

Castles in the sand

for under £100,000

IT'S STILL POSSIBLE TO GET A BOLT-HOLE NEAR THE BEACH FOR A SNIP, EVEN IN DISTANT DREAM LOCATIONS. WHICH OF OUR HALF-DOZEN HOTSPOTS TICKS THE MOST BOXES FOR YOU?

WORDS AMY CARROLL PICTURES SUPERSTOCK, GETTY



VENEZUELA

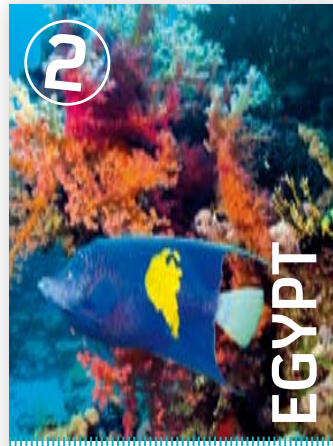
What's it like? Isla Margarita, off the north coast of Venezuela, is sparking a lot of interest. Formed from two peninsulas linked by an 18km spit of sand, it's tropical and mountainous, with everything you'd want for an idyllic Caribbean holiday. Its property market is taking off due to its improving tourism, economy and infrastructure. It offers diving and snorkelling, golf, horse riding and miles of white sandy beaches.

Getting there: Fly direct from the UK to Porlamar in nine hours, or fly to Caracas on the mainland and take a 35-minute ferry link.

Seasonality: The island basks in sun for 340 days a year and there are no defined seasons. It's a year-round destination, but for Venezuelans, Easter to September is high season.

Why buy there? It's a rare early-bird investment opportunity with beach-front property available for 70 per cent lower than on most other Caribbean islands. Rental yields can reach up to 12 per cent.

The buying process: Margarita is a tax and duty-free zone, with some developers putting the property into an off-shore company for you, so you only pay three per cent on top for legal and admin costs. All buying costs, including your purchase, have to be paid in Venezuelan Bolivares (VBS) – and in order to go through the buying process, you'll first need to register at the government offices.



EGYPT

What's it like? It's best known for its 7,000-year history, pyramids and pharaohs but Egypt has a lot more to offer. For example, it has Dubai's hot climate but with shorter flight times from Europe and cheaper property. The Red Sea coast has white-sand beaches and fascinating marine life, and is a popular family destination. Sahl Asheesh, 20km south of Hurghada, offers robust investment opportunities. The shoreline, mostly privately owned, is a precious commodity, so head a few rows back from the coast.

Getting there: Fly to the coast in five hours from the UK; easyJet now flies to Hurghada from Gatwick.

Seasonality: Egypt has sunshine for most of the year, with light showers in February and March. The tourist season peaks from October to May.

Why buy there? The property market is riding on the success of an established tourist market and the effects of the government's investment in infrastructure. The number of Brits visiting increased to one million a year by the end of 2006 and domestic interest in new developments is high, pushing prices up by 50 per cent year-on-year.

The buying process: The Egyptian government is easing the path for foreign investors, lowering the registration fee from 12 per cent of the property's net value to a modest three per cent.



What's it like? Goa is located halfway down India's west coast, with 105km of coast and 40 superb beaches. It is called the 'Beach Capital of India' and attracts more than two million visitors each year, delivering the escapist dream of a sandy palm-fringed coastline, broken only by creeks, estuaries, and charming fishing villages backing onto lush coconut groves. Investment property is mainly off-plan units around pretty beaches.

Getting there: There are direct flights to Goa from the UK, taking an average of nine hours.

Seasonality: It's a year-round destination, but is best enjoyed between October and March.

Why buy there? Because of its low starting prices, off-plan property in Goa has risen in value by 30 per cent per year. Bargain property can still be found and the year-round warm climate makes for rental yields of six to eight per cent. This may be India but it has a decent infrastructure, with reliable street lighting, even in rural village areas.

The buying process: A ten to 20 per cent deposit is payable on signing an agreement of sale and total buying costs are around five per cent of purchase price. Foreign nationals cannot hold a property title until they apply for residency – and as visas are limited to 180 days, this can put a spanner in the works.



What's it like? Boasting cheap air fares from Europe, low-cost living, white sandy beaches and a rich culture, Thailand pulls in the tourists. The market on the mainland has quietened down, but there are pockets of activity, such as in Bangsae and Mae Phim, east of Bangkok airport and on the east coast, where resorts with golf courses attract a wider audience. The islands are seeing a lot of activity, too – Koh Chang, Koh Samui and Phi Phi are popular, and property here can yield good returns.

Getting there: Flights from the UK to Bangkok take 12 hours. Direct flights to Koh Samui go from Hong Kong, Singapore and Kuala Lumpur.

Seasonality: The peak season is November to February. In October the monsoon starts, but it's still warm.

Why buy there? It's an established tourist destination, with occupancy rates of over 80 per cent year-round. Koh Samui is the jewel in the crown, with direct flight links, unspoilt beaches and a cool reputation. Thailand is relatively undiscovered in terms of property investment, so it still offers emerging-market value.

