

# Buying an international property that suits your needs

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Buying a property is a massive financial commitment. In fact, for most it is one of the largest financial investments that they will ever make in their lifetime. When it comes to making such a large investment, particularly in a foreign country where the property purchasing rules and regulations are different, it is imperative that investors take their time and undertake the necessary research in order to make an informed decision.

This is according to James Bowling, CEO of Monarch&Co, who says often an international real estate investment is one of the requirements of a residency or citizenship programme.

While today’s savvy investors have access to great volumes of information via the internet, Bowling says it is still possible for investors to be taken advantage of or caught out by certain clauses or regulations they were unaware of.

He says investors who are buying property abroad should always research exactly what they are buying into.

“An imperative part of any international transaction is to ensure that professionals are dealing with the transaction: from the facilitators and developers, to the lawyers and immigration specialists. Dealing with professionals is not negotiable.”

Aside from the fact that reputable international investment facilitators know all the ins and outs of property transactions in different countries and can advise their clients accordingly, Bowling also emphasises the importance of working through an independent property investment facilitator in order to ensure good investment value and prospective returns.

He says there are many companies which facilitate international property investments that partner with a limited number of developers and investment companies in a given country, and are therefore limited as to the number of opportunities they can provide their investors.

“This limited choice often means that clients are charged a premium on the property investment and minimal research has been undertaken on the potential investment returns. The investment returns are also seldom guaranteed or come with buy-back options.”

Bowling says when an investor works through an independent property investment facilitator who is not bound or limited to certain developments, they benefit from access to a far wider range of property options from different partners.


“As a result, independent facilitators are able to find a property that best suits their client’s requirements. This is especially important for investors as they know that the price they pay for their investment is the true value of the property.”

For example, he says Monarch&Co facilitates a range of international property investments across the globe, either linked to residency or citizenship by investment programmes, or as standalone investments.

He says in Cyprus, for example, there are more than 12 different property developments from which investors can choose, ranging in size, price and location.

“Depending on an investor’s requirements, they need to choose a property to best suit their budget and investment goals by being offered properties with excellent capital growth and yields, as well as size requirements to act as a holiday home or accommodation for frequent business trips,” says Bowling.

“In Grenada, there is the option to invest in real estate or a sustainable aquaculture business. This choice allows those who are more comfortable with property, or who wish to diversify their property portfolio the opportunity to invest in real estate, while those who are interested in



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acquiring shares in diverse business ventures can also apply for the citizenship programme.”

In Malta, there are opportunities for investment in Malta itself, or in Gozo, a neighbouring island, while in Portugal, investors are not restricted to choosing property only within certain developments, as any property which best suits an investors’ specific requirements can easily be sourced.

“If an investor is unsure as to whether or not they are dealing with a reputable international investment facilitator, they can contact the Association of International Property Professionals (AIPP) to see if the facilitator is a member,” says Bowling.

He says the AIPP is an industry body for the international property market. While the international investment industry is largely unregulated, members of the AIPP voluntarily agree to adhere to a professional code of conduct.

Bowling says as a member of the AIPP, professional standards must be met and members must act with integrity in their dealings. In order to become a member of the AIPP, the facilitator must be vetted and then approved.

Approval of membership is based on professional experience and all member companies agree to be bound by its disciplinary and dispute resolution procedures.

He says when acquiring an international property there are several aspects to take into account. It is for this reason that the importance of selecting the right investment facilitator, who has a good understanding of the various factors involved with the transaction, cannot be overemphasised.