

LOCALS ONLY · REGION NO. 02

Greenville

A million-person metro with a walkable downtown, three mountain golf clubs above it, and two very different ideas of the good life at the valley floor.

A field guide to 5 communities, each scored out of 100.
Reported by Damian Hall · Current to June 2026

THE BRIEF

Greenville, at a glance.

Greenville crossed one million residents in its metro this cycle, the first South Carolina metro to do it, and its downtown is the quiet envy of the Southeast. The luxury map splits cleanly: climb the Blue Ridge escarpment for the Cliffs mountain clubs, or stay at the valley floor for club and village life minutes from Main Street.

The three mountain clubs share the Cliffs membership and the cool-summer, long-view lifestyle. Thornblade and Hartness answer a different question entirely, for the buyer who wants downtown in fifteen to twenty minutes and is willing to trade altitude for it.

THE SCORECARD

Thornblade	FAZIO GOLF · IN-TOWN	83/100
Cliffs Valley	NICKLAUS GOLF · FOOTHILLS	82/100
Hartness	VILLAGE · HOTEL · NO GOLF	82/100
The Cliffs at Glassy	MOUNTAINTOP GOLF	79/100
The Cliffs at Mountain Park	GARY PLAYER GOLF	79/100

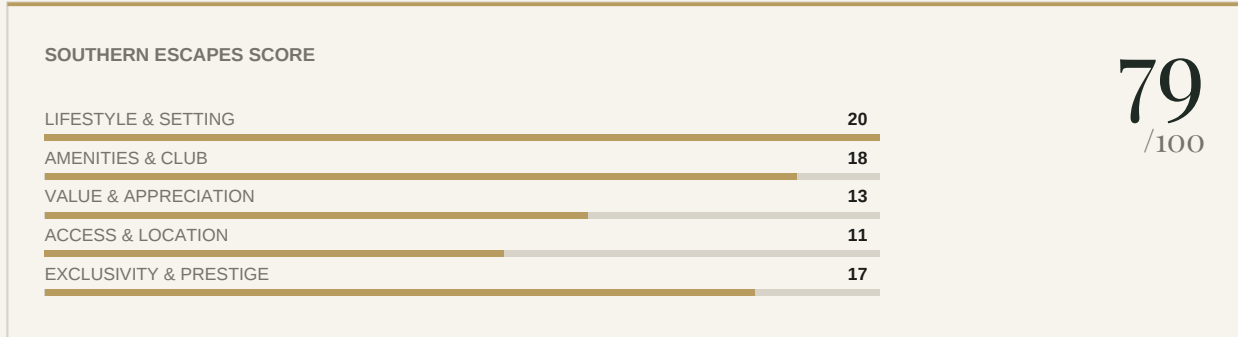
HOW THE SOUTHERN ESCAPES SCORE WORKS

Every community is rated out of 100 from five pillars worth twenty points each: Lifestyle & Setting, Amenities & Club, Value & Appreciation, Access & Location, and Exclusivity & Prestige. It is one editor's working opinion, not an appraisal. On this plateau of addresses, a 79 is not a failing grade.

No. 01

The Cliffs at Glassy

South Carolina's only mountaintop golf community, where a 3,200-foot perch does what no amenity budget can buy.



Glassy sits on top of Glassy Mountain above Landrum, the only mountaintop golf community in the state. Summers run cooler than the valley, the views reach seventy-five miles on a clear day, and a mountain-edge chapel and weekly member gatherings give it a tight, almost cult-like social culture. The Tom Jackson course includes a par-three thirteenth that has landed on national lists of the most scenic holes in America.

Homes run from roughly \$800K to \$4M-plus, with homesites from the low six figures. As a Cliffs club it opens all seven communities. The honest cost is the mountain itself: Greenville is a thirty-minute minimum, the roads demand respect in winter ice, and resale runs at a patient pace. You buy here for the setting, and the setting delivers.