The buying process: There are restrictions for foreigners wishing to own more than a part-share in land or businesses in Thailand but there are ways to overcome them: 30-year leases and setting up a limited liability company are options, but seeking legal advice is essential.



What's it like? Turkey has it all – sun, sea, mountains and lakes, ancient history and a rich culture, and 8,000 km of fabulous beaches. Sarigerme, on the Med coast, is going through a complete makeover, with new hotels, golf courses and marinas under development. Side, on the same coast, 45 minutes from Antalya airport, is also renowned for its beaches, while Altinkum, Bodrum – the St Tropez of Turkey – and Marmaris remain popular with Brits.

Getting there: There are plenty of flights from the UK to Turkey, with Aegean Flights and Thomas Cook to name but two; easyJet fly from Gatwick to Dalaman.

Seasonality: The summer season runs for approximately six months, from June through to September. Resorts with golf courses tend to have a longer season.

Why buy there? Each day, Turkey comes a step closer to being a full member of the EU, which should encourage a steep increase in property value. The government hopes to double the number of annual visitors to 63 million by 2023. New roads, marinas, golf courses and airport terminals are transforming the coast.

The buying process: Buying costs are five to six per cent, excluding legal fees. There's also compulsory earthquake insurance, ranging from £40 to £100 per year.



What's it like? Brazil is enjoying a surge of interest from younger, more adventurous investors and holidaymakers. Natal, in the north-east, has a pristine coastline with crystal-clear water and soft, golden sand. It's ideal for watersports, swimming and snorkelling and attracts surfers between June and August. Close by, Pipa is a hit with young people because of the low cost of living and outdoor pursuits.

Getting there: Direct flights from Gatwick to Natal take seven hours.

Seasonality: The area has an average of 300 days of sunshine each year. May to November is the hot season in Natal.

Why buy there? It's one of the hottest emerging property markets around. As well as attracting tourists all year, Natal, on the north-east coast, has a good infrastructure and offers value for money in terms of shopping and eating out.

The buying process: Brazil offers buyers 100 per cent ownership of land and property. You'll need a CPF (a registration number for any administration). On purchasing your property, you'll pay the ITBI, a transfer tax which totals (with other costs) two to three per cent of the property's value. If you sell and buy in Brazil, within 180 days of your sale, CGT of 15 per cent is waived as long as proceeds are re-invested in another property in Brazil.

TURN OVER FOR
BEACH PADS UNDER
£100,000

BEACH HOMES

 Budget locations



Six of the best

WE WERE SPOILT FOR CHOICE WHEN PICKING THE BEST BARGAIN BEACH PROPERTIES. HERE WE SHOWCASE APARTMENTS, TOWNHOUSES AND VILLAS, ALL WITHIN STROLLING DISTANCE OF A BEACH. SEE THE 'MAKING THE MOVE' PAGES IN THE SECOND HALF OF THIS MAGAZINE FOR MORE WORLDWIDE CONTACTS



1

Spades and spas

Where Isla Margarita, Venezuela
Price from €79,000 (£63,000)

What you get One and two-bed apartments overlooking the pristine white sands of Caracola Beach. This fabulous spa resort boasts swimming pools, a luxury spa and gym, and exotic landscaped gardens.

Contact Emerging Earth: 0845 604 1208; www.emergingearth.com.



2

Diving paradise

Where Soukhna, Egypt
Price from £45,000

What you get Fully-furnished apartments and detached villas, with private beach and pools. The development offers fantastic, world-class deep-sea diving and sports, as well as shops in easy reach.

Contact La Siesta: 0774 605 5628; www.lasiestaegypt.com.



3

A pad in the beach capital

Where Goa, India
Price from £28,000

What you get Sun Springs is a new resort development of one to three-bed apartments in a popular resort in North Goa. It is gated, with 24-hour security, a pool and a restaurant on site. Five minutes from the beach.

Contact DSR: 0800 634 237; www.davidstanleyredfern.com.



4

Modern mainland resort

Where Hua Hin, Thailand
Price from £19,990

What you get Contemporary living in a luxurious townhouse designed to reflect the spectacular surroundings. Just 500m from a stunning beach and boasting a 15m swimming pool and a private terrace. Studios also available.

Contact The Beach Village: 0066 09594 3367; www.thebeachvillage.net.



5

Get the measure of the Med

Where Antalya, Turkey
Price from £82,700

What you get Just 300m from the fabulous Konyaalti beach, these one and two-bed apartments are located around a large pool, on a green-field site. Close to restaurants and shops, as well as winding walking trails.

Contact Spot Blue: 0208 339 6036; www.spotblue.co.uk.



6

Lush and luxurious

Where Natal, Brazil
Price €81,000 (£63,700)

What you get One and two-bed apartments or two-bed villas on the beachfront, overlooking a lagoon and set in tropical landscaped gardens with coconut trees and fountains. The resort boasts on-site leisure facilities.

Contact Experience Int: 0800 612 901; www.experience-international.com.

