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Carpe Diem



SENSATIONAL SIX SENSES // ALBERT ARTS // GARDENING EN LUXE // LYDIA COURTEILLE

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We are living in turbulent times, perhaps more so than ever before. In the past, other than the political and military conflicts of the First and Second World Wars, fluctuations in currency, economic barometers, employment and interest rates were either national or regional. The rapidity of modern communications and the interlinking of vast common interest economies shows us that borders, frontiers and political ideologies no longer restrain the tendencies of economic shift, both positive and negative.

Across the globe, the moves to alleviate the pain of the present economic crisis, to ameliorate the financial climate and, in by doing so, allow the potential for stability and later growth, are common to all nations and economic unions. Time will tell whether these sudden universally collective, and nationally individual, measures will succeed. We will also be watching to see whether the lessons learned can be adopted for the greater good of all nations as it applies to poverty, to the domination of minorities, to the curtailing of civil liberties and of the freedom of expression by the dictatorship of individuals and governments.

While these moral and practical questions are responded to by our governments, there remains the vital question of personal investment. At a moment when there is uncertainty in the stock markets, the currency markets, and even the bond markets, the careful choice of real estate investment remains the most secure hedge against long term depreciation of values and the greatest opportunity for medium term growth, with the potential for immediate return on investment through a judicious rental strategy.

Climate, regional stability, capital growth, restricted new development potential, strategic geographical situation, lifestyle... and the fact that on the list of global destinations for people to choose, as a place to visit, to stay and to live, the French Riviera remains in the leading position, both for residence and for investment.

Philip R. Weiser
Carlton International

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FANTASY
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INTELLIGENCE

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Above: *Dragon et étoiles de mer.*
Bracelet, black gold, purple sapphires
and labradorite by Lydia Courteille
(see page 50)

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PROPERTY

Carlton International opens the gates to one of Provence's most splendid country estates, set in hundreds of acres of rolling countryside with row upon row of prized vineyards and olive groves.

Fantasy island, where luxury meets intelligence

Sonu Shivdasani met his wife and business partner Eva at the Monaco Grand Prix back in the 1980s. Twenty years on, he has built one of the world's leading luxury resort and spa companies. **Roger Tredre** spoke to the man who believes in "intelligent luxury".

It's the stuff of fantasy fiction. A handsome young Indian Oxford student meets a beautiful Swedish model on a boat moored in Monte Carlo during the Grand Prix. They fall in love, marry, buy an island in the Maldives and create the hideaway of their dreams.

Except the story is true. And here is the former Oxford student, Sonu Shivdasani, to prove it. He's a youthful 42 now, in charge of the \$220 million (€149 million) Six Senses empire of resorts, spas and hideaways, including Soneva Kiri, a new resort opening on an island off Phuket, Thailand, at the end of this year. "I didn't even want to go to Monte Carlo," he laughs, casting his mind back to 1986 and his first encounter with model Eva Malmström (the first eye contact was over a cup of tea on deck with mutual friends, if you really want to know). "It was during my first-year exams, it was really a last-minute decision."

How wise he was to change his plans. Let's put aside the personal happiness the two have found together. As Six Senses creative director, Eva has also become the design eye in the business, and is responsible for some 5,000 separate items created for the latest Soneva resort. More than that, says Sonu, she is "the group conscience" for the company, which has won a series of environmental awards and takes its green credentials very seriously indeed. Their relationship in the business works well, says Sonu. "We complement each other."

For the wealthy, the issues are personally challenging: how do you reconcile luxury lifestyles with environmental protection? The opportunities for a wealthy traveller in the 21st century are greater than ever before, but they come with responsibilities.

Born in Karlstad, the daughter of an SAS pilot, Eva had a glittering modelling career before meeting Sonu, with an impressive number of Vogue covers to her name and campaigns for labels such as YSL Rive Gauche. Those classic Scandinavian blonde good looks made her a favourite with the fashion set through the 1980s. She also ran her own fashion label in Paris, honing a sense of perfection that has never left her.

Fashion was a new world to Sonu. His Cambridge-educated

father Indoo, who had died in 1979, was a dynamic entrepreneur type with wide-ranging interests, primarily in agri-businesses including vineyards and breweries. Indoo also had a strong philanthropic streak, setting up the Inlaks Foundation in 1976 to provide financial support for the education and personal development of young Indian students. "I am always conscious that I owe a debt to this world," he once said. Sonu has inherited that same sense of moral responsibility.

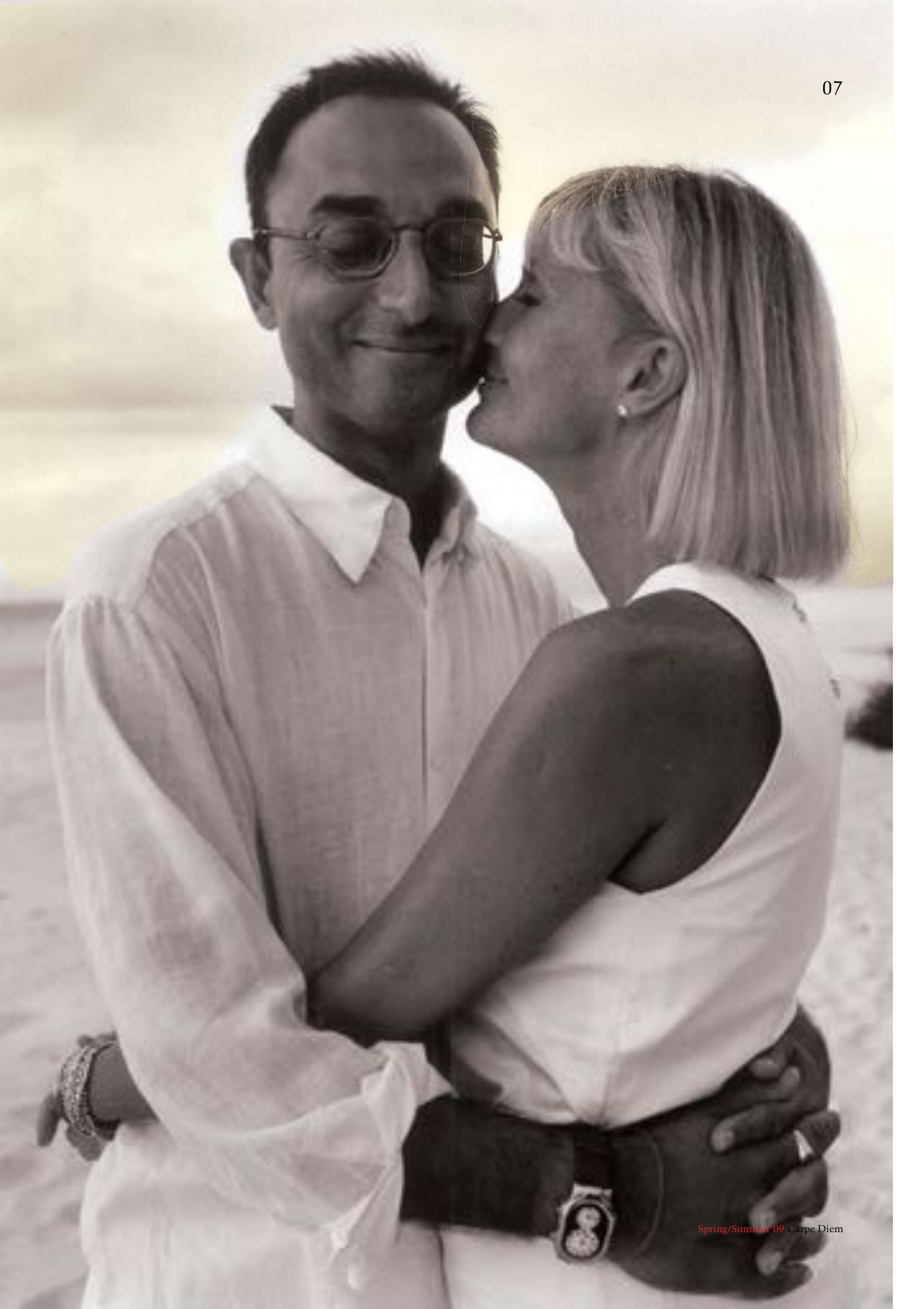
Sonu was deeply impressed by his new wife's commitment to environmental issues. Coming from Sweden, Eva had green thinking imbedded in her way of life. While the rest of us were still thinking that eco concerns were a minority interest, the Swedes were already recycling their newspapers and eating organic. "Being Swedish you're brought up that way, to save water, save electricity, save nature," she says. Now the rest of us have learned to think like the Swedes, of course. For the wealthy, the issues are personally challenging: how do you reconcile luxury lifestyles with environmental protection? The opportunities for a wealthy traveller in the 21st century are greater than ever before, but they come with responsibilities.

Sonu and Eva, who combined their names to create their Soneva resorts, call their solution "intelligent luxury". Soneva Fushi, one of two Six Senses resorts in the Maldives, has created a programme to offset its guests' flight emissions - the resort expects to be "carbon free" by 2010. The Little Green Book for guests is a miniature masterpiece of environmental writing, which presents its strategy for a harmonious balance between man and nature with precision and eloquence.

And a trip to Soneva Fushi, a 30-minute ride by seaplane from the Maldivian capital of Malé, will tell you that Sonu and Eva's solution works. Sonu leased the island, where shoes are banned and life takes on a Robinson Crusoe-style existence, in 1990. "We used to go on holiday to the Maldives a lot and we met a Maldivian who had connections. He told us about this resort on an island that had been a thorn in the side of the government. It had been given to a former minister of finance but had been quickly abandoned. No one wanted it, so we took the lease. We opened in October 1995. By Christmas we were full."

In truth, the path to success wasn't quite as smooth as all this sounds. Eton-educated Sonu comes from a prosperous family but still had to raise his own funding. "It was a huge challenge to get the financing," he acknowledges. "People didn't believe the Maldives was a luxury destination. We were charging rates two or three times our nearest competitors."

The opening of Soneva Fushi spurred a new era for the Maldives as a luxury holiday spot. Ex-Beatles star Paul McCartney was an early guest, while pop icon Madonna is one of a host of celebrities who have stayed more recently, scribbling an entry in the guestbook that lauded the resort as "five definitions of heaven", including "riding bikes barefoot in the 🍷





A Beach residence at
Soneva Kiri, Thailand.
Previous page: Sonu and Eva.



Madonna is one of a host of celebrities who have stayed more recently, scribbling an entry in the guestbook that lauded the resort as "five definitions of heaven", including "riding bikes barefoot in the moonlight, not wearing shoes for eight days and watching movies in the outdoor cinema under a starlit sky."



Left: Arrival at the Vatuete Island Resort.
Below: Six Senses at Sharq Village & Spa.
Right: Eva Malmström in one of her many appearances on the cover of Vogue.

moonlight, not wearing shoes for eight days and watching movies in the outdoor cinema under a starlit sky."

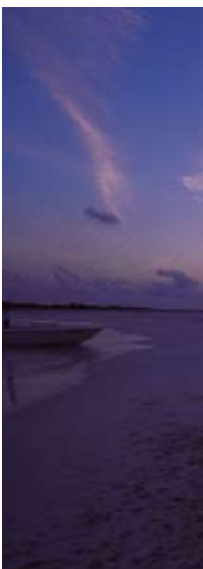
You pay handsomely for this kind of luxury simplicity: rooms start from around \$900 (€610) in low season. While wealthy Europeans account for the lion's share of visitors, guests from the BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India, China) countries are beginning to flow through, most notably from Russia and India.

