

Celebrities Who Said Goodbye to California

California dreaming? Nothing wrong with that. The Golden State has a lot to offer.

California has the fifth largest economy in the world. The San Francisco Bay Area alone has [a GDP of \\$535 billion](#) and ranks 19th in the world in economic activity. The state boasts [one of the largest agricultural industries](#) on the planet, producing more grapes, lemons, avocados, peaches, watermelons, and strawberries than any U.S. state.

And let's not forget movies. They contribute about \$50 billion dollars annually to California's economy – and nearly 2.5 million jobs.

Still, California has its downsides. It has the [highest poverty](#) rate in the U.S. It's among the most heavily taxed states – the top income tax bracket is 13.3 percent – and is America's most regulated state, [according to](#) the Mercatus Center at George Mason University. Its biggest cities suffer from housing shortages, mass homelessness, and congestion.

And then there's the whole, er, [poop crisis](#) thing.

So while California has a lot to offer, its demographics are beginning to head in the wrong direction. Last year, the state's population growth [hit a historic low](#). There's talk of a middle class [exodus](#) and the [death of Hollywood](#).

In recent years, there's even a growing number of celebrities saying goodbye to Golden State, including a big name recently. There's nothing wrong with people "[voting with their feet](#)" to establish residence in freedom-friendly states; it's one of the beauties of the American system. It does show, however, that high taxes and regulations can result in wealth

emigration that drives out a lot of capital that supports local jobs and businesses.

Here's a list of just a few stars who've headed for greener (or at least, not quite so "fertilized") pastures in recent years.

Joe Rogan on the Move to Texas

Fresh off of signing [a \\$100 million deal with Spotify](#) in May, comedian and podcaster Joe Rogan made headlines in July by announcing he and his family were moving to Texas.

Rogan has lived in California more than 25 years. He moved to Los Angeles in 1994 and shortly thereafter began appearing TV shows like *News Radio*. As recently as 2018 he [purchased a new home](#) in Bell Canyon for nearly \$5 million. That didn't stop him from leaving though, and he offered some telling reasons.

"I just want to go somewhere in the center of the country ... somewhere where you have a little more freedom," said Rogan. "When you look at the economic despair, when you look at the homelessness problem that has accelerated radically over the last six, seven, ten years ... I think there's too many people here. I think it's not tenable."

Funnyman and podcaster [@joerogan](#) explains why he's moving to [#Texas](#) after more than 25 years in Los Angeles. [pic.twitter.com/GT7l1S2M7j](#)

– Jon Miltimore (Parler: [@Miltimore79](#)) ([@miltimore79](#)) [July 29, 2020](#)

To be clear, California's problems do not stem from its high number of people. Humans are one of the [greatest resources](#) on the planet. California's [problems](#) stem more from a political and regulatory system that has stifled growth, accumulated massive debts, and suffers from a bureaucratic climate that

renders many cities dysfunctional and virtually [unlivable](#).

But whatever his reasons, it's clear the move will save Rogan gobs of cash. Texas has zero state income taxes compared to California's top bracket of 13.3 percent. Apply that rate to \$100 million and ... well, do the math.

Kim and Kanye Saving a Bundle Wyoming

In the fall of 2019, rumors began swirling that Kanye West and wife Kim Kardashian were giving up on California after it was reported that the rapper had purchased a \$14 million "monster ranch" in Cody, Wyoming.

The rumors amplified when the couple announced they had closed on another ranch property near Cody – this one 6,713 acres and valued at \$14.5 million – and were touring local schools for their children.

The purchases stemmed from West's [desire to move his billion-dollar apparel empire](#) Yeezy to Wyoming, the headquarters of which had already been moved to Cody from Calabasas, California.

During a 2019 interview (26:30 mark in video below), Kanye hinted that he found the Golden State's regulatory structure stifling and irritating, noting that regulators told him [his Star Wars-inspired domes for the homeless](#) violated government codes.

