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REAL ESTATE EXPERTS

JULY – AUGUST 2016

Foreign Investors Choose Traditional Houses in Crete

Despite the economic crisis and diachronic indicators such as bureaucracy, tax/legal system, instability and lack of incentives, which have currently been intensified because of the increased austerity measures, Greece's real estate sector is very promising and attractive among overseas investors.

Between years 2013-2016 almost 650 million euros have been invested in Greek real estate by foreign investors, with the emphasis given to summer houses and traditional stone built constructions in particular. The majority of the investment funds have been directed to the island of Crete and the magnificent island complex of Dodecanese in south-eastern Aegean.

Approximately 50 million euros have been invested in Greek real estate properties within year 2016; 186 million euros were invested in year 2015, 250 million euros in 2014, and almost 168 million euros in 2013.



Among the main real estate investors in the country, German investors appear to be most active, followed by the Scandinavians, British and those originated from Israel. According to the National Bank of Greece, approximately 100,000 foreigners are the owners of a holiday home somewhere in the country either on the mainland or on the Aegean islands including Crete.

Of the matter, 60 percent come from the continental Europe, U.S.A. and Australia. Moreover, 10 percent is controlled by investors and stakeholders from Russia and other Eastern European and Balkan countries like Serbia and Croatia, which have significantly strengthened their presence in the Greek real estate market in the last few years.

The most popular areas of Greece among the foreign summer home and traditional villages buyers are the well-established tourist locations, such as the Dodecanese Islands, mainly Rhodes, Kos, Patmos and Simi with 900 estates owned by foreigners, the Cyclades Islands (mainly Mykonos, Santorini, Paros, Milos, Kimolos and Andros) with 400 estates owned by foreign investors, the Ionian Islands (mainly Corfu, Lefkada and Zakynthos) where over 450 estates owned by overseas investors.

Over 2,800 foreign investors own a property in the south east coast of the Peloponnese in the Greek prefecture of Laconia with a significantly large number of property owners on the Myrtoan Sea coastline (1,750 estates in nearby Messinia).

According to the National Land Registry, foreign investors own approximately some 1,250 acres of land in Chania and almost twice as many have snatched up property on the rest of the island (Rethymno, Heraklion and Agios Nikolaos).

Foreign investors have been snatching up properties from the fishing village of Almyrida in the Chania region to the authentic mountain village of Zaros, famed for its natural spring water, in Heraklion and from Anogia in the prefecture of Rethymno, to the Minoan village of Zakros in the Lassithi region.

Chania is a key destination for foreign investors from Germany, Great Britain, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Austria as well as USA and Israel, with popular destinations like Vamos, Douliana, Gavalohori and Agios

Pavlos, Plaka, Almyrida, Kabia, Kokkino Horio, Kaina, Kefalas, and Paleloni being very popular. It should be denoted that German, French, British and Belgian real estate investors prefer traditional stone buildings in old settlements.

Similarly, in the region of Agios Nikolaos (Lasithi), British, French, Germans, and Russians have a big share of traditional houses ownership. The surrounding villages and the nearby area of Sitia, Elounda, Plaka, Istron, Kalo Horio and Sissi are also included in the preferred destinations of foreign buyers such as English, Russian and German buyers.

In Central Crete, Hani Kokkini, Agia Pelagia, Ammoudara and Peza are the most popular options, followed by Matala and Tsoutsouros. In Rethymnon, the interest is mainly from Germans and French, while in Agia Galini and Plakias, most buyers are Germans and Austrians.

The Island of Crete has always been, and will continue to be, a popular destination for real estate investors. In fact, the island concentrates the highest demand from both local and foreign investment funds. Seafront properties and traditional constructions located on sleepy villages are very popular choices for prospective buyers.

ARENCORES believes that there is great prospective for Crete to become an established global high-end tourist destination. During the last years and despite the unprecedented financial crisis and recession some of the world's best resorts have started to operate in the island including the Elounda Beach Hotels & Villas, the luxury facilities of the Sbokos Hotel Group, the 5-star Sensimar Kalliston Resort and Spa and the 5-star Aquila Rithymna Beach.



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Maria was born and raised in Athens. She studied Civil Engineering in Building Constructions in the Higher Technological University of Piraeus, Athens. Since 2003 she has been working as a design, planning, consulting and project supervising Civil Engineer in building constructions. Maria effectively demonstrates a balance of professionalism, collaborating skills and a creativity that make her well-regarded among real estate clients and stakeholders. Her knowledge of the intricacies of the Chania and Euboea Island housing market allows her to effectively accommodate the needs of both buyers and sellers.

Stavros is responsible for developing and executing strategic initiatives to mitigate the CoE for wind energy facilities and improve social acceptability. He has been involved in assets integrity management and value engineering innovation to identify opportunities and manage risks. He is experienced in project management and market intelligence methodologies, particularly in advanced business analysis for investments viability and technical feasibility. His background spans sectors of the IT and renewable energy industry and includes high-performance trading platforms development under Waterfall as well as Agile methodologies for investors and energy traders in Denmark, UK and Greece.