Intelligent luxury for Sonu includes championing the pleasures and spiritual benefits of the slow life, drawing on elements of Italy's celebrated Slow Food movement fused with classical eastern concepts of harmony and balance. Currently at the planning stage for Six Senses are a series of Slow Life centres, where every one of his employees will be able to participate in a Senses programme exploring these ideas. The essence of Six Senses is the concept that all the senses are touched: taste, smell, sight,

The operation includes three flagship Soneva by Six Senses resorts, nine boutique-style Hideaway and bigger-scale Latitudes resorts, one Destination Spa and five family-oriented Evason resorts. Locations include Thailand, Vietnam, Fiji, Jordan and Spain.

sound, and touch and the sixth - the balance of all these things.

Making the most of the natural environment is important for Sonu and Eva, who love talking about their resorts' organic vegetable gardens (the view from the toilet in the Maldives is simply spectacular, Sonu enthuses). "These days, most wealthy people live in big, congested cities with no big gardens," explains Sonu. "They work in small offices and they want space, privacy





Those classic Scandinavian blonde good looks made her a favourite with the fashion set through the 1980s. She also ran her own fashion label in Paris, honing a sense of perfection that has never left her.



and choice when they go on holiday - it's that natural environment they treasure, more than an elaborate environment."

There's a touch of a young Richard Branson about Sonu's commercially-minded idealism. These are the pioneers who believe they can bridge the gap between high-minded save-the-planet ideas and the entrepreneurial drive that motivates everyone in business. However, while Sir Richard Branson has built a mass market populist brand with Virgin, Sonu Shivdasani operates in a premium lifestyle niche. Alongside Branson's brash style, Sonu is all understated smoothness. Ever the self-effacing old Etonian, Sonu says: "Having a good education obviously helps, but the central ideas behind our company come from the whole philosophy of well being, inner strength and treating others as you would want to be treated yourself."

The company is based in Bangkok, from where Sonu supervises a management and development company with some 18 resorts in its portfolio plus three private residence developments. The operation includes three flagship Soneva by Six Senses resorts, nine boutique-style Hideaway and bigger-scale Latitudes resorts, one Destination Spa and five family-oriented Evason resorts. Locations include Thailand, Vietnam, Fiji, Jordan and Spain.

Soneva Kiri, expected to soft-launch in December on the Thai island of Koh Kood, takes Sonu into new territory. Besides renting, you can also buy a luxury villa. Eight out of a total of 21 for sale have been bought to date, all by buyers who have been guests at Soneva resorts. "Twenty-first century travellers lead pretty stressed lives," says Sonu. "We make it easy for them - their fridge is always stocked!"

Repeat visitors are at the heart of the company's success. Sonu talks about creating a virtuous circle, focused on greatly exceeding guest expectations, so that they come back again and again. "At Fushi, 35 per cent of our guests are return guests," he says, with some pride. Then there is the obsessive attention to detail, from the precise design of a bedside table so that there's room for a drink and a magazine through to the salt and pepper pots in the dining rooms. And best not get Sonu started on the bottled water they'll be using at Soneva Kiri - he could probably write a book about purification facilities.

Six Senses is expanding fast. Over the next 20 years, Sonu is aiming to build a network of 50 to 60 Evason resorts and 50 to 60 Spas. Developments are in progress in Brazil, Jordan and Spain. There's even a spa opening near Canary Wharf, London, in the new Pan Peninsula development, scheduled for early 2009.

The 20 or so spas, which account for around \$20 million (€13.5 million) of revenues at present, are an important part of the business. They are dotted all over the world, ranging from the Dominican Republic to aboard the Christina O luxury super-yacht. These days, every luxury resort needs a spa. The challenge for Sonu is how to stay ahead of the pack. Sonu hates the image of spas as joyless boot camps. "People are now more sophisticated: they want holistic and spiritual treatments rather than pure pampering." He believes his first Six Senses Destination Spa, opened this year in Phuket and boasting a team of 80 healers, supplies the solution. "It takes it to the next level," he says.

What about a resort in the south of France? Sonu loves the region and knows it well - as a boy, he used to visit a family-owned vineyard near Hyères. What puts him off, he says, is France's employment laws. With typical understatement, he adds: "It's quite difficult with labour."

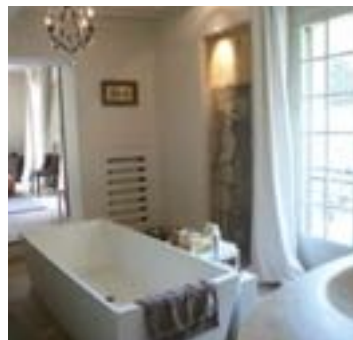
Still, the south of France has already given him enough. But for that chance meeting on a boat in Monaco, perhaps Sonu might never have embarked on his extraordinary career trajectory. //

12 Property



Aix en Provence

This lovingly restored 17th century residence offers first class accommodation just minutes from the heart of Aix en Provence.



Situated just five minutes from the centre of the wonderful and historic city of Aix en Provence, this five-bedroom property is incredibly well equipped to make the perfect family home.

Set in a landscaped park of nearly six acres (2.4 hectares), the residence consists of a master bedroom with two bathrooms and two dressing rooms, and four further bedrooms each with salon, bathroom and dressing room.

Within the 1 000 square metres of living area there is an amazing fully fitted kitchen and dining room, two main salons with fireplaces, a gym, home cinema, wine cellar, utility room, together with a private two-bedroom apartment useable as living accommodation for visitors or caretaker. Several offices could also be used as additional bedrooms.

Quality materials have been used throughout the property and the authenticity of the 17th century marries astonishingly with the contemporary art of today.

Price: €8 900 000
Ref 1952

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Mougins



This magnificent French manor house is a short drive from the picturesque hilltop village of Mougins, former home to Jean Cocteau, Picasso and Christian Dior.

The recently renovated property, with seven bedrooms, is only ten minutes from the heart of Mougins, renowned for its meandering cobbled streets, superb restaurants and charming ambiance.

Originally built in 1866, the house enjoys extensive views of the sea and is set in wonderful Provencal gardens of more than 2.5 acres (11,000 square metres), with olive groves, fruit trees and flowering shrubs providing complete quiet and privacy.

There is a large swimming pool in the grounds, and as the land is mainly flat, there is the possibility of creating tennis courts.

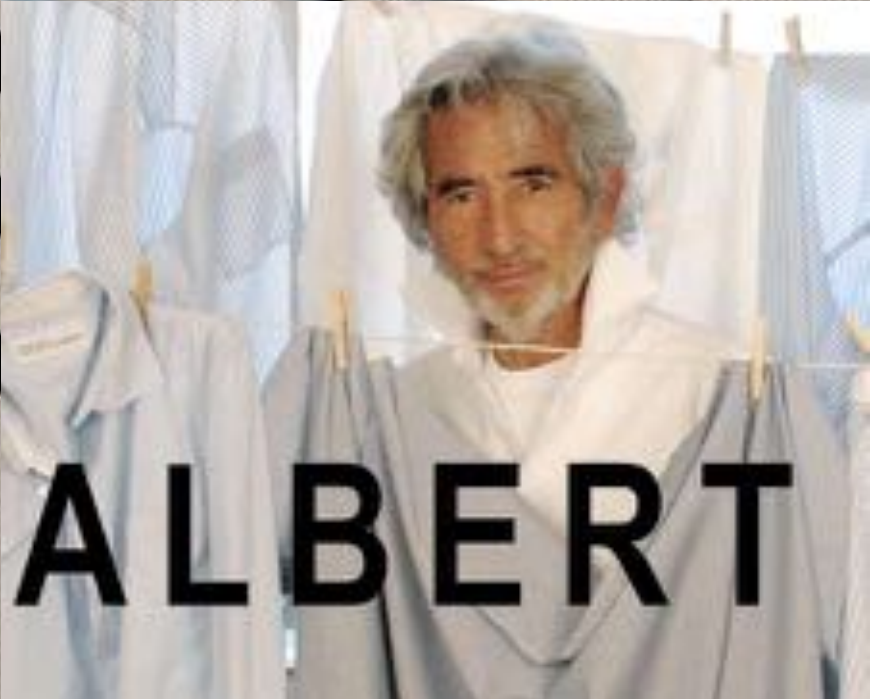


Price: €8 500 000
Ref 2076

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A L E



A L B E R T



A L B



A L

Alberts Arts heralds the return of the Côte d'Azur's very own Fashionista

French designer **Albert Goldberg** is responsible for giving the Côte d'Azur a style of its own for more than half a century. Now he's back with a brand new boutique 'Albert Arts' which oozes Riviera-glamour, as **Lanie Goodman** discovers when she drops into the Nice store.

There are some things on the Côte d'Azur that never change. Over a century ago, artist Claude Monet journeyed to the French Riviera for the first time and was overwhelmed by the dazzling light. "What I will bring back from here will be sweetness itself, white, pink, blue, all of it enveloped in this fairytale-like air," he wrote.

It's on one of those bright beautiful mornings when French designer Albert Goldberg ushers me into his private showroom in Nice, perched above the Mediterranean, overlooking the Promenade des Anglais. And the colours of Goldberg's new exclusive men's sportswear label 'Albert Arts' are right out of a Monet pastel seascape - delicate shades of sky blue and pale pink linen shirts, deep royal blue blazers, and creamy white trousers, all part of his upcoming winter collection called 'Baie des Anges', inspired by changing hues of the sea and sky.

"I've always exercised my craft as an art," says Albert Goldberg, the man who gave the Côte d'Azur a style all its own for the past half-century. Creator of the internationally known Niçois label, Façonnable, the 70-year-old designer is back in his hometown, eight years after selling his franchise in 2000 to Nordstrom for a cool \$169 million (€115 million).

"I did 84 collections of Façonnable, 45 years in a row. Then I took a break," explains Goldberg, an elegant man with a shock of salt and pepper hair, immaculately dressed in one of his trademark blue shirts. "The idea to launch Albert Arts isn't a new adventure; it's really just a continuation of everything I've always loved to do. I'm lucky to have lived and worked on the Promenade des Anglais in Nice ever since I was a boy," he says, gazing out at the sweeping panorama of the coast. 🌊

Goldberg says his biggest thrill was to meet some of his cinema heroes - the likes of Alain Delon, Burt Lancaster and Tony Curtis - in person. "Whenever an actor was in town, or filming at the Victorine Studios, they dropped by our store on the rue Paradis,"

His new boutique, Albert Arts, a stylishly contemporary white building located on number 5 Promenade des Anglais and a stone's throw from the showroom, carries a complete men's wardrobe of sportswear and tailor-made suits with accessories from ties to handsome leather luggage. The secret: perfect cuts, meticulous finishes, the finest fabrics, and a flair for casual elegance. Riviera-style.

Goldberg's career is an unusual "Made in Nice" success story that was a direct result, he says, of what he was able to observe as a child.

However, when Jean Goldberg opened a small elegant wood-paneled tailor's shop in 1950 on Nice's rue Paradis, little did he dream that his son, Albert, would someday follow in his footsteps and create an international fashion empire.

"While I growing up, I was already fascinated by my father's workshop," Goldberg recounts. "I studied at Monsieur Jean's school. It's where I learned everything, just by hanging around the store."

Goldberg's two other passions have always been soccer and cinema. "My parents wanted me to play the violin but I was no more interested in that than in schoolwork. I remember using my satchel and my violin as goal posts on the little square where we played soccer after school."

In later years, once Façonnable was launched, the label caught

Ultimately, Albert Arts was conceived to be more than just another menswear boutique. Lined with vintage photos of Cary Grant, Paul Newman, there are overstuffed club armchairs where you can catch the latest sports game on a giant screen.

on like wildfire. Goldberg says his biggest thrill was to meet some of his cinema heroes - the likes of Alain Delon, Burt Lancaster and Tony Curtis - in person. "Whenever an actor was in town, or filming at the Victorine Studios, they dropped by our store on the rue Paradis," Goldberg recalls.

"I've never been blasé," Goldberg adds with a smile. "When I was watching the European Soccer Cup on TV, I noticed that a Turkish trainer - a handsome guy - wore a white Façonnable shirt every single day of the games. I'm sure he had more than one in his suitcase! I was very touched."

