

# The World's Happiest Cities

When author Dan Buettner went looking for the world's happiest people on four different continents, he found some really great places to live!



## a. Singapore

With a population of 5.1 million, Singapore is really crowded, and people work very long hours. Yet 95 percent of Singapore residents say they are happy. Subway trains almost always arrive on time. The police are good at their jobs and always ready to help. People in Singapore love that their city is so clean and safe.



## b. Aarhus, Denmark

Although people pay an incredible 68 percent of their salaries in taxes here, they get lots of services for free: healthcare, education, and daycare for young children. The city has lots of entertainment options too, like museums, shopping, and nightlife. For those who love nature, it's only a 15-minute bike ride to incredible beaches and forests.



## c. San Luis Obispo, California, U.S.A.

People here smile and feel happy more than in any other American city. Most people travel less than 10 minutes to work, and there are lots of bike lanes, so commuting is easy. Residents share their joy with others, too. Almost 25 percent of people in San Luis Obispo volunteer to help people in their free time.



## d. Monterrey, Mexico

Although many of its people don't earn high salaries, they still feel rich. People in Monterrey have strong family relationships and very busy social lives. They also have a positive attitude about life - they laugh and stay strong even in times of trouble.



**A.** After reading the article, match the paragraphs (a-d) to the pictures (1-4)

**B.** Read the comments from residents of these four cities. Which city do you think they live in? Write the letter.

1. "I spend a lot of time with my relatives." \_\_\_\_\_
2. "A lot of what I earn goes to the government, but I don't mind." \_\_\_\_\_
3. "I can see great art in my city." \_\_\_\_\_
4. "I often have to spend eleven hours or more in the office." \_\_\_\_\_
5. "I help children with their homework after school for free." \_\_\_\_\_
6. "I try to be cheerful, even when things are going badly." \_\_\_\_\_
7. "I take the train to work, and I'm never late." \_\_\_\_\_
8. "On weekends, I can get out of the city without taking the car." \_\_\_\_\_

**C.** Let's talk.

1. How do you usually get around your neighborhood?
  - How has transportation in your neighborhood changed since you were a child?
2. Do you often use the bus?
  - How have bus services changed since you were younger?
3. How do you feel about riding the train?
  - Were trains different when you were a child? How so?
4. Do you prefer taking a taxi or walking?
  - Were taxis as common when you were younger?
5. How long does it take you to get to the grocery store?
  - Has the way you travel to the grocery store changed over the years?
6. Is the public transportation in your city comfortable?
  - How does the comfort of today's public transportation compare to when you were young?
7. Do you find it easy to use the subway?
  - Were subways available when you were a child? How have they changed?

8. How often do you visit your friends using public transportation?
  - Has visiting friends via public transportation become easier or harder over the years?
9. Is public transportation affordable for you?
  - How have the fares changed since you were younger?
10. Do you feel safe when traveling by bus or train?
  - Was safety a concern in public transportation when you were a child?
11. Are the trains in your city usually on time?
  - Do you remember if trains were as punctual when you were younger?
12. How crowded are the trains during the day?
  - Have you noticed a change in how crowded the trains are now compared to the past?
13. Do you enjoy walking to nearby places?
  - Were there more or fewer places to walk to when you were younger?
14. How do you spend your time while traveling?
  - How did you spend your time while traveling when you were a child?
15. Are there any special seats for elderly people on the bus or train?
  - Were there special seats for elderly people when you were younger?
16. Do you think public transportation is easy to use for seniors?
  - How has accessibility for seniors in public transportation improved over time?
17. How often do you use a bicycle to get around?
  - Was biking as popular when you were a child?
18. Would you like any improvements in public transportation?
  - What improvements have you seen in public transportation over your lifetime?
19. Do you enjoy taking the train for longer trips?
  - How have long train trips changed since you were young?
20. How do you feel about the cleanliness of public transportation in your city?
  - Was public transportation as clean when you were a child?

21. How has the transportation system changed since you were a child?
- What are the biggest improvements or changes you've noticed over the years?
22. How have the fares for public transportation changed since you were younger?
- Do you think the current fares are reasonable compared to the past?

