

Buying in Orient: Water Views, Fishing, Ferry Draw Homebuyers

Ellen Ya | July 18, 2023



Far from the madding crowd, Orient retains the old-time pace that drew the likes of poet Walt Whitman and President Grover Cleveland.

THE SCOOP This tip of the North Fork gained fame 150 years ago as a resort town, and it's still a summer and weekend refuge for many homeowners who come for the fishing and the water views that are never far away, from Long Island Sound to Hallock Bay.

"If you're a water person, it's a very special place," said Ned Baldwin, a chef, boater and fisherman who bought a second home there in 2004. It was a respite option from his busy life as owner of Houseman, a Manhattan restaurant. "What's wonderful about Orient is there's very, very little commerce. It's just people and their homes. That keeps Orient feeling very civilized."

Orient has farm stands, a candy store, the Old Orchard Farm Store for antiques and art and the Orient Country Store, whose slogan is "If we don't have it, you don't need it."

Although the area may be best known for the ferry between Orient Point and New London, Connecticut, there are two main attractions. Orient Beach State Park has a rare maritime forest and is a spot from which four old lighthouses can be seen, including one on nearby Plum Island.

The Oysterponds Historical Society showcases art and collections, including artifacts from local Native Americans, on its campus of buildings dating as far back as 1798.



The community's quaint and low-key profile draws Orient house hunters, real estate agents said.

"This is a lifestyle that people choose," said Compass real estate agent Diane Mollica. "They want to live out of the way."

Orient's population has barely ticked up from fewer than 800 residents in 1880, a figure cited by the Long Island Regional Planning Board report, to about 1,000 in the latest census. Children in prekindergarten through grade six go to the Oysterponds School District and those in grades 7-12 go to Greenport.



What's changed is the availability of homes under \$1 million. In Orient by the Sea, a community launched in 1957 with modest homes, cottages and ranches have sold for seven figures, with mansions sometimes going up in their places.

"Since COVID, homes sell for over \$3 million," said associate broker Nicholas Planamento of Town & Country Real Estate. "Orient without a doubt has a very special cache, and it tends to be for those with better than average means."



CONDOS AND CO-OPS There are currently no condos or co-ops on the market.

SALE PRICES Between July 1, 2022, and June 30, 2023, there were 15 home sales with a median sale price of \$1.645 million, according to OneKey MLS. The low price for that period was \$530,000 and the high was \$3.575 million. During that period a year earlier there were 18 home sales with a median sale price of \$1.465 million. The price range was \$700,000 to \$2.496 million.

OTHER STATS

Town Southold

Area 5.13 square miles

ZIP code 11957

Population 1,037

Median age 62.3

Median household income \$78,048

Median home value \$1.465 million

Monthly LIRR ticket from Greenport \$450

School district, graduation rate Greenport (70.8%)

Parks Orient Point County Park, Orient Beach State Park

Library Floyd Memorial

Hospitals Stony Brook Eastern Long Island Hospital

Sources: 2020 Census; 2020 American Community Survey; OneKey MLS; LIRR, data.nysed.gov

ON THE MARKET



This \$4.25 million home in Orient is on the waterfront. Credit: Bian Botticelli/LI Real Estate Photography

This 1-acre waterfront property has a Nantucket-inspired home with panoramic views of Long Island Sound and more than 130 feet of private beach. The five-bed, 4½-bath house contains more than 5,000 square feet of living space, with a first-floor master suite, wine cellar, vaulted ceilings, family room fireplace and billiard room. Built in 2004, it also has a full-house generator and outdoor shower. Taxes are \$22,176. Nicholas Planamento, Town & Country Real Estate, 631-948-0143.



A farmhouse-style home, built circa 1830s on a half-acre property, has a heated saltwater pool and a full-house generator. The main house has three bedrooms, two full baths, three fireplaces, room for an office and living room French doors that open onto the pool. A detached two-story barn, which has 1½ baths, can be used as an art studio, gym or storage. Taxes are \$9,003. Diane Mollica, Compass, 917-803-1915. \$1,800,000.



This two-bedroom, one-bath cottage sits on a third of an acre in the waterfront development Orient by the Sea. Built in 1965, it is steps away from the development's private beach and has a water view from the backyard. The house has a full basement and a one-car garage. Taxes are \$4,141. Diane Mollica, Compass, 917-803-1915. \$699,000.