The name Façonnable comes from the French noun 'façonner',

which means 'to fashion', and in a short amount of time the brand became synonymous with style. As a result of his expertise and exceptional talent the store's reputation grew, and by 1973 Goldberg had opened outlets in Monaco, Cannes, Saint Tropez, Lyon and Marseille. Yet it was not until 1984 that a Façonnable boutique came to Paris.

Four years later, Façonnable arrived in the United States with aplomb. The first US store opened on New York's Fifth Avenue in 1993, and within two years the brand was doing so well that a decision was made to expand its production in America, to include clothing and accessories for women.

However, despite being bought by US department store giant Nordstrom in 2000, Façonnable has never severed its roots with the Côte d'Azur. Indeed, design and product creation operations still remain in Nice.

So why, over four decades later, has Albert Goldberg chosen to start all over again in Nice?

"I was born in Paris but the war brought my parents to Nice," the designer says. "I've been fortunate to have travelled quite a bit, and had to be Asia and the US every six months. No matter where I've been, I'm always happy to be back. What I learned is this: the grass isn't greener on the other side!"

Goldberg also feels that lately, Nice is on the upswing with high-end development. "I'd like Nice's Promenade des Anglais to be right up there in the height of fashion, as it was when I was growing up," he admits. "I've often been asked to open a store on the Croisette in Cannes, but I've always refused, despite the international prestige of the Croisette." At the present time, Albert Arts will only be sold in Nice and distributed exclusively in the Parisian department store, Old England.

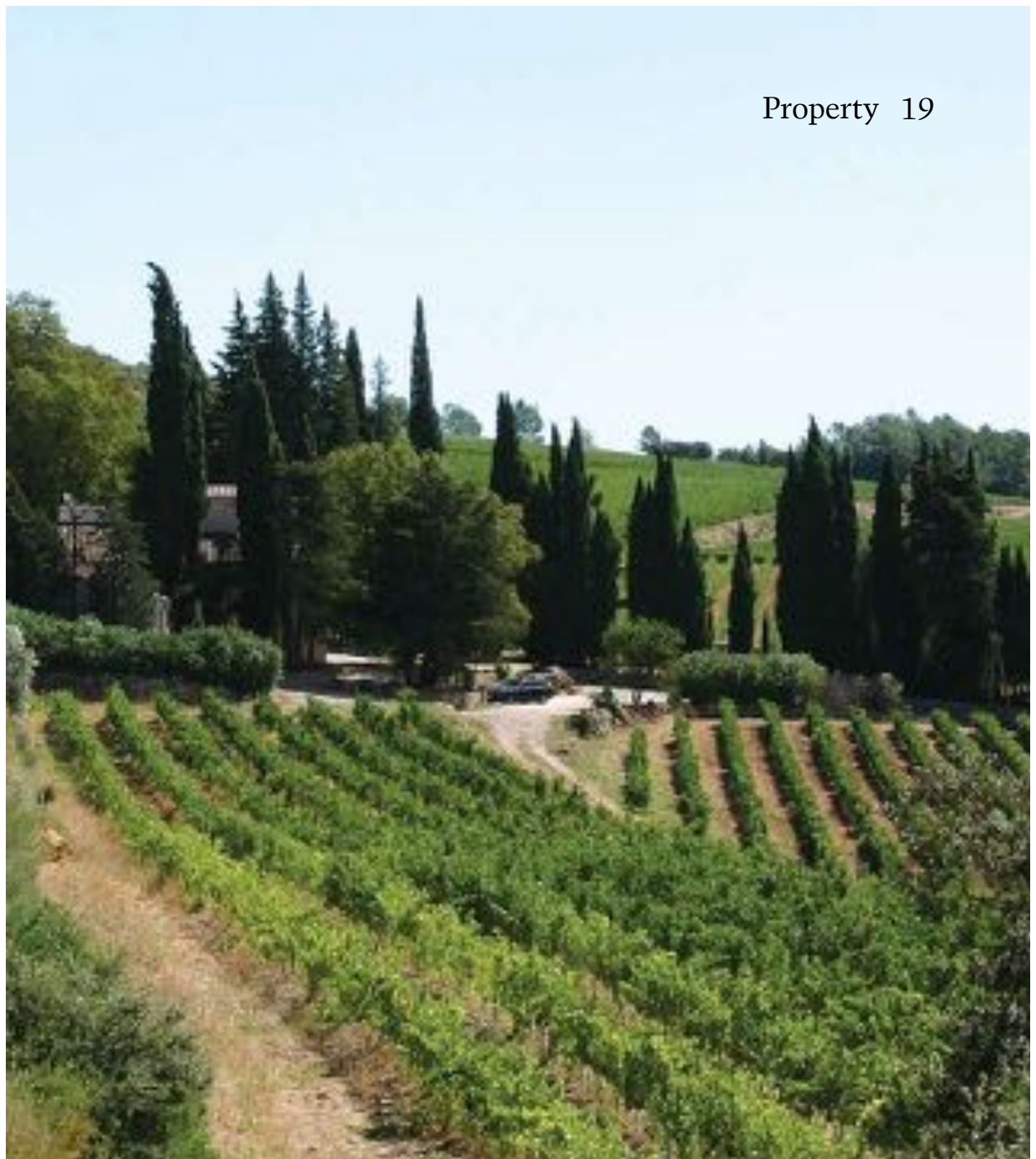
Ultimately, Albert Arts was conceived to be more than just another menswear boutique. Lined with vintage photos of Cary Grant, Paul Newman, there are overstuffed club armchairs where you can catch the latest sports game on a giant screen. Next month, the store will open a 1000 metre tailor workshop for special custom-made orders. The clients, who range from age 18 to 80, are likely to find a dazzling array of classic button-down shirts to choose from, for every generation.

But what I really want to know is the difference between the concept behind Façonnable and Albert Arts? "Eighty years," Albert Goldberg replies, without missing a beat. "It's the culmination of everything I've experienced during a lifetime."

"It's a perspective that is both young in style, and a little bit older, in terms of the maturity of my vision. The collections have already been planned up to 2020. For me, true luxury is waking up with this view. My globetrotting days are over and I'm back doing what I've always loved to do." Goldberg pauses, and flashes a mischievous smile. "The only difference is that now," he confides, "I have to put on my glasses to see the colours." //







Le Thoronet

This substantial country estate and working vineyard in the heart of Provence is a rare and exciting find.

Situated in the midst of the rolling Provencal countryside but only 40 minutes drive from the cosmopolitan port of Saint-Tropez, this vast estate extends to around 250 acres (100 hectares) of prime land, much of which is covered with vineyards and olive groves. There are facilities to produce the acclaimed wine on the Domain, which can then be stored in the impressive ancient vaulted cellars attached to the main house.

Within the handsome country house there are seven bedrooms, vast reception rooms, ample office space as well as a caretaker's house and contained guest apartments.

The estate, which is surrounded by a number of picturesque villages the nearest of which is Le Thoronet with its 11th century abbey, also has a large swimming pool, pool house and helicopter pad. The land lends itself to hunting, and the possibilities within the estate are limitless.



Price: €17 025 000
Ref 2051

carpediem@carlton-international.com



Saint-Tropez - Ramatuelle

This magnificent mansion lends itself to entertaining, with no less than three kitchens within the exceptional living space.



Located a short drive from the picturesque village of Saint-Tropez and only a few minutes walk from the renowned Pampelonne beaches, this stunning modern Provencal-style mansion is situated in a peaceful and exclusive community.

Renovated throughout to the highest standards, the unique property with superb sea views boasts six guest bedroom suites, a magnificent master bedroom suite with fitted wardrobes and private balcony, a spacious dining room with fireplace, an enormous living room with fireplace and exposed beams, a separate TV lounge and a total of three kitchens.

The residence, which is in a gated neighbourhood with direct access to the sea, is set in two acres (7000 square metre) of gardens complete with a fitness room, tennis court, 15 metre swimming pool and pool house.



Price: € 26 500 000
Ref 2117

carpediem@carlton-international.com



Le Muy



Imagine waking up every morning to these sensational and totally uninterrupted views of Provence.

This exceptional and quite unique plot of land is situated equidistance from Cannes and Saint-Tropez, which are a 30 minute drive away.

The plot, which is just over 110 acres (45 hectare) in size, would make an incredible setting for an extensive property with around one quarter of the land being flat and ideal for construction.

And although the plot of land gives the impression it is literally in the middle of nowhere, its location couldn't be more favourable. The A8 motorway is close by, which will take you to Nice Côte d'Azur Airport in about an hour, while Aix-en-Provence is an hour drive in the other direction.



Price: €4 400 000
Ref 2090

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High-end Horticulture

Forget croquet and lawn tennis. What today's design-aware homeowners want in their gardens are outdoor bars, hot tubs and contemporary artwork. **Nicole Swengley** reports.

Stroll around any residential area of Saint-Tropez or Cannes and it's clear that a quiet revolution is taking place in the garden. Homeowners seeking a stylish alternative to high-maintenance planting are filling their gardens with artwork and sculpture. "Toys" like petanque courts, model boating lakes and garden mazes provide amusement while chic exterior bars, outdoor kitchens and even hot tubs extend the options for entertaining.

The trend for garden galleries has developed from the current fascination with contemporary art and artists but is also a highly practical solution. Art creates all-year-round colour, interest and vitality and, unlike most plants and shrubs, needs neither pruning nor irrigation. "People are much more open-minded towards contemporary art these days," says landscape designer Paul Cooper. "They've seen artworks used externally in public spaces and they now want art in their own gardens. It's viewed as a luxurious treat, a very personal indulgence."

Weather-proof paints are generally used for outdoor paintings. Photographic prints can replace or enhance natural planting while one-off designs employing materials as diverse as enamel, ceramic, concrete, metal, willow and glass-encased fabric are commissioned by imaginative home-owners as freestanding pieces or to hang on garden walls. 🐾



Steel Eye by Allison Armour-Wilson
Above: *Paintings between glass*
 by Carole Waller. Photo: Jason Ingram



Stainless steel is another industrial-strength material that works well in design-conscious gardens. Known for her clear acrylic sculptures, Allison Armour-Wilson makes Steel Eye, a 2.5m diameter dish that compresses a reflected world into a perfect circular image. "You get a wonderful horizon line because the dish reflects the sky in equal proportion to the garden," she says. "It also captures the nuances of light and atmosphere brilliantly." A two metre version of the Steel Eye costs €13,200.

As well as offering visual treats, artworks can provide privacy or create an intimate enclosure within a large estate. Carole Waller, who is well known for her painted clothing and wall-hangings, can be commissioned to create semi-transparent screens comprising hand-painted silk encased in resin within UV-resistant glass panels, from €4,400 per panel. Her technique makes the floaty, transparent artworks tough enough to withstand storms without fading or reacting to light. "I paint directly on the fabric then etch away at some of the obscurity so the light plays through the material in different ways," she says.

Homeowners looking for high-octane impact, however, might consider the vibrant sculptures, inspired by algae and pollen grains, made to order by landscape designer, Tony Heywood of Conceptual Gardens. His Ooze designs are hand-carved from high-density, weather-resistant foam with coloured glass and resin "jewels" inlaid in an exterior-grade rubber solution. "All the materials are UV-stable and the jewels multi-faceted to catch the light," he explains.

Heywood can also be commissioned to make "Anthroscapes" - pre-formed landscapes hand-carved from expanded foam and covered in grass felt matting on which a wild-flower mix is scattered. "At first glance you just see classical rolling hills," says Heywood. "Then you notice

animal-like shapes in the landscape. You could even have a cave or gorge with plants growing through it." The landscapes are perfect for urban courtyards or roof gardens as they are mobile and very light yet can be bolted into a specific location. "It's a bespoke product," says Heywood. "But it's also very low-maintenance, requiring only simple watering." However they are also much more expensive at the outset. Tony Heywood's Ooze sculptures cost from €5,000 per sculpture whilst his Anthroscapes come with a €31,500 price tag.