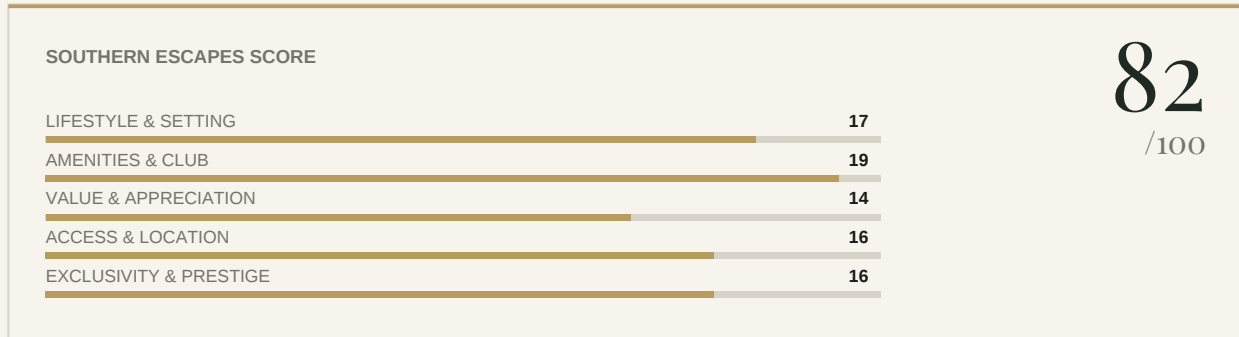
<p>HOMES</p> <p>~\$800K to \$4M+</p>	<p>THE DRAW</p> <p>Only mountaintop golf club in SC</p>	<p>MEMBERSHIP</p> <p>Cliffs: one card, seven clubs</p>
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<p>WHY LOCALS RATE IT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A singular mountaintop setting and cooler summers • Intimate, genuine community culture • Full Cliffs network access multiplies the value 	<p>WHAT TO WEIGH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thirty-plus minutes to Greenville; winter mountain roads • Buyer's market with longer days on market • Smaller home-club footprint than valley clubs
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No. 02

Cliffs Valley

The largest and most established Cliffs mountain club, with a Nicklaus Signature course and the best valley access of the three.



Valley sits in the Blue Ridge foothills above Travelers Rest, which has become a destination town in its own right with the Swamp Rabbit Trail, breweries, and a real restaurant strip. The community is the largest of the Cliffs mountain clubs, with big lots in mountain, golf, creek, and waterfall settings, and a Jack Nicklaus Signature course as the headline. It carries a mature, established feel and a full social calendar.

Homes run from the \$700s into the seven figures. The location is the edge: roughly twenty to twenty-five minutes to downtown Greenville and minutes to a walkable town, which is rare for a mountain club. As with all Cliffs addresses, model the membership and HOA carry together. For a buyer who wants the Cliffs lifestyle without surrendering quick access, Valley is the balanced pick.

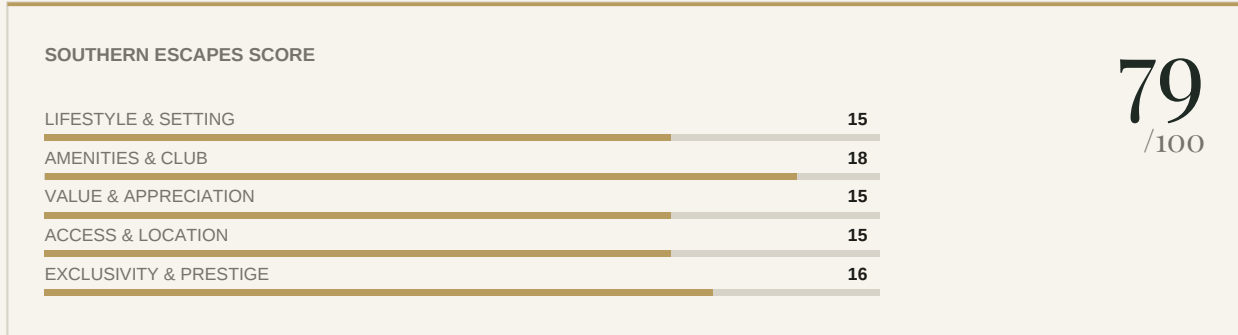
<p>HOMES</p> <p>~\$700K to \$5M+</p>	<p>THE DRAW</p> <p>Nicklaus Signature golf, big lots</p>	<p>MEMBERSHIP</p> <p>Cliffs: one card, seven clubs</p>
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<p>WHY LOCALS RATE IT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The strongest course nameplate on the Greenville shortlist • Best access of the mountain clubs, near Travelers Rest • Large lots and a mature, well-run community 	<p>WHAT TO WEIGH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Still a buyer's market; inventory can sit • Mountain prices appreciate slower than in-town • Membership plus HOA carry adds up
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No. 03

The Cliffs at Mountain Park

The newest Cliffs club in the Upstate, built around a Gary Player Signature course ranked among the state's best.



