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Hollywood Picks Pasadena as New Location to Live

By ANDY VITALICIO

Published : Friday, December 15, 2017 | 6:56 AM

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From left to right, new Pasadena residents Meryl Streep, Kristen Wiig, Summer Bishil, Rachel Bilson, Mandy Moore

The announcement that Meryl Streep and her husband just bought a \$3.6 million estate atop the rim of the Arroyo capped a year of Pasadena home purchases by high-profile movie and television actresses in what appears to be an accelerating local real estate trend.

The five, each of whom selected mid-century modern-styled homes with gorgeous views of the local mountains, were likely swayed by the relatively reasonable pricing of larger secluded properties here, the stunning views, their yearning for privacy and Pasadena's respectful culture, local real estate experts said.

The year started with Mandy Moore's \$2.6 million Pasadena purchase after selling the house she shared with ex-husband Ryan Adams.

Moore was since joined in selecting Pasadena by Rachel Bilson, Summer Bishil (who was born here and is, one could say, simply returning), Kristen Wiig, and just this month, Meryl Streep.

"I think a lot of it has to do with both pricing and more privacy," said Bill Podley, Chairman of Pasadena-based realty company Podley Properties.

Podley said that many beautiful Pasadena estates designed by world-famous architects and sitting on large plots of land can be bought in Pasadena for only 50 to 75 percent of what a similar property costs on the west side.

"One might think that a higher paid entertainer wouldn't be so greatly concerned, but I think everyone thinks about those things these days," Podley said.

[Mandy Moore's new Pasadena home](#)

Coldwell

Mandy Moore's Harold Zook-designed home sits on 1.45 acres of land

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Realtor Nick Borelli added that Pasadena is "close to downtown and

there is less traffic up here. It's a lot easier to get around."

Borelli agreed that for the money, many Pasadena estates offer "a lot more space to make it more private."

"I would just say it's location; you got the mountains up here, it's peaceful. They can live up here without everyone knowing who they are," Borrelli said.

Steve Clark, founder of the Clarkliving team at Compass, notes that there's been a general eastward movement in terms of neighborhood desirability. "Pasadena has always been one of LA's preeminent suburbs. There's a timeless elegance to Pasadena: we've got walkability, privacy, views of the San Gabriel mountains, history, culture, and a wealth of phenomenal architecture. I'm a born-and-raised Angeleno and there's nowhere I'd rather live than the 1955 Harold Bissner in Linda Vista my family moved into earlier this year."

Michael Bell, one of the top agents in Pasadena who as a Broker-Associate regularly deals with many Westside agents and was the listing agent for the seller of the house bought by Rachael Bilson, observed that "Westsidiers are discovering Pasadena is because we have almost everything but the beach and the traffic, and our real estate is incredibly affordable."

Streep and husband Don Grummer bought a well-maintained, late-1950s mid-century modern residence privately tucked into the affluent foothills in Pasadena, according to Variety. The couple paid \$3.6 million for the house described as an "unassuming, yet enigmatic low-slung residence" at the end of a "pretty, tree-covered drive." Built in 1959, the house was designed by mid-century architects Whitney Smith and Wayne Williams and is on one of Pasadena's most prestigious streets above the rugged Arroyo Seco.

[Kristen Wiig's new Pasadena home](#)

Kristen Wiig's Case Study House No. 10

Wiig,
known for
her work on

"Saturday Night Live," purchased a celebrated mid-century modern-style home for \$2.96 million. The residence, known as Case Study

House No. 10, is part of a series designed and commissioned by Los Angeles-based Arts and Architecture magazine as an initiative to showcase innovative and inexpensive homes built in response to the housing shortage after World War II. House No. 10 was designed in 1947 by father-and-son duo Kemper Nomland and Kemper Nomland Jr. It features minimalist flourishes spread across 3,425 square feet.

Also during [Summer Bishil's new Pasadena home](#)

the past Summer Bishil returns to Pasadena to live in this 1952 month, mid-century modern

Summer

Bishil, of “The Magicians,” bought a mid-century modern home in Pasadena for \$1.8 million. The house, built in 1952, has glass walls that open to canyon, mountain, and city views of Pasadena, and features include a living room fireplace with a circular opening. The 2,000-square-foot house, with three bedrooms and three bathrooms, sits on a half-acre of land and has been updated with elegant finishes and high-end materials. The courtyard outside features a pond and waterfall, with a swimming pool back below the house.

Rachel Bilson, who rose to fame on the hit series “The O.C.” and later appeared on “Hart of Dixie” and “Nashville,” bought her new dream home in October — a \$3.25 million stylish six-bed, four-bath home in the Linda Vista area.

The mid-century modern masterpiece, built in 1950, was designed by Gregory Ain, and is known as the “Ralph’s House.” The 3,678-square-foot single-level property maintains most of its original design: floor-to-ceiling windows provide streaming natural light, refurbished wood floors, and a spacious living room with a fireplace and built-in bookshelves. Including a resort-style backyard, an outdoor landscape designed with rolling gardens with stunning views of the canyons and mountaintops above Pasadena, the entire property measures 35,844 square feet.

[Rachel Bilsons new Pasadena home](#)

In January,

Rachel Bilson's new Pasadena home is in the Linda Vista Mandy

area. Photo courtesy Michael Bell

Moore

bought a

Pasadena home for \$2.6 million after selling the house she shared with ex-husband Ryan Adams. According to the Redfin listing, the Moore property features 1.45 acres of land, 360-degree views, floor-to-ceiling glass walls, three bedrooms, three baths, a breakfast nook, a spa, and a pool. The mid-century mansion was designed by architect Harold Zook, who later became known for his Cotswold-style cottages now found in the Chicago suburbs.

Podley believes the privacy element isn't the only thing the celebrities are looking for — the character of the people who live here has as much to do with their attraction to Pasadena as anything else.

“It's a different lifestyle. We've always been known as a more old-fashioned kind of community where people aren't as concerned about their image. And I think that they find that in the Pasadena area,” Podley said. “It's a little calmer lifestyle. Yes, you may be noticed, but you're not going to be oogled over maybe as much. I think Pasadenans by and large get along and respect each other's privacy.”

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