On the bench sits a cut-out vicar drinking tea. A cricket score-board hangs nearby. "A garden like this is full of content which has a personal meaning for clients – almost like telling a story – and there's no reason why these installations can't be taken when people move,"

A more tranquil experience is offered by sculptor Simon Percival whose "water pictures" comprise a bronze or stainless steel frame within which a design is etched on glass, slate, bronze or stainless steel. A continual flow of water is activated by a hidden electric pump. Some home-owners set them in the ground while others locate them vertically within a wall. Either way, they provide a calming influence and add a pictorial quality to a garden or courtyard. "They look like framed pictures and people are intrigued by that," says Percival. 🐦



Paintings between glass by Carole Waller
Photo: Jason Ingram



Urban homeowners seeking a therapeutic escape from fast-track lives in places like Monaco, Hong Kong and central London are cultivating sophisticated and imaginative gardens high above the streets. Styles range from wild jungles to oases of Zen-like calm with rockscapes, ponds and even lawns turning previously unused areas into landscapes in the sky.



Where roof gardens were once awkward to plant and tedious to keep watered, technical advances in irrigation systems mean that fully-fledged gardens with beds and lawns can now be maintained relatively easily. Landscape designer [Paul Cooper](#) gave a central London property with no open space of its own an imaginative roof garden planted with *Prunus lusitanica*, lavender, bamboo, birch, evergreens and fern. A two-metre tall stainless steel gas fire is bordered on either side by glass-backed water features.



Cascades shimmer into a narrow reservoir, enhanced by underwater lighting, while back-projection screens behind the toughened glass turn into cool blocks of colour at night. Spotlights and a sound system, all hidden in stainless steel containers that double as seats, create drama and atmosphere.



"The owners anticipated using the space as an entertainment area but they've since become quite keen gardeners too," says Cooper, who charges from €6,000 per design.

Clever optical illusions, meanwhile, can conjure space literally out of thin air. Designer Martin Summers installed mirrors behind planted trellises in his own Chelsea rooftop jungle while Oriental doors and



ornate shuttered windows, built into walls, harbour the illusion of hidden vistas. Neon strip lighting was used by garden designer [Stephen Woodhams](#), to outline the black slate floor of one central London roof garden while another has LEDs (light-emitting diodes) to illuminate frosted toughened glass squares set in grey limestone.

He has also installed a hot tub in the roof garden of a central London penthouse having first strengthened the floor to take the load. "It's a very intimate space and you can lie back and enjoy a big sky which is otherwise hard to see in a city-centre," he says.



Ooze by Tony Heywood.
On the lawn outside Tate Gallery, London.
Photo: Clive Nichols

Former sculptor Paul Cooper takes a narrative approach to garden design. A request from a city-centre client for a "private jungle" resulted in a subterranean rocky grotto concealed beneath a planted dome. Inside is a smoke machine which puffs mist through the rocks, a sound system and a cascading fountain. In another part of the garden Cooper installed a bench beside an oval lawn where the client's children play. On the bench sits a cut-out vicar drinking tea (a self-portrait of Cooper). A cricket score-board hangs nearby. "A garden like this is full of content which has a personal meaning for clients - almost like telling a story - and there's no reason why these installations can't be taken when people move," says Cooper.

Homeowners who were previously satisfied with croquet lawns and tennis courts are now requesting far more sophisticated "toys". Cooper was recently commissioned to create a purpose-built petanque court within a large estate. "We filled a sunken garden with compacted gravel, planted the perimeter with lavender beds and added benches and a summer house," he says. "The owner uses it very much as a party venue." Another client asked him to enlarge an existing pond to create a lake for his remote-controlled model boats and Cooper has also built garden mazes using coloured Perspex panels within the planting. "Clients want gardens to have a 'play' aspect these days," he says.

Garden designer Stephen Woodhams, who has created contemporary gardens for homeowners in Saint-Tropez, Nice and near Grasse, says: "We're increasingly asked to create outdoor kitchen areas, particularly near swimming pools, with a permanent barbecue and chic bar. People want outdoor fireplaces to extend the season and they also want specially-designed areas within the garden where they can do yoga or a hot tub where they can chill out with a glass of champagne. Coming back to a restful, well-equipped garden at the end of a stressful day is a magical experience. It's all about nurturing. People want a different sort of fulfilment these days." //

- Allison Armour-Wilson www.allisonarmour.us
- Carole Waller (www.carolewaller.co.uk)
- Conceptual Gardens (www.conceptualgardens.co.uk)
- Simon Percival (www.artinthelandscape.com)
- Paul Cooper (www.paulcooperdesign.co.uk)
- Stephen Woodhams (www.stephenwoodhams.com)

Patrick Blanc

Botanist Patrick Blanc's incredible organic Vertical Garden, known in French as "Le Mur Vegetal," is an exciting and new way to grow plants without soil.

The only essential ingredients necessary to grow plants are water and the minerals dissolved in it, together with light and carbon dioxide. As long as these ingredients are plentiful, plants are able to grow any which way they can - up tree trunks, on buildings and on soil-less slopes.



Blanc's Vertical Garden merely aids the process in urban locations. It is made of three parts: a metal frame, a PVC layer and a layer of felt. The metal frame is hung on a wall providing an air-space. The PVC layer is riveted on to the metal frame and makes it water-proof. The final felt layer, made of polyamide, is stapled onto the PVC and it is to this layer that the seeds, cuttings or roots are attached. Watering and fertilisation are automated, and trickle down from the top of the wall.

Since the weight of the greenery is so light it is possible to create a Vertical Garden on any wall, whatever the size, indoors or out, in any climate.

"It's easy", promises Blanc, who says there is no end to locations needing his Vertical Garden. "All those difficult spaces where you don't expect to see greenery, what interests me is to



reintegrate nature where one least expects it", he explains. For big spaces, cost is about €600 per square meter, plus

labour. Small spaces are more complex and more expensive, in the region of €1,200 per square meter. Blanc, a prize winning Doctor of Science, is a 50-something Frenchman

who grew up outside Paris. Instead of playing football, the tradition on Wednesdays, he hunted for plants in local forests and fields. Later on, travelling the world, he noticed how hanging plants frequently grow from the top down, say, at cave entrances or the sheer rock-faces of tropical waterfalls.

"Plants don't always have to grow upward", he says. "They will adapt to the most inhospitable places, invent new forms and behaviours", says Blanc, who showed his first Vertical



Garden (now they are copyright) in 1994 at the Garden Show Festival International de Chaumont-sur Loire. His motto: "Horizontal is finished, but the vertical is still free!"



Admire Blanc's genius at:

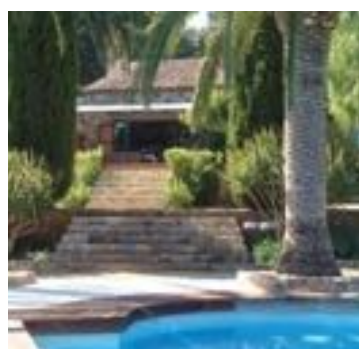
- Pershing Hall, Paris*
- Musee de Quai Branly, Paris*
- French Embassy, New Delhi*
- Marithe & Francois Girbaud Boutique, Manhattan*
- The Siam Paragon Shopping Centre, Bangkok*
- Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, Japan*
- Byblos Hotel, Saint Tropez*
- Marche des Halles, Avignon*
- www.verticalgardenpatrickblanc.com

By Margaret Kemp





Saint-Tropez



This stunning villa is a wonderful mix of old and new, combining ultra modern facilities with the traditional stone of an ancient farmhouse.

Located at the entrance to Saint-Tropez and a stone's throw from the picturesque hilltop village of Grimaud, this recently constructed villa enjoys complete quiet and spectacular views of the Provencal countryside.

The south-facing property has six bedrooms and bathrooms, a very spacious reception room and outstanding American-style kitchen, plus an independent guest or caretaker's cottage.

The gardens, which are beautifully landscaped with mature trees and flowering shrubs, boast a wonderful oversized swimming pool with pool house.



Price: €2 000 000
Ref 2115

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How culture defines a home

Despite the homogenizing force of globalization, deep cultural differences in architectural philosophies play out in the design of homes. To put this theory to the test, author and journalist **Jim Crane** visits houses in three of the world's most culturally contrasting nations - the United Arab Emirates, Bali and Sweden - and finds three very distinct models.

For Gulf Arabs, home is a personal fortress. Walls are thick. Windows are small and screened from prying eyes. Male visitors are sequestered out of eyeshot of the women. Concrete walls envelop the home and garden.

And when the steel entry gate slides back, the BMW that emerges has tinted windows. Rarely is it possible to study local Arabs going about their private business.

"Privacy in the Muslim world is a sacred thing," says Salah Kubba, the director of one of Dubai's largest architectural firms, Arif & Bintoak. "Everything is separate. There is private and public."

Contrast that view with modern homes in Bali and Sweden. These societies are among the least privacy-driven, and their homes are a study in openness and embrace of nature and setting. In fact, if many Swedes had their way, they'd live without curtains, walls - even clothes.

The view in Bali and in Sweden and more generally in the West is that the home is a shelter that embraces the outside world. The Arab home is oriented inward: half

refuge, half fortress. The enduring features that distinguish Gulf Arabs' homes from those in the West relate to strident requirements for privacy, especially when it comes to shielding women.

In Gulf Arab states like Dubai, the private sphere is *very* private. Visiting the interior spaces of a Dubai Arab home is akin to watching a geologist crack open a rock to reveal a beautiful geode. The home is a personal haven away from the dust, noise and curious eyes of the street. Gardens with shade and running water are especially prized, says Dariush Zandi, a prominent Dubai architect and author.

"You enter an oasis of your own. It's the sense of sounds amid the quiet, the coolness from the flowing water and the green shade which is precious," says Zandi, sipping a coffee seated on a bench in the miniature outdoor mall and gallery he designed. Nearby, a pair of fountains drip into a channel of gently burbling water. The breeze is freighted with the water's coolness. "All the decoration and the beauty face the inside."

The Gulf Arab home is laid out in radiating layers of accessibility. The layers grow ever more private as you move through the gardens to the servants' quarters, the kitchen, the men's quarters and finally, to the women's bedrooms.

