eau Palm Beach Resort & Spa, owned by Ellison, as its primary amenity. The resort offers a spa and multiple restaurants, including Nobu and Angle, an upscale restaurant serving modern American cuisine.

From Mansion Global Boutique: [Looking to Restock Your Kitchen? Oriane Shapira, Chef of Michelin-Starred Shmoné, Has Advice](#)



“The town remains exceptionally secluded,” Faroni said. “There is no such thing as a ‘downtown’ here. Residents head to Palm Beach with its Worth Avenue to shop and for the nightlife and restaurants.”

For education, Brandt said Manalapan is within reach of several highly ranked private schools. These include Gulf Stream School, serving pre-K through eighth grade and located in Delray Beach, about 20 minutes away, and Palm Beach-area options such as

Palm Beach Day Academy (pre-K through eighth), Oxbridge Academy (sixth through 12th), and the Greene School (kindergarten through 12).

Brandt added that many of Manalapan's most significant amenities are found within the estates themselves. "They have private beach tunnels, spas, salons, tennis courts, guest houses, private docks for boats, multiple pools, movie theaters, security facilities for guards," she said. "They're destinations on their own."