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French Coastal Properties: Position, position, position - The 3 most important points when purchasing a property!

If you want to make buying in France an even safer bet in these difficult times, then go for the very best position you can afford. The value of a property is based to a great extent on its position. The best positions will always be in demand and will command more money than others. There is a limit on the number of properties that can be built in these prime locations so that demand is always higher than supply

This applies all over the world and if you look at your home town you will know that there are certain streets and areas that are more expensive than others often due to their proximity to amenities and their outlook. It can be more difficult to recognize the better districts when you visit an area but if you take note of the types of shops available, standard of restaurants and general ambience of the town it will give you a clue as to the general wealth in close proximity.

Renting your property out will often pay the expenses and some of the mortgage repayments if you have a mortgage. Obviously this will depend on how much you use it and how much you rent it. By taking a mortgage during this period of the strong Euro, will mean that you don't have to change so much money into Euros and then at a time when perhaps the rate might improve, you can repay the mortgage at a better exchange rate. Buying a property by the sea which is ideal for holidays will make letting rather easier. At the present time with the Euro being strong, your rental when converted back to Sterling will be worth even more.

The domestic market in France provides the greatest number of buyers to that buying in areas that are popular with the French is often more expensive, especially where the purchasers are Parisien. The French are very keen on properties that are close to or right by the beach are in high demand and command higher prices. Those set back a little but with sea views are more expensive than the same properties without views. Properties up to 30 minutes inland will still be sought after although their general position will be taken into account i.e. do they have a view, is it an easy drive to the sea, do they have a distant sea view, are they in a beautiful setting, do they have pretty views if not sea views, are they away from main roads, noise and nuisance.

An unusual property to find with beach access is this attractive Norman manor offering direct access to Deauville beach, set in very well kept landscaped gardens of almost 5 acres priced at 6,360.000 €. At the other end of the scale in the department of Morbihan in Brittany, is this new development of 150 new apartments & 20 new cottages in secure domaine with heated swimming pool, balneotherapy facilities, surrounded by woodland with a lake & situated only a few minutes from sandy beaches)

Also in Brittany there is a selection of building plots of just under quarter of an acre that are within 1.5km of the beach. In Calvados a new leaseback development of 1 and 2 bedroom apartments with terraces, parking spaces and a communal swimming pool is set within walking distance of the coast with 2 weeks of personal use and up to 4.2% return. Prices start at €83,612 HT. There are several new developments available at present of classic purchase apartments and houses along the Normandy and Brittany coasts which offer superb holiday homes with the possibility of good rental potential if you are not using the property

In the well known resort of Le Touquet, its full name being Le Touquet Paris Plage because of the fact that it an extremely popular weekend for the Parisiens in Pas de Calais, the forest area is renowned for its selection of beautiful homes that are not only walking distance to the wide sandy beaches but also to the town, the casino, the golf courses and tennis centre. The prices in this area are considerably more expensive with this superb detached house in almost three quarters of an acre garden offering 220m² of living space priced at 1,272,000€

Situated in the resort of Granville with a variety of shops, restaurants and services, beautiful golden sandy beaches and a Golf Club, a contemporary house with terrace, garden, & exceptional sea views. is priced at 1.040.000€

On the Cote D'Amor in Brittany at 522,400€ a South-facing detached house with over half an acre enjoys beautiful sea views. Superb location, close to all amenities.

At 470,000€ an exceptional 19th century stone property with tower, set in two acres offers panoramic sea views and is only 500m from town. A South facing detached stone farmhouse with a second 2 bed roomed house set in 2 acres of land next to the beach is available for 460,000€ in the Manche .

An exception development of 3 and 4 bed roomed houses with garages has just been released in Morbihan with direct access from their gardens onto the beach. These present an ideal opportunity for a superb family holiday home that will let out easily to provide extra income when not in use. Prices start from 360,000€.

The Western coast of France has some lovely resorts and have historically been more French than cosmopolitan although gradually we are seeing more and more interest there. Much of it is accessible within a day's drive and the weather is warmer with guaranteed summers once you cross the Loire Valley. There are also a number of flights from the UK to airports in the region.

Some of the resorts such as La Baule, Ile de Re and Biarritz are extremely expensive which is indicative of the high demand for properties in those areas from the Parisiens and the French domestic market generally.

In the Vendee we have a new development of houses and apartments offering indoor heated & outdoor pools, tennis, sauna, hammam and within 800m of the sea. Situated close to a golf club offering 36 holes, starting prices are from 108,000€. In St Jean de Luz which is a very popular and much demanded resort we have leaseback apartments within 200m of the beach priced from 126,000€

In the Gironde a superb house with direct access to the sea & wooded garden is priced at 7,500,000€ and offers 7 bedrooms etc in excellent order. 450ga and in Biarritz a stunning front-line character property, built in 1896, set in over half an acre of grounds featuring a heated pool, & enjoying wonderful sea views is for sale for at 3.277.000€. On the Ile de Rey a detached house enjoying sea views with a garden just 100m from the beach is priced at 854,550€.

The Southern coast, including the regions of Languedoc Roussillon and Provence has numerous coastal resorts and towns offering a wide range of properties and prices, many of which will compare well with the Northern and Western coasts although there are certainly some properties at higher prices than can be found anywhere else in France – but the vendors normally don't allow them to be publicised!

The Mediterranean is quite different again in many ways including the slower pace of life to a certain extent but on the other hand you have many very busy and built up resorts. It really does depend on personal taste as to where you will choose.

At the top end of the market is a front-line property on Cap d'Antibes which has recently been refurbished, priced at 27,000.000 €. At the other end of the scale is a neat little detached property with terrace within 200m of beaches priced at 99,000€ in Herault.

Starting from 280,000€ are new apartments opposite the beach in Antibes les Pins. The development also offers a pool and landscaped gardens and is walking distance to the lively resort of Juan les Pins.

In Nice a 3 bedroom apartment with balconies is within 500m of the beaches is priced at 295.000€. It includes underground parking and is a ideal home

for permanent living or holidays as well as being a good investment. However on the renowned Promenade des Anglais in Nice an entirely renovated double aspect 2 bedroom apartment, with terrace overlooking the sea is priced at 485,000€

In the popular and very French resort of Cap d'Agde a recently built single story 3 bedroom villa with quarter of an acre is situated 300m from the beach and is priced at 495,000€

In Gard there are a selection of newly built houses around a marina with their own moorings at the end of their small gardens. There is direct access out to sea and into the canal system. Properties range in price from around 175,000€ up to over 540,000€.

The Mediterranean area offers many apartments which are front line onto the sea and a fewer number of private villas which are at a premium.

Sea views and even more so, direct access to the beach can double the price of a property, but it is something worth paying for as properties are limited.

So if you are looking for a property by the coast then France has it all to offer, whether you are looking for the quieter wide sandy beaches of Pas de Calais and Normandy, perhaps the more dramatic beaches of Brittany, the varied resorts of the Western coastline and the Atlantic or the very pretty coastline and choice of beaches and resorts on the Mediterranean.