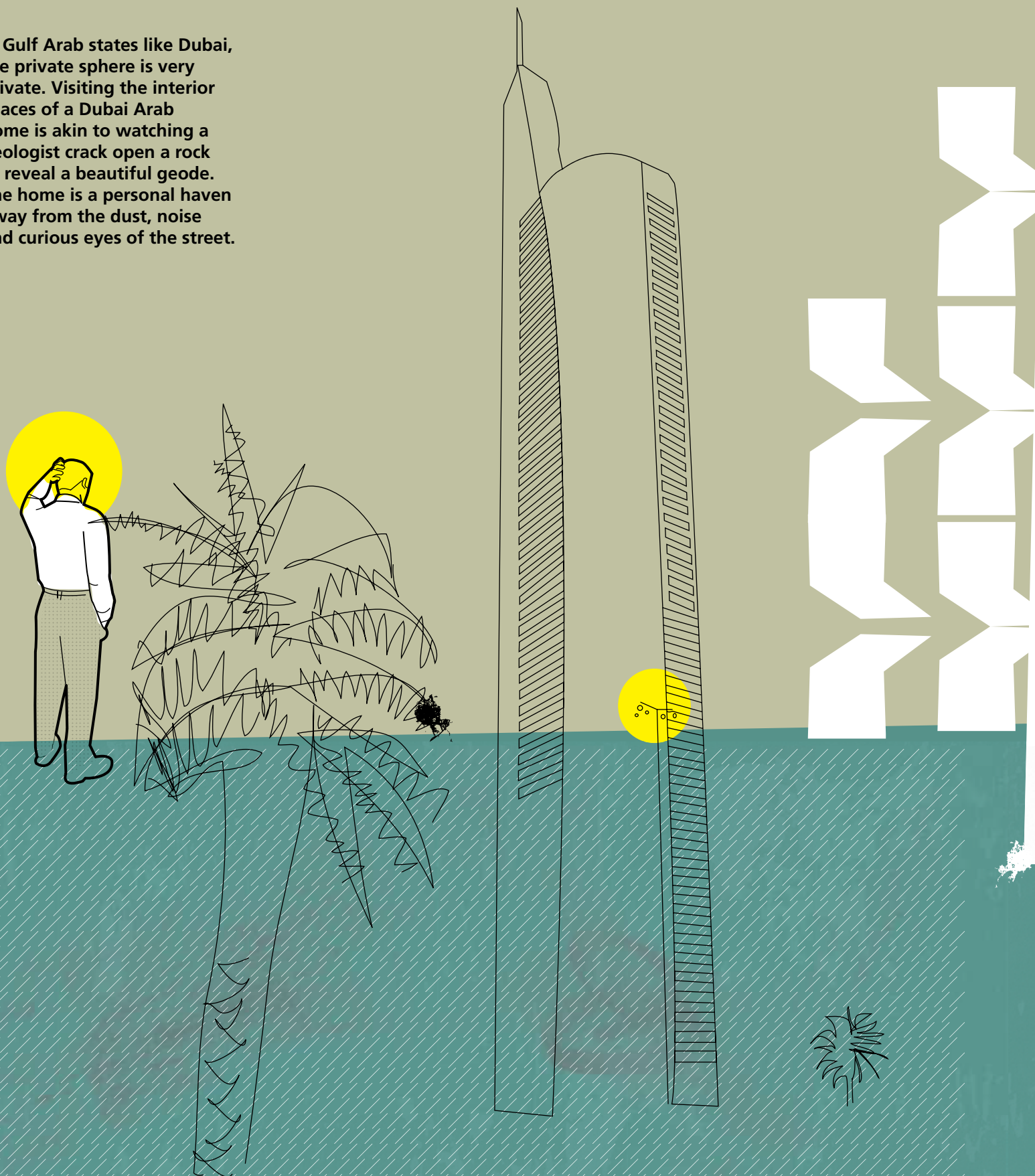
Zandi says his clients want the women's rooms to be the innermost, furthest from the street, sometimes even interior rooms. Many Gulf Arabs still view the women's bedrooms as the home's deepest sanctuary, known in legend as the *hareem* or harem.

"The idea of a sanctuary or a holy place also comes from the difficulty of getting there. As you go deeper, the house becomes more private," Zandi says. "In a traditional Arabic society, the whole house is off limits, except the rooms that are dedicated as transition space between the interior and exterior. It comes from the need for defense, in case a person is hostile."

In Bali, Hindu philosophies govern home design. Homes are oriented with the path of the sun's daily arc in mind, as well as the direction of the sea and mountains. When Nalla Krishna, a 52-year-old Balinese architect, starts his home design process, he sizes up his client - literally. He measures the client's height, the width of his hand, the length of his thumb, the furthest possible distance of his reach. When Krishna is finished, the house is custom-sized to the client's height and reach, as well as oriented to take advantage of natural daylight and prevailing breezes.

"My house will be smaller than yours because you are bigger than me," says Krishna, who heads the Balinese design firm HST. "Smaller people get lower windows, narrower and lower doors. That's because the door is for you, not for someone else." 🐘

In Gulf Arab states like Dubai, the private sphere is very private. Visiting the interior spaces of a Dubai Arab home is akin to watching a geologist crack open a rock to reveal a beautiful geode. The home is a personal haven away from the dust, noise and curious eyes of the street.



It's possible for a stranger to enter a Balinese home without realizing it. It happened to me. I wandered into what I thought was an outdoor pavilion and noticed a carpet, a stereo and then a bed and some crumpled clothes strewn across it. I quietly backed out. Instead of looking for a doorbell, I shouted "Hello!"

"We keep the flow very smooth between in and out," Krishna explains. "It's not very strict like in the West. Only the bathroom and bedroom have proper doors."

Swedes are so fond of sun and nature that their country homes have begun to look like glass boxes. Orientation of a home in its environment is important, so the house fits with the boulders and

"They wanted to bathe in the middle of nature," Bergerhoff says. "But the bathroom is completely exposed. If you sit in the neighbouring guest house, you have a full view of the bathtub."

trees around it, but also to maximize light during the long summer days. Artificial lighting and fireplaces are critical for long dark winters.

Unlike Arabs, Swedes don't mind exposing themselves to the world. Philip Bergerhoff, partner in the Stockholm architecture firm Widjedal Racki Bergerhoff, says walls of insulated glass in the bedroom – without curtains – are a staple of the upscale country houses he designs.

"Our clients would rather have the view than worry that someone can see them," Bergerhoff says. Here's something that wouldn't fly in Dubai: A fully exposed bathroom. One of Bergerhoff's country houses has an extraordinary view of lake and mountain, in gorgeous woodlands of spruce and birch. The client was so enamored of the setting that he asked for a wraparound wall of glass to encompass even the bathroom, so that he and his wife could lie in the tub and admire mountain and sky.

"They wanted to bathe in the middle of nature," Bergerhoff says. "But the bathroom is completely exposed. If you sit in the neighbouring guest house, you have a full view of the bathtub."

Not long ago, Dubai's fortress architecture was a practical matter. Until the 1960s, the lands that formed the United Arab Emirates – of which Dubai is one of seven city-states – were rife with poverty and tribal lawlessness. Dubai had no running water, paved roads or electricity. Men who today are billionaires or PhD scholars were raised in mud homes by illiterate parents.

Back then, the cooling technology came from Iran: the square windtowers that rose above the home to funnel breezes indoors. Privacy features also preserved the cool indoors: the thick walls of mud and coral, the wooden *mashrabiya* window screens that gave way to breezes but not prying eyes, the open central courtyard.

These days, of course, Dubai bears no resemblance to the goat-trammeled village of decades past. The city is now the largest financial center between Singapore and Frankfurt, packed with shimmering skyscrapers and cloven by 12-lane highways. But in the city's Arab neighborhoods, many of the old ways live on.

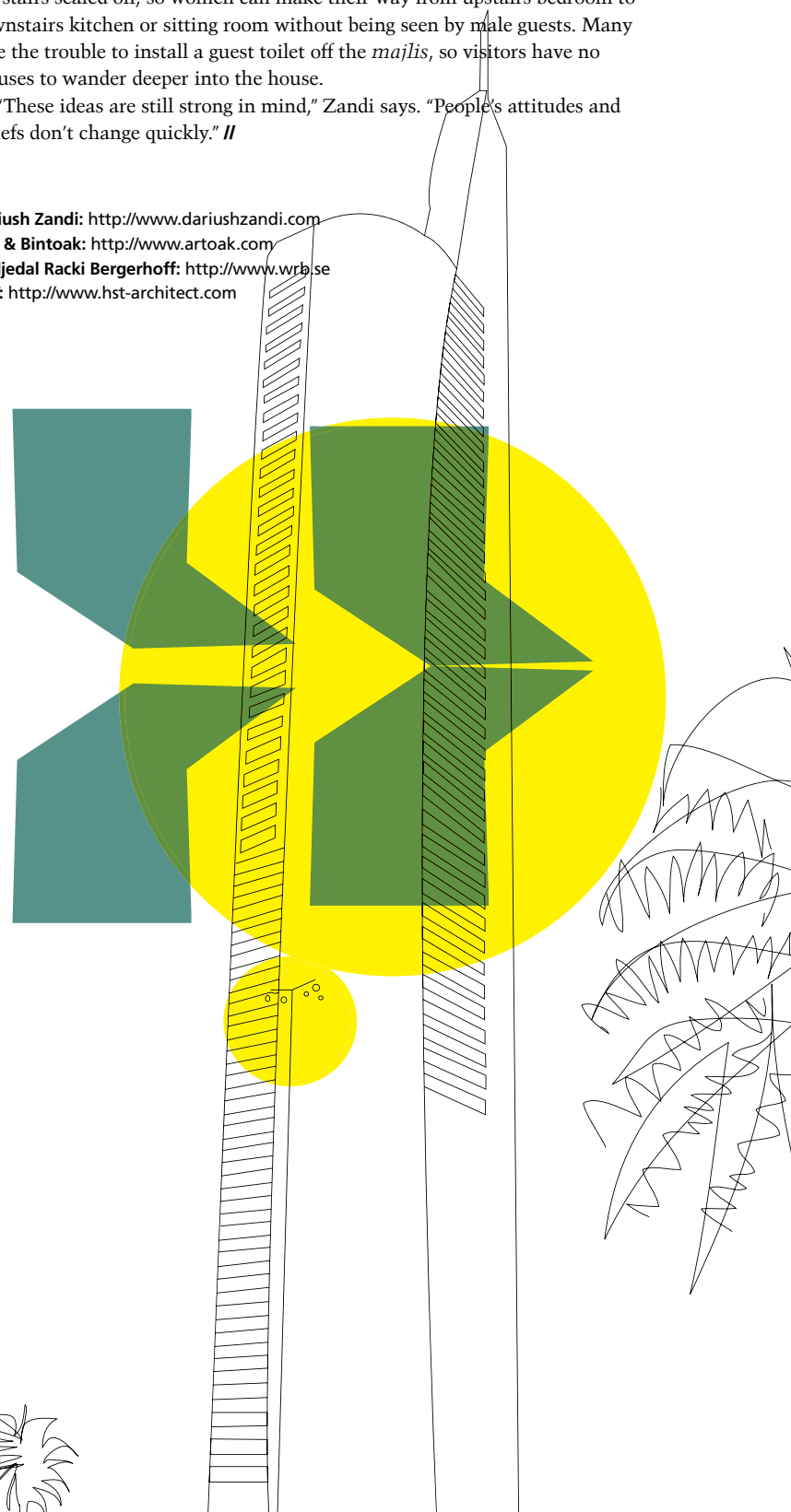
New homes are fortified by tall concrete walls and locked gates. The first storey can't be seen from

the street. Windows are tinted. Separate entrances serve residents, guests, and sometimes, staff. Inside the walls, the house and grounds are segregated, just like in the old days. The space for entertaining guests is sealed off. Many families keep a separate outbuilding still called the *majlis*, where men receive visitors.

Kubba says his clients decline key features of western homes – like the grand open staircases that are visible from the entry foyer. Arab clients want the stairs sealed off, so women can make their way from upstairs bedroom to downstairs kitchen or sitting room without being seen by male guests. Many take the trouble to install a guest toilet off the *majlis*, so visitors have no excuses to wander deeper into the house.

"These ideas are still strong in mind," Zandi says. "People's attitudes and beliefs don't change quickly." //

Dariush Zandi: <http://www.dariushzandi.com>
 Arif & Bintok: <http://www.artoak.com>
 Widjedal Racki Bergerhoff: <http://www.wrb.se>
 HST: <http://www.hst-architect.com>





Beauvallon



Ultra modern yet set a stone's throw from two of the region's oldest villages, these contemporary villas make the ideal family home.

The Domaine Beauvallon is a brand new luxury development between the charming and picturesque villages of Biot and Valbonne, and a short drive from the famous beaches of the Cap d'Antibes.

Wonderfully secluded yet only a three-minute walk to the local shops and schools, the four-bedroom villas have been finished to an extremely high standard. The light and spacious rooms look onto large terraces, all of which enjoy unimpeded southerly views.

Each of the properties, the majority of which have already been sold, have their own private pool and offer a unique lifestyle on the Côte d'Azur, either for families living all year-round or as a holiday home.



Price: Between €1 750 000 and €1 950 000
Ref 1089

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Biot

It's hard to imagine that this stunning villa was once little more than a stone barn holding sheep.