Mountain Park, along the North Saluda River in Marietta, opened its Gary Player Signature course in 2013, making it the youngest Cliffs course in South Carolina with the newest infrastructure. It plays as a more open, links-style test, the most demanding of the Upstate Cliffs trio, and Golf Digest has ranked it among the best in the state. A smaller enclave called Golf Ridge offers semi-custom, lock-and-leave homes for buyers who want the golf without a big lot or a long build.

Pricing spans a wide band, from undeveloped lots into the mid-seven figures for estate homes. It is the smallest-feeling of the three mountain clubs but carries full Cliffs network access and a shorter drive to Greenville than Glassy. For a serious golfer who wants modern bones and a Player course, this is the one.

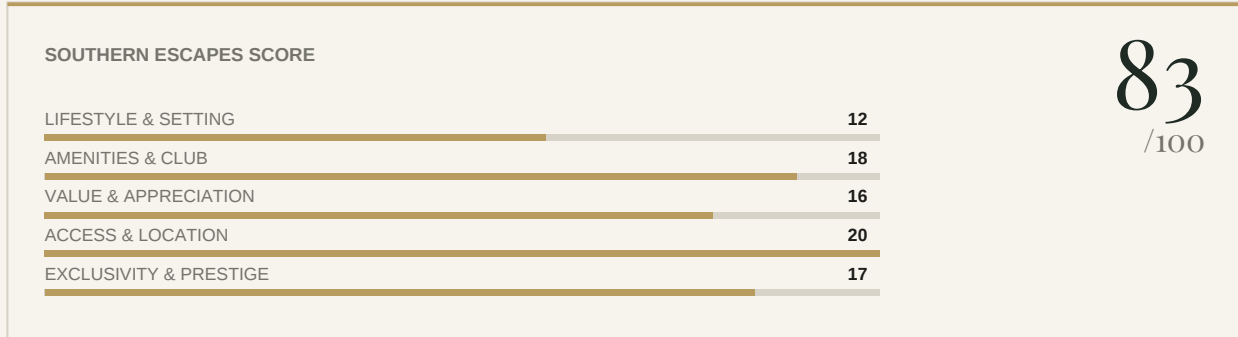
<p>HOMES</p> <p>Lots to ~\$3.6M</p>	<p>THE DRAW</p> <p>Gary Player course, newest Cliffs infrastructure</p>	<p>MEMBERSHIP</p> <p>Cliffs: one card, seven clubs</p>
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<p>WHY LOCALS RATE IT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newest infrastructure of the Upstate Cliffs clubs • A serious, Golf Digest-ranked Player course • Golf Ridge offers a simpler entry point 	<p>WHAT TO WEIGH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smallest community feel of the three • Links style will not suit every golfer • Still half an hour from downtown Greenville
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No. 04

Thornblade

The Upstate's most prestigious in-town golf club, Tom Fazio greens and tour pedigree, fifteen minutes from downtown.



Thornblade is woven into the established neighborhoods of Greer, a Tom Fazio course maintained to tour standards thanks to decades hosting the BMW Charity Pro-Am. Lucas Glover grew up playing here and the Haas family home overlooks the sixth green. This is not a gated wilderness escape; it is an integrated suburb where club membership, eleven tennis courts, a pool, and a near-full dining room are the differentiators. Membership is separate from owning, which gives buyers flexibility.

Homes range from the \$400s to \$1.5M-plus, with townhomes and villas providing a lower entry. The setting is the trade: lots are small and the views are neighborhood, not mountain. What you buy instead is location, fifteen minutes to downtown Greenville, the airport, BMW, and Furman, plus a genuinely liquid resale market that mountain communities cannot match.

