

top ten

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top 10
...self-build

BUYING A READY-BUILT PROPERTY IS GREAT, BUT THERE'S NOTHING QUITE LIKE MAKING A HOME TRULY YOURS. SARAH RODRIGUES LOOKS AT TEN EXAMPLES FROM AROUND THE WORLD OF HOW YOU REALLY CAN BUY SOMEWHERE TAILOR-MADE.

10 NAQUERA, VALENCIA, SPAIN

While not strictly a self-build, there's certainly scope for the buyer of this property to "make it theirs". Located on a plot of about 5,000 square metres near the future golf course of Naquera, this half-built castle-style house was started by the Italian artist Guillermo Ernesto Tedesco 20 years ago, but never finished – it consists of incomplete

external walls, and not much else. Building restrictions in the area prevented any progress on the building being made after Tedesco abandoned it, but with plans for the nearby golf course approved, and the surrounding area inevitably becoming residential, this property is bound to appreciate rapidly. It's being offered at €158,000 (£109,000) in its current, unfinished state. Agent: Villas Valencia



9 VADO, MARCHE REGION, ITALY

More crazy Italians and again, they've literally laid the foundations for you. With a recently restored framework of external walls and roof, there is plenty of scope for the buyer to finish restoring this rural property or to allow the developer to customise it according to the finish and layout you want. Located close to the village of Sant'Angelo in Vado, the

property comprises 500 square metres, including an annex of 50 square metres. All of the restoration works currently being undertaken make use of traditional building techniques and materials, but the builders will then finish the works according to the buyer's tastes and preferences. The property is priced at €590,000 (£408,000) after the partial restoration, but the final price is entirely up to you. Agent: Precious Villas



8 GAVALOMOURI ORCHARD/ PETRINO HILLS, CRETE

Foremost Villas are offering the opportunity to design and build your own stone villa in either of these areas. The external walls are built in the traditional method by local stonemasons and the white stone is locally sourced – worth a few environmental brownie points: After you have chosen your plot, a team of architects will design your villa based on your own ideas or on their already-existing plans, including the Krystyna model, which comprises three bedrooms and three bathrooms set out over 100 square metres of floor space, and is priced at €175,000 (£120,000). Plot sizes vary, but are generally in the 2,000 square metre region, and buyers can choose from the rural surroundings of Gavalomouri Orchard in the north west of Crete, where existing olive trees will be incorporated into the properties' gardens, or coastal Petrino Hills, which is just ten minutes from the neighbouring beaches and boasts sweeping sea views. Agent: Foremost Villas

7 ORBA VALLEY, COSTA BLANCA, SPAIN

This development, overlooking orange groves and with views out to sea, is located about 17 kilometres inland from Dénia. There are a number of property designs available, including Orba Villa, which comprises just over 140 square metres in constructed area and includes two bedrooms, two bathrooms and a lounge/dining area – all of which is set over two levels. Another option, Alicante Villa, features four bedrooms and three bathrooms, as well as extensive terraces and a private garden. Both homes can be built with a private swimming pool and the design and layout of the villa itself can be adapted to suit your needs. The final price will depend on the size and location of the plot you choose, as well as your personal design specifications, but a full estimate will be provided once these factors have been established. Expect to pay from £241,000 for Villa Orba and from £362,000 for Villa Alicante. Agent: Headlands International

6 APHRODITE HILLS, CYPRUS

Aphrodite Hills is a five-star golf, spa and tennis resort, where buyers can either purchase a ready-built villa or select from various plots of land and design their own. There are 12 standard villa designs, ranging from two to four bedrooms. All of these can be customised according to personal taste, but buyers can also choose to have their

own tailor-made designs built from scratch, as long as they comply with the resort's specifications and design guidelines: in an effort to maintain a harmonious appearance, the design, colour, materials and landscaping must be consistent with the rest of the resort. The average cost of building a villa is £465,000 and the average plot size is around 1,518 square metres. Agents: Premier Resorts ▶





5 BRACKENRIDGE, PLETTENBERG BAY, SOUTH AFRICA

Adjacent to the Plettenberg Bay Country Club, the *Brackenridge Estate* is set high upon a ridge overlooking the Indian Ocean and within close proximity of some of South Africa's most beautiful beaches. A 128-hectare estate, *Brackenridge* also offers some of the Southern Cape's most scenic walking trails. Ranging in size from 1,000 to nearly 2,000 square metres, all building plots have views of the golf course, the ocean or valley and mountain – or a combination of these three aspects. Buyers have a lot of freedom in designing their perfect property, as no specific building style is prescribed, although plans are subject to zoning regulations and building guidelines – so you can feel free to let your architectural imagination run wild. Two of the few restrictions are that you are required to commence construction of your property within four years from the date of registration, and that building must be completed within a one-year period. The entire estate is being developed in close co-operation with *Brackenridge's* team of consulting environmentalists who are focused solely on minimising the impact of development upon the local environment. Building plots range in price from R650,000 (£56,500) to R1.1 million (£95,500).

