

Marinas and waterside living

As an island race it is only natural that we Brits should love the sea. Combine this enthusiasm with our passion for buying property abroad, and it is no surprise to learn that waterside living is one of the fastest-growing trends in the property world, especially when it includes a berth at a nearby marina, says Cathy Hawker

From old favourites such as the Caribbean and the Mediterranean to newer destinations such as the Seychelles and Thailand, impressive, state-of-the-art marinas are being built alongside property developments.

As the boat industry reports booming sales and a global shortage of larger mooring spaces, marinas are beginning to rival golf resorts, that other staple of overseas property buyers, in popularity. And you don't have to be a sailor to enjoy them: landlubbers are as keen to live beside the water and enjoy the upmarket buzz as sleek yachts slip in and out of harbour.

So grab your deck shoes and imagine waterside living in one of these glamorous locations.

Mallorca – Puerto Portals

The Balearic island of Mallorca has an excellent infrastructure, particularly in the popular south-west corner, where the marinas of Andratx and Puerto Portals have taken over from the South of France as the place to berth, according to Peter Hilton of Knight Frank associate Vida Balear. "From Mallorca, the largest Balearic island, sailors have a wide choice of deserted bays and beaches to explore," he says. "The island attracts a wealthy clientele now, with Michelin-starred restaurants and excellent boating facilities."



Mallorca – Puerto Portals, €595,000 (£413,850)

Vida Balear: 00 34 971 45 04 22; www.vidabalelear.com
Knight Frank: 020 7629 8171; www.knightfrank.com

Engel & Völkers is selling this two-bedroom apartment in the Silverpoint development overlooking the chic Puerto Portals marina. From the south-facing terrace, which has open sea views, you can keep an eye on the swanky yachts below, and there are plenty of smart restaurants and bars on your doorstep. The charming Mallorcan capital, Palma, is five minutes away by car, while the international airport, well served by budget carriers, is 15 minutes away. "Property overlooking the port is always sought-after, often not making it on to the open market," says John van Eenennaam of Engel & Völkers. "Portals is one of the most

popular luxury ports in the Med." Priced at €595,000 (£413,850).

Engel & Völkers, Puerto Portals office: 00 34 971 67 68 63; www.mallorca.engelvoelkers.com

Seychelles – Eden Island

Island-hopping is what the Seychelles is all about - cruising around the Indian Ocean in search of a perfect beach then snorkelling and diving in the warm waters. The 116 coral and granite islands are perfect for messing about in boats, whether big (one of Roman Abramovich's super-yachts was sighted there last year) or small. Yet there is no large marina in the area.

Eden Island, a development by a South African consortium, is a 105-acre manmade island off the west coast of the main island of Mahé, 10 minutes from the international airport. When fully completed in 2011 it will boast 470 units, ranging from one-bedroom apartments to spacious villas with tennis and squash courts, five swimming beaches, restaurants and bars and a large retail centre open to the public. Prices start at \$300,000 (£144,100) for an apartment and \$600,000 (£288,200) for a town house.

Best of all, Eden Island will have a commercial harbour and state-of-the-art marina capable of housing super-yachts up to 263ft along with all the attendant facilities.

"This is a real opportunity to create a new sailing centre in the Indian Ocean," says Peter Smith of Eden Island Developers. "Seychelles is probably 10 years behind Mauritius in development terms with a government keen to balance inward investment with the preservation of the island's unique beauty."

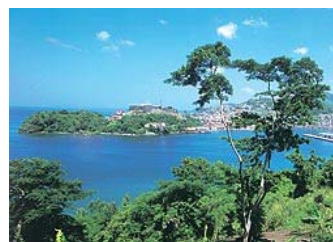
Eden Island, Pam Golding/Savills: 020 7016 3892; www.edenisland.sc



Seychelles – Eden Island, prices start at \$300,000 (£144,100)

The Caribbean

The Caribbean is a traditional hotspot for upmarket housebuyers, and sailing is a big part of its attraction. Antigua holds an annual regatta that attracts the well-heeled sailing fraternity, while the Grenadine Islands in the south-east Caribbean are perfect for exploring under sail.



Port Louis in Grenada - prices start from \$500,000 (£240,160)

Grenada, the most southerly of the Windward Islands and the gateway to the Grenadines, has several new developments for sale. This undeveloped island is negotiating a fine line between keeping its natural beauty and enticing inward investment.

British property developer Peter de Savary has worked in the Caribbean for 31 years and is himself a keen sailor – he captained England's Americas Cup team in 1983. His development at Port Louis will be based around a 150-room hotel and eco-marina close to the capital and overlooking the harbour and the historic Carrenage (harbour waterfront). There are plans for 300 apartments and villas, each with a leasehold marina berth, in a St Tropez-style waterfront town. Prices start from \$500,000 (£240,160), with villas from \$3 million (£1.44 million).

Port Louis: 020 7352 278; www.portlouisgrenada.com

Elsewhere, the volcanic island of St Lucia has an established marina development at The Landings in Rodney Bay priced from \$595,000 (£285,800), while over in Barbados, the marina at Port St Charles, just north of charming Speightstown, is a development with 156 waterfront apartments and town houses all with their own berth. Boats up to 200ft can be moored there.

The Landings: 0845 217 7851; www.thelandingsstlucia.com



St Lucia - The Landings, priced from \$595,000 (£285,800)

from £396,260 to £2.02 million. "Buyers in the first phase at Port St Charles spent about £264,000 and saw their money double in five years," says Barbados property agent Harry Manning. "It is set by a beautiful beach with good facilities in an increasingly popular area of the west coast and the property is spacious and comfortable."

Harry Manning Associates: harryman@caribsurf.com
Port St Charles: www.portstcharles.com

Thailand - Phuket

Boating is being heavily promoted in Thailand, not least by King Bhumibol, the country's much-revered monarch and an award-winning sailor in his younger days. Stunning Phang Nga Bay, off Thailand's west coast, has hundreds of islands, some lush and green and some towering limestone karsts, such as James Bond Island, the location for The Man with the Golden Gun: all perfect to cruise or kayak around in search of an empty sandy beach. The last government lifted all taxes on boat purchases, and fuel and crew are much cheaper there than in Europe.

"Phuket is an ideal boating hub for Phang Nga Bay," says Panu Maswongsa, tourism manager for Phuket. "Several marinas are being built here, new tsunami early-warning measures on the sea are being introduced, and last year we hosted international events in dinghy-racing and power boats."

At the Royal Phuket Marina, on the quieter east coast of the island, there is property for sale from £324,614 in Aquaminiums, residences that open straight out onto the water, allowing boats to be berthed below your own living room. Royal Villas start at £1.6 million.



The Royal Phuket Marina has property for sale from £324,614

Savills International: 020 7016 3740; www.savills.com/royalphuketmarina