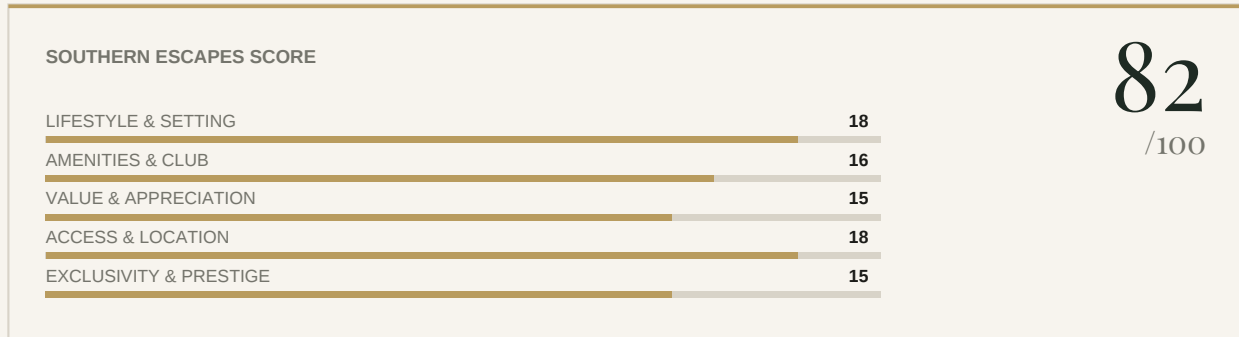
<p>HOMES</p> <p>~\$400K to \$1.5M+</p>	<p>THE DRAW</p> <p>Tom Fazio course, tour-grade conditioning</p>	<p>MEMBERSHIP</p> <p>Separate club; figures by inquiry</p>
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<p>WHY LOCALS RATE IT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unbeatable location for working professionals • Fazio course with real professional-golf pedigree • Liquid, faster-moving resale market 	<p>WHAT TO WEIGH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suburban setting with no dramatic scenery • Small lots; homes sit close together • Club membership is not included with the house
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No. 05

Hartness

Greenville's only New Urbanist village, a walkable town with a boutique hotel, an acclaimed restaurant, and a 180-acre preserve.



Hartness is a traditional-neighborhood development on the Eastside, built on the Hartness family's old farmland: front porches, alley garages, a walkable village center, and roughly forty percent of the land kept as a 180-acre preserve with ten miles of trails. The on-property Hotel Hartness and its restaurant, Patterson Kitchen and Bar, are the rare amenities that draw outside visitors and have collected Wine Spectator and OpenTable recognition. There is no golf course, and that is the point, or the dealbreaker, depending on the buyer.

Homes run from around \$799K for cottages to roughly \$4.5M for grand estates, twenty minutes from downtown. Amenity access generally comes with ownership rather than a six-figure initiation, and a wine house and additional village tenants are opening in 2026. For a design-forward buyer or an empty-nester who wants a hotel and a great table at the end of the street, nothing else in Greenville is close.

<p>HOMES</p> <p>~\$799K to \$4.5M</p>	<p>THE DRAW</p> <p>Hotel Hartness, Patterson, 180-acre preserve</p>	<p>MEMBERSHIP</p> <p>Amenities with ownership; HOA by inquiry</p>
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<p>WHY LOCALS RATE IT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A genuine walkable village, novel for the Upstate • Hotel, spa, and a credentialed restaurant on the street • Twenty minutes to downtown, no golf initiation required 	<p>WHAT TO WEIGH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No golf, which narrows the luxury buyer pool • Newer market with a less-proven resale track • Eastside location is a longer reach to the airport
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Considering one of these addresses?

Before you tour a single home, an Advisory Conversation tells you which community actually fits the life you are building, and what the move is worth under the new Carolina tax math. Schedule one at calendly.com/damianhallgroup, or run the numbers yourself with the Tax Alpha Calculator at southernescapes.com.

The Southern Escapes Score is an editorial opinion, not an appraisal or investment rating. Price ranges, club fees, and market figures are estimates current to June 2026, drawn from sources believed reliable but not guaranteed, and they change. Confirm any figure with the community and your own advisors before acting on anything you read here.