But the origin of this luxury three-bedroom property was an authentic stone bergerie built in the middle of the countryside just outside the medieval village of Biot.

The villa situated in the Domaine des Clausonnes now makes an exceptional home, with a spacious double living room with fireplace, a TV room with built-in book shelves, a newly renovated kitchen and three large bedrooms all with ensuite bath or shower rooms. The master bedroom, which opens on to a private terrace with beautiful sea views, also has a fireplace, wood beamed ceiling and office space. In addition, there is the possibility of adding a fourth bedroom to the downstairs living space.



The villa, which boasts a sauna and laundry room in the basement, is set in a stunning landscaped garden with a large heated swimming pool.

Price: €2 990 000
Ref 1953

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The secret to a perfume's success

There's more to a fragrance than a sensual scent, as Alexander McGillivray discovers when he meets **Steven van der Kruit**, creative trend director of one of the world's leading perfume and flavour producers, who identifies socio-trends of today which inspire the *parfums* of tomorrow.



Steven van der Kruit has a crystal ball on his desk that many marketeers would kill for. It's an Apple computer holding a careful selection of tens of thousands of images he shoots in a dozen locations around the world each year. Weird people, weirder clothes, strange billboards, high-tech gear, designer items, tattoos and graffiti are a few of the recurring themes.

But this is more than the scrapbook of an eternal traveller with an eye for the unusual. His photographs map the journey of emerging socio-trends, and explain, for example, how a series of unrelated skull and crossbone images emblazoned on T-shirts, billboards and walls in New York's East Village resulted in a new line of perfumes and cosmetics by iconic tattoo artist-turned designer Ed Hardy. Steven has an innate sense for assembling seemingly random events that shape marketplaces of the future.

He sees this as a key part of his job as creative trend director at Firmenich, arguably the most established fragrance and flavour producer in the world. The privately-owned company has supplied some of the biggest names in consumer marketing with custom fragrances for perfumes, cosmetics and household products for more than 100 years. At its headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, a team of world class perfumers and flavourists create the smells and tastes of an extensive range of products that are used everyday by billions of people worldwide. What's more, Firmenich's acclaimed olfactive creations frequently also come with exclusive insights, the result of Steven and his trend team's work.

The five-second history of fragrances is that they've been used by humans since the earliest times. They were derived exclusively from natural ingredients for

several thousand years until the commercialization of synthetic materials in the late 19th century. Just in time, according to Steven. "At the heart of every fragrance is the scent of a natural plant or flower - a rose, for example. But to get one kilo of rose oil, a truckload of buds must be picked early in the morning and the oil extracted by means of a time-consuming wax and distilling process. It's expensive and time consuming to scale up beyond a certain point. Imagine how many hectares of land you would need to meet current market needs?"

As demand grew in the 20th century, fragrance makers turned increasingly to science. Perfumes were originally a luxury of the elite but after World War II brands used mass marketing techniques to reach the average consumer, and soon the industry couldn't supply the demand by natural sources alone. By 2000, they had become a \$20-billion global industry using powerful analytical tools to map the molecular pattern of nature's many wonderful smells - from the scent of the sea which

At its headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, a team of world class perfumers and flavourists create the smells and tastes of an extensive range of products that are used everyday by billions of people worldwide.

you inhale on a coastal walk to the fragrant smell of a rose in bloom, or a freshly cracked nut - and replicate it synthetically with almost 100 per cent accuracy.

That's why most of the fragrance-based products you buy today are inspired by nature but, for the most part, made by man. Firmenich specialists visit remote parts of the world collecting samples of smelling natural plants - flowers, fruits and other smelling objects - that are dissected and analyzed down



to the last molecule in pursuit of their fragrant secrets. In addition to this, the company's creative trend director is likely to be on an expedition of his own, but his quarry is different: he's looking for prototypes of tomorrow's consumers and those consumers' behaviour.


Each year, Firmenich receives literally thousands of briefs from its customers for the formulation of new fragrances and flavours. The journey from product concept to commercial launch ideally takes about two years. Consumer insight, or more specifically - the ability to anticipate the life-styles of the future - can play a particularly important part in this evolutionary process. If Steven and his team are able to pre-empt what will happen in years to come, the product they inspire will be as relevant as can be on launch-day.

Steven explains it this way. Because we can't see or touch fragrances, they make fundamentally different demands on our senses and imagination. They're closer to dreams: subconscious reflections of how we see the world in general and ourselves in particular. As creative trend director, he thinks in terms of "stories" around which fragrances are created. And the inspiration for tomorrow's stories is already out there in the marketplace.

To understand the essence of what is 'trendy' today, you must rewind at least four years, says Steven, who likens the advent of a trend to the force of a tsunami. "Most people will be lying on the beach when they see this enormous wave coming and be surprised when they are suddenly confronted by it. It's like that with trends.

"However if you try to see changes in the water, if you know the system and find out where the force is coming from and why, you are able to anticipate it. We know there are seven plates in the world that have friction and when it happens under water there is an up-surge of water. And when that whole water mass hits a beach, there is a big wave. There is a mechanism to discover what's going on."

He adds: "Finding the trend is not the key. To see where they come from, and why they happen, that is more important than the change itself." 🐘

A man with grey hair, wearing a black t-shirt and black pants, is crouching on a red metal surface. He is holding a large camera with a long lens up to his eye, taking a photograph. A black bag is on the ground next to him. The background is a red metal wall with a diamond-patterned mesh window. The overall scene is outdoors, likely on a construction site or industrial area.

Steven and his team, cameras in hand, spend a majority of their time on the road, capturing raw material for a mapping process that examines dozens of possible future developments and results in the identification of street-level phenomena called *Trenz*.

Steven's photographs map the journey of emerging socio-trends, and explain, for example, how a series of unrelated images resulted in a new line of perfumes and cosmetics by iconic tattoo artist-turned designer Ed Hardy.



There are several essential steps in Steven's discovery process. The first, he describes as "finding the baby". "Nothing happens overnight. Whatever is going to influence markets in the timescale we're talking about is already born - it's somewhere, putting down roots."

The next step is knowing where to look. According to Steven, there are "a number of locations where a concentration of innovators is thickest on the ground, ranging from London to Tokyo to Sao Paulo."

The real challenge comes when he gets off the plane, however, because it's crucial to avoid the obvious. "True social innovation doesn't tend to flourish in the heart of the city or where you might expect it to - like in a store on Oxford Street, for example. If it's already centre stage, it's too late to learn anything useful."

And in each of these clusters of creativity there is a group of individuals who bring the change, from fashion designers to graffiti artists to a new music scene.

"I take pictures of things that keep cropping up. This is the beginning of the tsunami, when I still don't know the end of the scenario. But if they make it to another town, for example Ibiza, I can see a pattern and I can begin to predict change two years before it happens. A lot of scenarios don't make it."

Steven and his team, cameras in hand, spend a majority of their time on the road, capturing raw material for a mapping process that examines dozens of possible future developments and results in the identification of street-level phenomena called *Trenz*. There are currently eight of these on his radar screen, ranging from an interest in nature and sustainability to an ongoing individualism.

He demonstrates this by firing up his Mac to show a series of unrelated photos taken in the Lower East area of New York in September 2005. All of the pictures have one thing in common: the skull and crossbone

symbol. Six weeks later Steven spotted them in London's East End. The pirate image began to point to a new emphasis on personal self-expression.

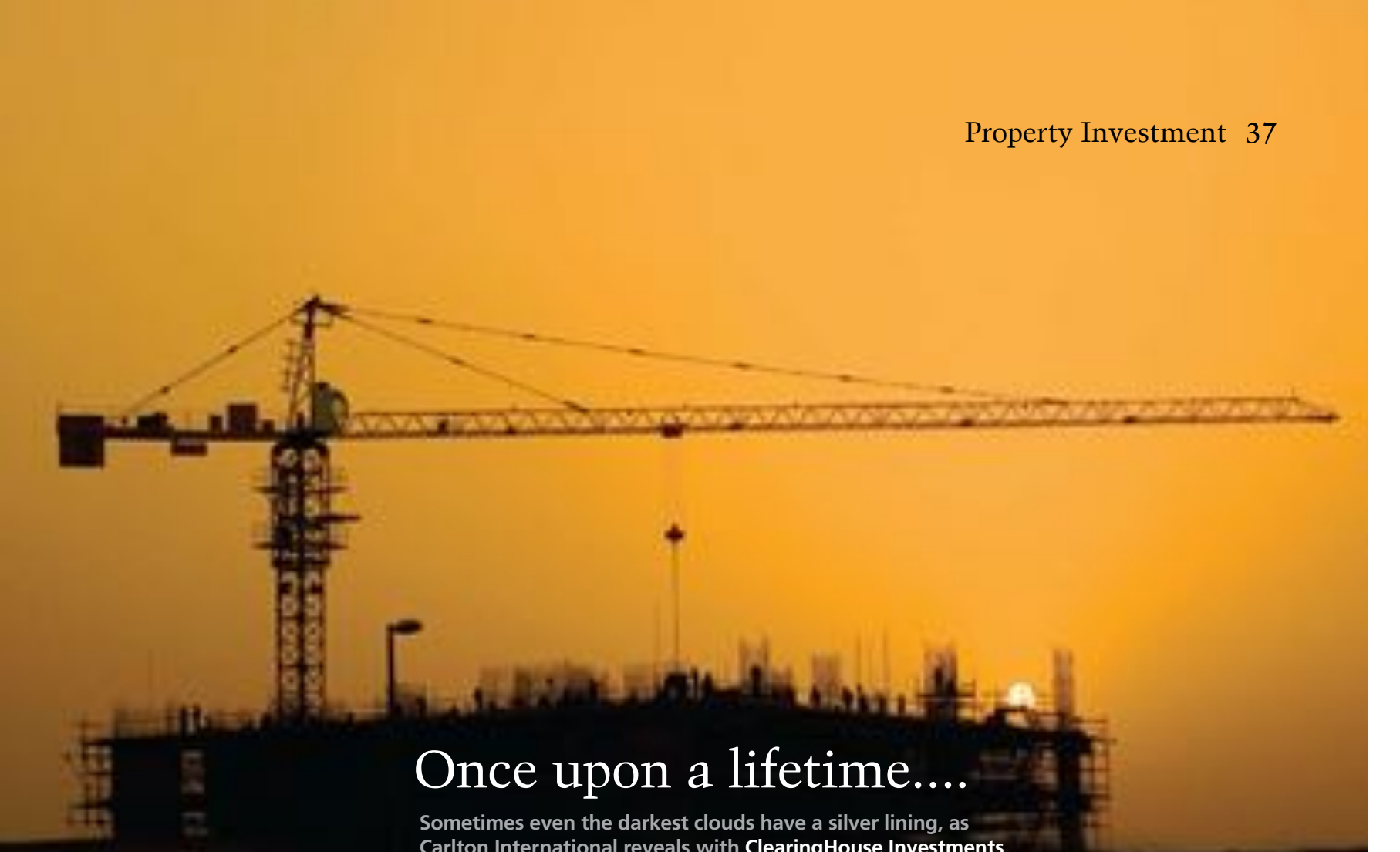
Cue: the launch of Ed Hardy's designer label, favoured by many rich and famous including David Beckham, Snoop Dog, Madonna and her daughter Lourdes. His clothing range includes striking T-shirts with skull and crossbones prints, and his Love and Luck fragrance also has the pirate symbol on its packaging.

Some trends are slow burners. In other cases, change can be sudden and dramatic. In August 2006, in a single month, the number of environmentally-related messages Steven picked up doubled.

"Significantly," he recalls, "this was exactly a year after Hurricane Katrina. It said to me that, regardless of the scientific debate, the street had made up its mind: climate change was here, now and dangerous. Before Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans, the US was fairly non-committal to climate change. But this was the turning point of the US consumer. Anyone involved in product positioning strategies needs to know this kind of thing."

