



MARKET SNAPSHOT

QUICK STATS – 2014 Totals

Florida's Share of U.S. Sales to Foreign Buyers **10%**

Volume of FL Sales To Foreign Buyers **\$7.97 Billion**

Percentage of Cash Sales in FL to Foreign Buyers **82%**

Source: National Association of Realtors 2014

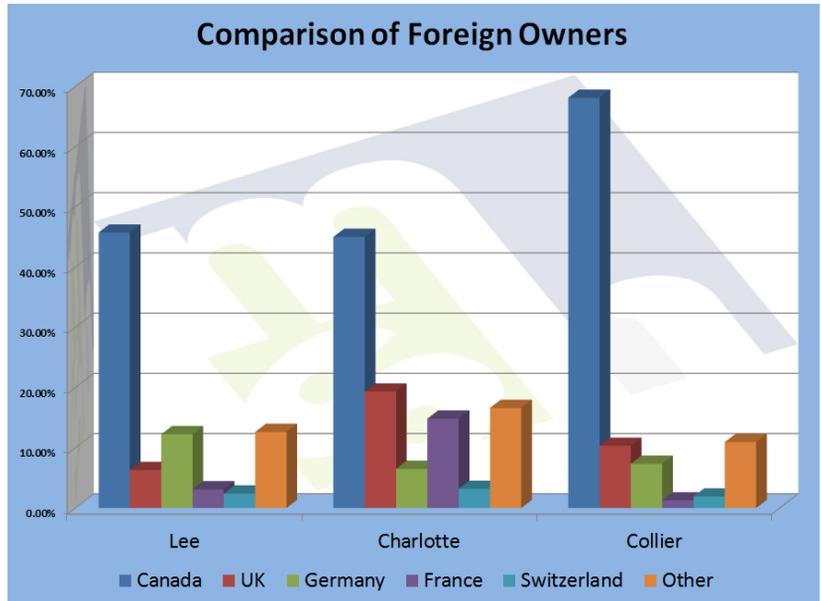
Southwest Florida has always been a vacation destination for many Americans. Increasingly, Southwest Florida is also becoming a destination for thousands of foreign investors. This month, we've analyzed the rise of foreign investors and the impact our area has on who decides to invest here.

Canada accounts for about 45% of foreign owners in Lee County. The next big investors are Western Europe, with 12% from Germany and 6% coming from the United Kingdom. Not only in Southwest Florida and Lee County, but nationwide we are seeing a major influx of foreign investors.

Much of the foreign investment comes in the form of EB-5 programs. In short, EB-5 is a program providing visas in exchange for investments in qualifying job-creating projects. In recent years, EB-5 applications have risen from 800 in 2007 to a capacity of 10,000 applications in 2014. China is leading the way with 70% of the 10,000 EB-5 applications received and is the fastest growing foreign investor group in America.

However, Chinese investment in Southwest Florida has been minimal.

So why is Canada flocking to SWFL and China isn't? Our airport has a lot to do with it. Southwest Florida International Airport (RSW) alone carries 217,270 passengers to and from Canada yearly. Direct flights and easy transportation is a major convenience for Canada and is the main reason why so many Canadians are choosing to invest here. Conversely, flights to China are limited out of RSW. We already benefit from foreign visitors, so look for increases in foreign investment potentially in the form of EB-5 projects.



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