"One of the domes was 10 feet too high," said West, speaking at the 2019 Fast Company Innovation Festival. "They came and said, 'You got to take it down.'"

It's hard to blame an innovator like West for being irritated by red tape. But it probably wasn't his only reason for leaving.

"Kimye" stand to save a bundle if they live more than 183 days

a year in Wyoming. Reports estimate the West [paid some \\$15 million](#) in state income taxes in 2018 alone.

The Cowboy State, on the other hand, has zero state income taxes.

Chris Hemsworth's Life 'Down Under'

Chris Hemsworth is today one of the biggest stars in Hollywood, even though he no longer lives there. In 2015, the same year *Avengers: Age of Ultron* was released, the Australian-born actor announced he was moving back Down Under with his family, since he no longer had to be in Hollywood to land movie roles.

'We were in LA for six or seven years and then once we got the opportunity not to be there full-time, it was good to get back to Australia," [said](#) Hemsworth. "And it's great. Quiet, coastal town – [it] couldn't be further from Hollywood, which is nice."

Quiet. Coastal. And far from Hollywood. The perfect place for Thor Odinson to retire after his battles with Thanos.

Future Governor Matthew McConaughey?

Matthew McConaughey took home an Oscar in 2014 for his role as Ron Woodroof in the 2013 biographical drama *The Dallas Buyers Club*, but by that time the *Dazed and Confused* actor had [already sold most](#) if not all of his homes in the Hollywood Hills.

McConaughey and wife Camila Alves, married in 2012, have lived in Austin, Texas for years with their three children. McConaughey, who was born in Texas, in 2015 [joined the faculty of the University of Texas at Austin](#) where he works as an instructor in the department of radio, television and film at

the Moody College of Communication.

Rumor has it McConaughey is even considering [a run for governor](#) of the Lone Star State in 2022. We don't know McConaughey's politics – he keeps his views famously close to the vest – but based on [some of his comments following the 2016 election](#), odds are he'll have a better chance in Texas than California.

Blake Lively and Ryan Reynolds's 'Idyllic Life' in New York

One of Hollywood's most famous power couples, Ryan Reynolds and Blake Lively don't actually live in Hollywood. Though Reynolds and his first wife Scarlet Johansson were California residents – Reynolds [filed for divorce](#) in Los Angeles in 2010 – the *Green Lantern* stars (sorry to bring that one up) decided Hollywood wasn't where they wanted to raise their family.

In 2012, the same year the couple married, Lively and Reynolds purchased a \$5.7 million home near Bedford, New York. Nestled on 11.65 acres, the colonial-style mansion reportedly is 8,000 square feet and has seven bedrooms and six bathrooms. The property even comes with a *barn*.

Taxes in New York aren't much better than California, but the couple seems to have found a beautiful place to raise their three children. Reports say they have made quite an impression on the community.

“[L]ocals describe them as extremely nice and well-liked,” *E! News* [reported](#). “They have a bit of a routine around town that can only be described as, well, idyllic.”

Nicole Kidman and Keith Urban Loving Life

in the (Income Tax Free) Volunteer State

Nicole Kidman and Keith Urban didn't exactly leave California. They still keep a home there, a \$4.7 million mansion in Beverly Hills purchased in 2008. But the couple, married in 2006, seems to collect homes the way other people collect stamps.

There are the two homes in Australia: a \$6.5 million farm in Bunya Hill and a penthouse in Sydney.

There's the mansion in Nashville the couple purchased for \$3.4 million in 2008.

And let's not forget the \$10 million Manhattan condo the *Days of Thunder* and country music star purchased in 2010.

Despite their many dwellings, the couple has called Nashville, Tennessee their home for years. And that's a smart move financially speaking. The Volunteer State has [a zero percent](#) income tax rate, which went a long way toward allowing the couple to accrue an aggregate net worth estimated [at \\$325 million](#).

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