Steven is at pains to stress that his ability to create a vision for the future is only part of the work carried out by Firmenich, which is by its very nature hugely secretive. "We are an artistic company with the best perfumers and flavourists in the world. My team's task is to give an additional source of inspiration to our creative teams, and by helping them to see what will happen in the future, we hope to heighten their senses even more to create the most beautiful smelling, the tastiest, or most affective product."

The next time you buy perfume at duty-free, select cosmetic products like soaps and shampoo, or even pick a humble household product off a supermarket shelf, your choice may have been influenced more than you'll ever know by Firmenich's creative teams and Steven's crystal ball. //



Once upon a lifetime....

Sometimes even the darkest clouds have a silver lining, as Carlton International reveals with **ClearingHouse Investments** which provides a golden opportunity for investors.

While there remains uncertainty as to the appropriate target for both private and institutional investors, the world looks to the equities market, the bond market, to commodities, to gold and to the currency markets to hedge against further declines and to recuperate past losses. The current economic downturn has been blamed on the sub-prime mortgage catastrophe and the parallel investment instruments linked to the insurance of sub-prime mortgages. "Property" is seen as the common cause, whereas in reality, it has just caught the common cold.

An investment solution has been embodied in the activities of *ClearingHouse Investments*, a division of the Carlton International Group, with thirty years of French Riviera real estate and two major economic and property crises experience. They provide the opportunity for investors to acquire numbers of apartments in buildings, recently built or nearing completion, under premium conditions.

France has avoided the sub-prime debacle largely because the banks have, historically, conditioned loan facilities on the capacity of the borrower to repay. Repossession laws are complicated. French banks have made specific efforts to avoid litigation with homeowners. On the Côte d'Azur the limited capacity for additional construction has restricted the over-building seen in many parts of the world. Demand, both for primary and secondary residences has, more often than not, exceeded supply.

In any economic downturn, aided and abetted by the failure of banking institutions to provide finance, the threat of unemployment and the anxiety caused by a constant bombardment of bad economic news, potential buyers capable of purchase, prefer to hold their financial resources in case of unforeseen circumstances.

The result is a decline in sales of new development apartments.

French legislation obliges developers to provide guarantees for building completion before they are able to contract the sale of any unit. In the event of the failure of the developer to complete the construction, the guarantors must ensure completion. It goes without saying that both the developer and the guarantors, wish at all costs to avoid falling into this trap.

ClearingHouse Investments has identified sites suitable for investment and negotiated substantial reductions in the tariff, for bulk purchase of multiple units. Once acquired, completed apartments can be offered for rental and managed by a licensed rental consultancy. Returns naturally exceed the norm, rental values having been unaffected by the current economic difficulties. At any time, apartments can be resold and with the inevitable upturn of real-estate values, in due course, will provide considerable capital appreciation.

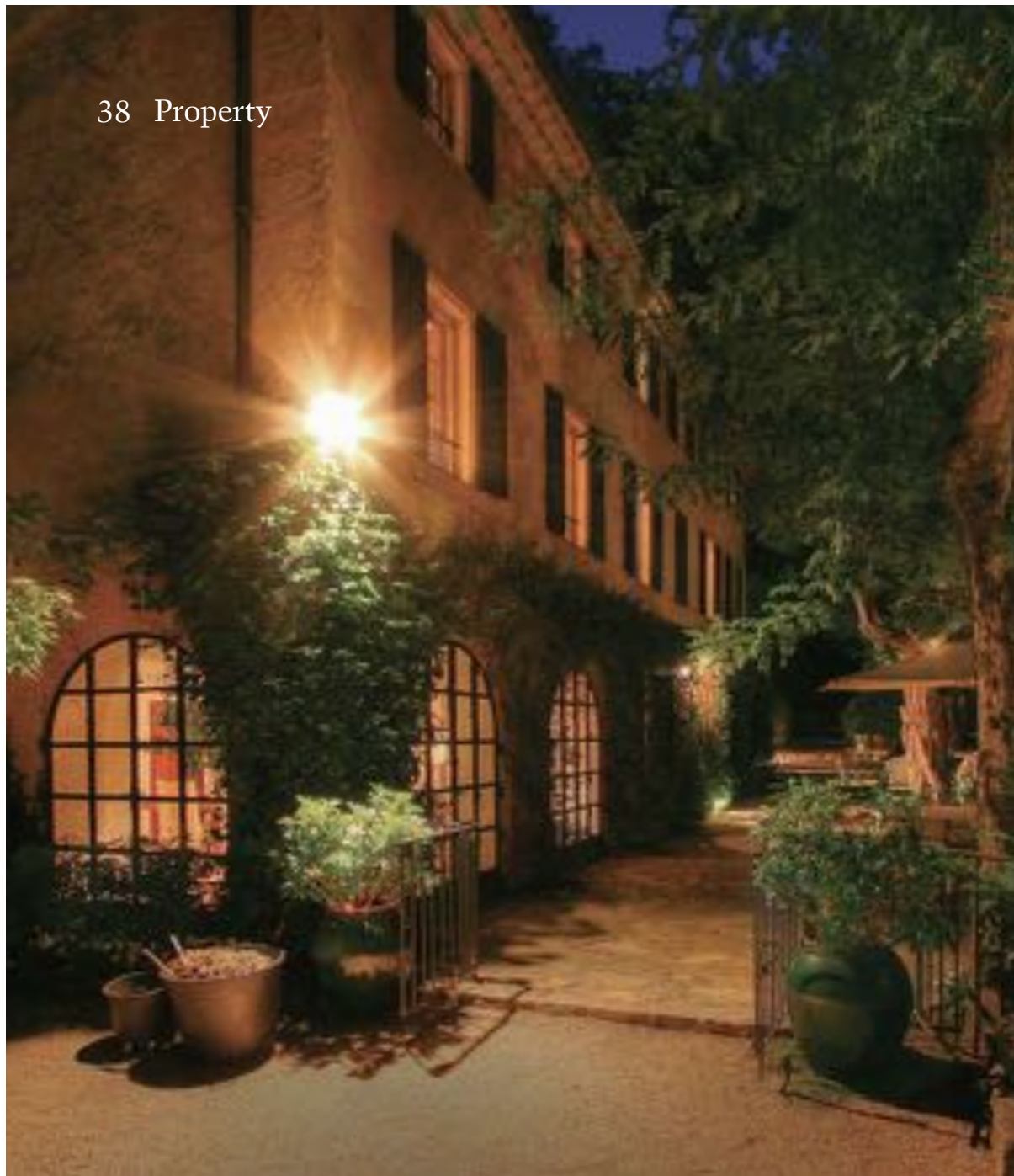
Experience has designed a pattern for future market tendencies: stagnation and the credit crunch imply that developers become unable to acquire land for building. The stagnation period lasts two to four years. Building permits require six months to one year and subsequent construction takes one or two years until delivery. Clearly, at best, new apartments will become available for occupation between 2012 and 2016. The current stock of unsold apartments will be imperceptibly exhausted by 2010 and demand will exceed supply, resulting once again, in the accompanying increase in property values.

For investors, discount levels depend on capital advanced and the numbers of units to be acquired and local banking institutions have agreed to assist in investment financing at competitive rates.

Kenichi Watanabe, president of Nomura Holdings, which acquired parts of Lehman Brothers after its collapse, called today's financial crisis a "once in a generation opportunity". With regard to Real Estate on the French Riviera, *ClearingHouse Investments* thinks so too. //

For specific information and investment opportunity details:
clearinghouse@carlton-international.com

ClearingHouse Investments has identified sites suited for investment purposes and negotiated substantial reductions in the price for bulk purchase.



Auribeau sur Siagne

The extensive grounds to this stately country mansion are breathtaking, and include a meandering river, a waterfall and large, emerald pond.

This beautiful and truly authentic Provencal country mansion is situated just 20 minutes from Cannes, and enjoys spectacular views over its 10 acres (4 hectares) of parkland, and the charming mediaeval village of Auribeau sur Siagne.

Renovated and decorated to the highest standard, the property includes an independent housekeeper's cottage and an ancient chapel converted into guest accommodation.

The main house has five bedrooms, a charming dining room and a vast vaulted lounge leading onto a large panoramic terrace.

Within the grounds there is a swimming pool, pool house and tennis court as well as the estate's own private river, waterfall and large natural pond.




Price: on demand
Ref 1385

carpediem@carlton-international.com





A fisheye view through a ski helmet's lens, showing a snowy mountain slope. A ski lift structure is visible in the distance, and evergreen trees line the right side of the slope. The image is framed by the metallic and plastic components of the helmet, including a strap buckle at the bottom.

One of France's oldest ski resorts is Valberg, situated at 1650 metres, which was built in 1936. Skiers and snowboarders can enjoy more than 90kms (55 miles) of runs over 52 pistes from this attractive, chalet-style town.

The south of France: a skier's paradise

Mention the Côte d'Azur to most people and they will immediately picture brilliant blue sea on a dazzling summer's day. But the area is also considered one of France's finest skiing regions, with mile upon mile of challenging pistes within a two-hour radius of the coast.

In fact, the reputation of the Alpes-Maritimes is such that it was recently named as official candidate to host the 2018 Winter Olympics. The city of Nice will compete against Grenoble and Annecy to become France's nomination, and then, if successful, go head to head with other candidates including Munich, Sofia in Bulgaria, and Pyongyang in South Korea.

Isola 2000, the largest resort of the Mercantour National Park which dominates the Southern Alps, has been selected to play principle host to the Alpine ski events. Other disciplines will be held at Valberg, Beuil-les-Launes, Auron and La Colmiane, all within a two-hour drive from Nice Côte d'Azur airport.

The fact that Nice has been chosen as an Olympic candidate is tribute to the caliber of skiing in the region and will put some of the smaller resorts which have until now attracted a largely local clientele, firmly on the map.

So, why not take advantage of the relatively un-crowded pistes now, before Olympic-fever sets in? And why limit yourself to a one-centre skiing holiday, when you could, like the Olympic champions, sample runs in a handful of resorts from a rental base on the Côte d'Azur?

Carlton International has an extensive portfolio of properties for rent throughout the year on the French Riviera, from Monaco to Saint-Tropez. The villas, which tend to get booked up for summer rentals earlier and earlier every year, come with an unrivalled welcome service which offers clients all the facilities of an exclusive hotel. Through Carpe Diem Touch, guests can benefit from a wide-range of health and beauty opportunities which complement the established limousine, private jet and personal chef services.

With the exception of villas towards Saint-Tropez, the majority of rental properties are all within a gentle drive to about half a dozen ski resorts. For consistent snow head to Isola 2000, a purpose-built resort with more than 120km (75 miles) of lift-served runs. Although the ski station, built in the 1970s, is anything but pretty, it offers varied terrain with excellent off-piste runs for snowboarders and advanced skiers.

Isola's nearest neighbour Auron shares a joint lift pass with the larger resort, situated across the valley, but tends to be less populated. Here, at 1600 metres, there are 135km (83 miles) of lift-served runs, including 15 reds and nine blacks.

One of France's oldest ski resorts is Valberg, situated at 1650 metres, which was built in 1936. Skiers and snowboarders can enjoy more than 90kms (55 miles) of runs over 52 pistes from this attractive, chalet-style town. Many of the pistes run down through shady gorges, meaning that the snow tends to last later into the season than other resorts. There are also more than 300 canons covering 80 per cent of the runs.

Situated slightly further away from Nice, but still within an easy day's drive, is the resort of Val d'Allos, in the Alpes de Haute Provence department. Here lie two separate stations, Val d'Allos 1500 (also known as Le Seignus)

and Val d'Allos 1800 (la Foux), which when combined with the neighbouring resort of Pra-Loup offer more than 230kms (142 miles) of slopes which rise to 2600 metres.

Perhaps the most popular with families is the resort of Gréolières, situated within an hour from the coast. The ski station - with a particularly friendly ski school which offers tuition in English - has more than 26kms (16 miles) of pistes with a view of the Mediterranean from the top. However, as Gréolières is situated so far south, the season tends to be short, from January to March.

