

FRENCH PROPERTY NEWS

Prime Riviera property still growing in popularity

The latest French Riviera Residential Market report from Savills (savills.co.uk) has revealed that suppressed prices, a weak euro and recent changes to taxation policy have made prime property in this desirable part of France even more appealing to foreign buyers. A €2m property, for example, cost sterling buyers £1.44m in June 2015, compared to £1.65m the previous year, representing a reduction of 12%. The report also highlighted that ultra-high-net-worth individuals (UHNWs) are the driving force for the top tiers of the Riviera property market, with prime property becoming increasingly attractive to those seeking an investment opportunity.

Some 5% of all the second residences owned

with over 11 million tourists each year, there's a steady flow of visitors in need of holiday and rental accommodation. "The luxury property market on the French Riviera is really booming in 2015," says Tim Swannie, Director of Home Hunts (home-hunts.com). "We saw an increase in activity in 2014 but enquiries are up 60% on last year, and the first six months of 2015 have been the busiest we have seen since we started the company back in 2004. It is a unique time for the French Riviera property market because asking prices have dropped over the past few years, and when you put that together with the low mortgage rates and the amazing exchange rates on offer there has not been a better time to buy in more than 10 years, and savvy buyers are realising this."

The agency has found that there are four distinct areas on the French Riviera that stand out for their popularity this year: in and around Mougins and Valbonne; Villefranche-sur-Mer and St-Jean-Cap-Ferrat; Cannes and Cap d'Antibes; and St-Tropez, while Grasse is currently viewed as a good up-and-coming location to invest in because it is not as expensive as other Riviera locations.



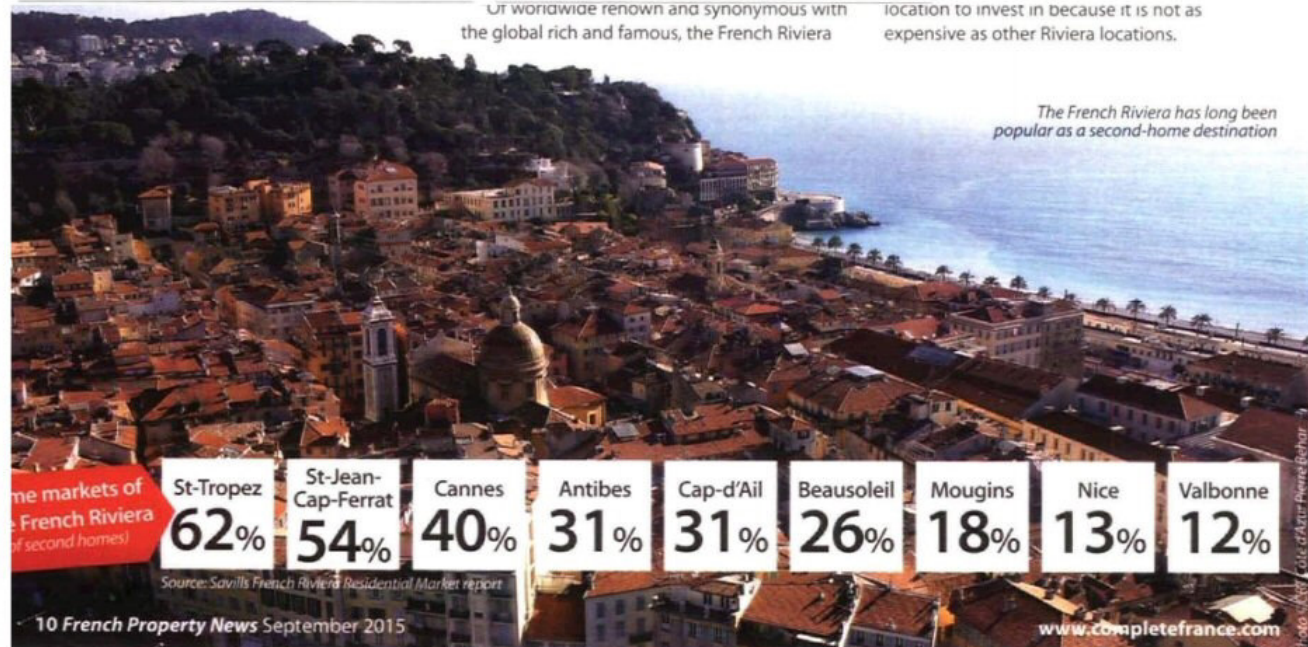
This penthouse in Cannes overlooks the Croisette and the Palais des Festivals, €8.5m (home-hunts.com)



On the Côte d'Azur, a three-bedroom villa and a second two-bedroom villa for guests, €2.9m (leggetfrance.com)

Of worldwide renown and synonymous with the global rich and famous, the French Riviera location to invest in because it is not as expensive as other Riviera locations.

The French Riviera has long been popular as a second-home destination



by UHNWs worldwide are located in France, and the French Riviera is one of the world's most exclusive destinations for second home ownership – 17% of properties here are second homes, compared to 11% nationally. The research shows that the residential holdings of UHNWs are concentrated in top-tier world cities, but are frequently paired with properties in 'retreat locations'. The French Riviera is one of the most important global retreats, and the majority of those who own a property there have their city base in London.

British buyers accounted for 34% of prime property purchases on the Riviera between 2011 and 2014, making them the most represented nationality, and their average spend was €3.3m.

"Of worldwide renown and synonymous with the global rich and famous, the French Riviera