Agent: Engel & Völkers (South Africa)

4 HUERCAL OVERA, ALMERÍA, SPAIN

Just to the north of Huerca Overa in Almería, plots of land on which a villa designed to your specifications can be built are on offer through *Casas Almería*. The coast is only a 35-minute journey away, and the area has fantastic views of the surrounding mountains, as well as the nearby village of Urcal for all day-to-day facilities, including medical. Plot sizes range from 400 to 700 square metres, but you can combine plots for a larger area, if required. The architect will draw up personalised plans, whether your ideas are specific or general – and the *Casas Almería* website includes a number of villa

designs which may serve as a useful starting point. Prices will vary according to the size and complexity of the villa design, but expect to pay from €165,000 (£114,000) for a two-bedroom villa, including plot.

Agent: Casas Almería

3 BOM SUCESSO, OBIDOS, PORTUGAL

Located in the relatively unspoilt western region of Portugal, just one hour north of Lisbon, *Bom Sucesso* is destined to be a unique resort that will offer a wide range of leisure facilities, including a luxury hotel and spa, championship golf course, exclusive beach, tennis courts, watersports, fishing, mountain biking,

horse riding and a children's park. Residential properties, which have been designed by world-class architects, will cover less than 6.5 per cent of the resort's area, so owners will never feel crowded and, as well as ready-built townhouses and villas, buyers are given the option to buy a plot and choose their villa design from a range of three-, four- and five-bedroom options. Construction of your villa must be completed by 2010 and, although there is a range of designs to choose from, all of them have an emphasis on light, spaciousness and privacy. Plot prices start from €180,000 (£125,000) and construction prices start from €230,000 (£159,000).

Agent: Hamptons International

2 BENGUELA COVE LAGOON WINE ESTATE, SOUTH AFRICA

At only an hour's distance from Cape Town, *Benguela Cove Lagoon Wine Estate*, situated on the shores of Botrivier Lagoon, boasts the wonderful combination of ease of access with spectacular surroundings. It's set among vineyards, olive groves and lavender fields, and offers a private nature reserve, to which residents have exclusive access, as well as a hotel and restaurant. Leisure activities include boating (there are two deep-water jetties) fishing and waterskiing, while Arabella, the Western Cape's top golf course, is just a relaxing boat ride

across the lagoon. Buyers are also entitled to a host of residents' benefits, including winery privileges such as an exclusive wine allocation. You can choose from four styles of house – Barn, Courtyard, Lagoon and Ridge – but your choice will be slightly restricted by where exactly your chosen plot is located. Materials and colour are previously specified at *Benguela*, but these design guidelines are, of course, intended to protect the environment and the spectacular views, as well as the look of the resort. There are 124 plots in total, ranging in size from 1,800 to 4,000 square metres. Prices start from R1.5 million (around £130,000).

Agent: Engel & Voelkers



1 KADENWOOD, WHISTLER, CANADA

Purchasing one of the 60 private plots of land at *Kadenwood*, a ski-in/ ski-out community in Whistler, gives buyers the opportunity to purchase their dream home at one of North America's top ski resorts. Located at the end of a tranquil two-and-a-half-kilometre alpine road, which winds its way up Whistler mountain, properties built here will offer both spectacular mountain views and the ultimate in luxury. A team of experts, including developer, architect, interior designer and builder, has been brought together to guide and advise buyers through every stage of the process – from selecting the right plot, to designing your home exactly the way you want it, to selecting the furnishings and fittings. Owners can have as much or as little involvement in each of these decisions as they choose – but the end result is that each home will be unique to its owner. Each lot value is around CAS2 million (£923,000) and completed properties are estimated to be worth around CAS5 million (£2.3 million).

Agent: Erno Low

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