Italian lovers should head to Limone in the province of Cuneo, just two hours from Nice where there are 80kms (49 miles) of slopes through fascinating countryside. And if you don't fancy returning to France that same day, why not book into the Wonderfall chalet for a weekend of pure indulgence. The luxury chalet, which is tucked away in beneath a cascading waterfall, is perfectly situated just 100 metres from the Limonetto ski. It sleeps 14 adults plus four children in seven spacious suites. Guests can also make use of the chalet's gym, Jacuzzi, sauna, and helicopter pad. //

Wonderfall and any of the villas included in our portfolio of rental properties on the following pages can be reserved by contacting Carlton International on +33 (0)4 93 95 11 11 or consulting the website: www.carlton-international.com

Cannes

This is an unusual hacienda style home with exceptional panoramic views over the Bay of Juan les Pins and the Cap d'Antibes, offering an outstanding living space with a beautiful terrace surrounding the heated swimming pool. An especially spacious home, it provides accommodation for up to 16 people and lends itself ideally to entertaining large numbers of guests with its independent guest house and studio, a billiard room with bar, a large reception room with breathtaking views, a professional kitchen, garage and space for numerous cars.



Ref 053
carpediem@carlton-international.com



Beaulieu

On a clear, crisp winter's day the views from this magnificent modern villa are second-to-none. The villa is set in stunning parkland on the hills above the picturesque port of Villefranche sur Mer, halfway between Monaco and Nice. With six ensuite bedrooms, the villa can easily accommodate 12 people with an additional suite for staff. The large reception room and separate dining room both open onto a wide terrace which in turn leads onto the stunning Mediterranean terraced gardens. There is also a wonderful infinity swimming pool, and pool house with a bar, dressing room and bathrooms.



Ref 352
carpediem@carlton-international.com



Villefranche Sur Mer

Where better to relax after a day's skiing than in front of the open fire in this beautiful Provencal villa which looks out over Cap Ferrat and the colourful port of Villefranche. Just a 20 minute drive from Nice airport and Monaco, the property offers a warm and cosy base from which to discover the region. Each of the four bedrooms, all equipped with a TV, opens out onto its own terrace. For those brave enough there is a stunning horizon swimming pool, with further steps carved into the ground leading guests directly down to the sea. The property, which has an independent one-bedroom guest apartment, also has a Hammam and lift.



Ref 301
carpediem@carlton-international.com



Beaulieu

This is an outstanding contemporary villa perched on the hillside above the stylish port of Beaulieu. Guests staying here will be able to get to the beach or marina in a matter of minutes, or - if they don't fancy moving at all - enjoy unforgettable views over Beaulieu, which means 'beautiful place' in French. The five-bedroom, five-bathroom villa has been meticulously designed to offer first class accommodation. With wooden floors throughout, the villa is especially light and airy. To the front of the property, overlooking the sea, there is a large swimming pool.



Ref 315
carpediem@carlton-international.com



Mougins

This wonderful contemporary villa, situated five minutes from the picturesque towns of Valbonne and Mougins, offers spacious accommodation in exquisite surroundings. The light and airy property, which has been tastefully decorated in modern style, enjoys unobstructed views towards the Bay of Cannes, which is no more than 20 minutes away by car. There are four bedrooms with ensuite bathrooms, an independent guest studio, a large living room with fireplace and a wonderful modern kitchen with dining room which opens on to a wide terrace. The swimming pool, which lies just in front of the covered outside eating area, is salt water.



Ref 361
carpediem@carlton-international.com



Cap d'Antibes

Even in winter guests sitting on the terrace of this beautiful Art Deco villa will enjoy all day sunshine and incredible views over the famous Garoupe beach on the exclusive Cap d'Antibes. The six-bedroom property has a particularly large outdoor seating area, with large comfortable armchairs under parasols facing the sea. Inside, the furnishings and decoration have been tastefully done, with a wonderfully welcoming open fire in the large double living room. The villa, which has a laundry room and independent suite on the ground floor, also has a heated swimming pool in the extensive grounds.



Ref 367
carpediem@carlton-international.com



Saint Jeannet

The views from any number of the 15 bedrooms in this sensational chateau are simply stunning and offer a perfect window on to the snow-capped mountains. Situated on a hill near the picturesque village of Saint Jeannet, the 11th century fortress built for the defence of France has been lovingly restored from ruins to a very luxurious residence which provides the perfect location for holidays, high profile weddings and corporate events. The chateau is surrounded by terraces and beautifully landscaped gardens, with a luxuriant 18m by 9m swimming pool with an infinity waterfall and Jacuzzi. The pool house has a small kitchen and bar so guests can eat and drink by the poolside.



Ref 371
carpediem@carlton-international.com

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TERRAZAS DE COSON
Dominican Republic



Dominican Republic - Samana



This romantic hideaway on the palm-fringed white beaches of the Samana Peninsula offers a rare and exciting opportunity to buy a profitable hotel business.

The magnificent waterfront hotel is set in around 2.7 acres (11,000 square metres) of land in a spectacular location on the Peninsula of Samana, the Caribbean's Côte d'Azur.

The hotel consists of a reception and restaurant with seating for 60 guests in one building, while a further annex accommodates seven suites. There are also five charming bungalows in the tropical gardens.

The property, which is fully quipped and tastefully decorated in a Caribbean style, is being sold furnished. The hotel is a profitable business and a turnkey opportunity. It also offers the possibility of additional construction.



Price: € 1 500 000
Ref 1761

carpediem@carlton-international.com



Dominican Republic: Las Terrenas

The views from this elegant villa perched on a hillside just minutes from the beach are breathtaking.



This beautiful house is located less than ten minutes from the bustling town of Las Terrenas and a mere 600 yards from the palm-fringed beach. The international airport is also a short drive away.

The luxury villa consists of three large bedrooms, all with ensuite bathroom or shower rooms, a large fitted kitchen and spacious living room.

The property is exceptionally light, with sun filling the rooms through large bay-windows which open on to a large swimming pool and terrace.



Price: €530 000
Ref 1762

carpediem@carlton-international.com



Dominican Republic: Jardines de Coson



This exclusive project of villas and apartments nestled in an oasis of tropical landscape at the water's edge offers the perfect opportunity to buy a home from home in the Dominican Republic.

The first-class residence, which is completely integrated into the natural environment and surrounded by coconut trees, consists of 53 villas and 63 apartments just two kilometers from the centre of Las Terrenas.

This picturesque former fishing village has become a bustling cosmopolitan town only 40 minutes from the new international airport and just over two hours drive by car from the capital, Santo Domingo.

Five villa designs, almost all of which have their own private pool, and spacious apartments have been developed to suit all needs. Future residents will also benefit from an elegant club house, with bar and snack restaurant, a vast swimming pool, a fitness centre and business services together with property management and rental facilities.



Price: from 270,000 to 1,128,844 euro
Ref 2013

carpediem@carlton-international.com



Lydia Courteille

A chance meeting with an antiques dealer changed Lydia Courteille's life. Had she not walked into his boutique more than two decades ago, the Parisian might well have ended up designing oil rigs instead of some of the world's most stunning haute couture jewels. She talks to Margaret Kemp.

I was born in Paris, I love this city and never stay away for long. I live overlooking the Arc de Triomphe and every day I open the curtains and say, "Ah! Paris". It's a never-ending love affair.

I studied at the Ecole de Chimie (ESPCI) where my specialist subject was geology and petrol. But when I was offered a stint on a petrol platform I declined. I knew my Manolos wouldn't go down that well, although I also knew it would be a great way of meeting guys with similar interests!

One day I walked into a boutique on rue Duphot, behind the Chanel boutique, where I got talking to the owner, Monsieur Jacquet. I was admiring the intricate pieces on display when I realised my focus should be gemmology. Fascinated by antique jewellery, wanting to discover more, I took a job in the boutique. Subsequently I was elected a member of the National Institute of Gemmology.

All my collections have names. They may be a take on gothic vanities, my secret garden, cameos. They are all conversation pieces, one-offs, and give the wearer an air of intrigue and mystery.

Without the help of a petrol platform I got married and became pregnant with Thibault, who now works with me in my eponymous jewel-box boudoir style boutique on rue Saint Honore.

These days I travel the world for business and pleasure, but my life predominantly revolves around my two Paris boutiques, designing and showing my collections. I won't give names of my clients, but let's just say I have "le tout Hollywood", Karl Lagerfeld is a great friend and my collections are available all over the

world, at Brown's in London, LA, Moscow, Peking, Hong Kong, Milan - everywhere.

Wonderful things happen to people who wear my pieces, and they return time and again to tell me. Today a faithful client popped in and fell in love with a unique antique coral ring, without even asking the price she took it. "It's the season for coral, so I must have it", she told me.

And my client was correct, there are seasons for stones. Think Jade, Turquoise, Coral for spring/summer; Sapphire, Garnet, Oriental Chrysolite for autumn; and White Sapphire, and Turquoise for winter.

My favourite opals are year round stones. The other day an elegant gentleman spent a long time looking in the window. Finally he rang the bell and I let him in. "The name is Opal, "Neville Opal," he told me. "My family come from the Imperial Court of Russia and we have a very important collection, of course". Personally, like Monsieur Opal I prefer opals to diamonds, but that's a matter of taste.

I buy almost daily from my contacts in Paris, so clients either choose a piece by, say, David Webb, Madame Boivin, Suzanne Belperon, Juliette Moutard, or one of my unique pieces. All my collections have names. They may be a take on gothic vanities, my secret garden, cameos. They are all conversation pieces, one-offs, and give the wearer an air of intrigue and mystery.

My days are often taken up with journalists, stylists and photographers who borrow pieces for glossy magazines. Or couturiers such as Alexander McQueen and new young talent like Alexis Mabille who come to choose pieces, say, a diamond and coral skull antique brooch. Or elaborate cuffs, featuring imaginary animals, serpents, monkeys and fish in precious stones. The couturiers say my pieces are the icing on their cakes, the finishing touch. This makes my day.



I begin with antique pieces which I transform first by sketching, then give my scribbles to a workshop. All my designs are copyright. I buy stones and trinkets wherever I am. Recently I was in Provence, where I not only bought an old farmhouse, but, trawling through a tiny village I found some amazing black coral in a souvenir shop. I'm very excited about my house, in the heart of the lavender fields, I will get inspiration, and if nothing happens I will at least be able to sit back and relax!

I like to discuss my work with clients and friends over lunch at Costes, on rue Saint Honore. The Napoleon III-style of the purple and gold rooms reminds me of my creations. Dinner can be at "La Laosian", a favourite Chinese in Belleville, Paris's Chinatown, at an authentic French bistro or, my favourite, the sumptuous Grand Vefour, where Napoleon, Josephine, Victor Hugo and Colette once dined. It's a heavenly experience and the chef, Guy Martin is a great friend of mine.

My boutique is located next door to Jean Paul Hevin, who makes jewels from chocolate, and I often pop in there with Thibault for a hot chocolate, an éclair, or some marron glaces. Hevin also believes in seasons for his chocolates and pastries.

When I'm not thinking about a new idea for a collection, I tend to focus on food! When I travel I bring back caviar from Turkey, and chocolates, truffles and dried fruits from Bernard Dufoux in La Clayette, Burgundy. My cupboards are stuffed full of products from India, Brazil, Jordan, Costa Rica, Burma, if only I had time to use them!" //

www.lydiacourteille.com



Beauty Set In Stone

Pictured: The Amalfi contemporary slipper bath

Stylish, distinctive QUARRYCAST® natural volcanic limestone baths from British brand Victoria & Albert are the perfect choice for any beautiful home. Cast in a single piece so there are no panels or seams, the baths come in styles from cutting edge contemporary to classic period looks and in sizes from luxuriously large to perfectly petite.

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