





**£31K**

**CRYSTAL APARTMENTS  
 BANSKO, BULGARIA**  
**Studio apartment: £31,000**

**Summer** The resort of Bansko is in the Pirin mountains, where you walk, hike, bike or play golf at a new, 18-hole course designed by Ian Woosnam. There are 120 historic sites in the area and a vineyard that has been producing wine since the 12th Century.

**Winter** Skiing and snowboarding. Bansko offers 60km of ski runs at present – but work is in progress to expand this to 200km, and an international ski school is being established by ski champion Marc Girardelli.

**How to get there** Sofia airport is a two hour drive. Prices for the three-hour flight start at around £150.

**Contact** Regnum Homes (020 7930 7550, www.regnumhomes.com).



**CANADA: SUMMER**



**£191K**

**BLUEBERRY LAKE,  
 MONT TREMBLANT,  
 CANADA**  
**Three-bed house: £191,000**

**Summer** Hiking, swimming, fishing and sailing (property pictured right). The only Ferrari driving school outside Italy is there too.

**Winter** Tremblant is becoming the new Aspen – celebrities like Michael Douglas and Catherine Zeta Jones have holiday homes there. There are 94 ski runs in the area and you can also go dog-sledding, snowmobiling and cross-country skiing.

**How to get there** Flights to Montreal take six hours and cost from £350. Transfer time to Blueberry Lake from Montreal is 90 minutes.

**Contact** Pure International (020 7331 4500, www.pureintl.com).



**CANADA: WINTER**  
 Spend winter at Lake Tremblant skiing or snowmobiling... and summer biking, golfing, or rambling through the Humber Valley (top)





**£44K**

**TATRAGOLF MOUNTAIN  
 RESORT, PRESOV, SLOVAKIA**  
**Studio apartments from £44,350**

**Summer** The resort is next to an 18-hole golf course, a nine-hole course and driving range. There is also a state-of-the-art water park and thermal spa with saunas, Turkish baths and thalassotherapy spa treatments.

**Winter** There are three ski areas at the base of the High Tatras Mountains within 4km of the resort, all offering beginners, intermediate and advanced slopes. They are linked by a train shuttle system.

**How to get there** Poprad airport is just nine kilometers from the resort and twice-weekly flights go from Stansted. Flights take two and a half hours and cost from around £80.

**Contact** Escapes2 (0161 351 2160, www.escapes2.com).



As you lake it... the Marina Port Valais development

Homes 5



# Here for the year

## WHERE TO BUY ABROAD FOR 12-MONTH USE

**F**ORGET crowded beaches – more and more health-conscious Brits are taking to activities such as hiking, mountain-biking and golf.

So when it comes to buying a property abroad it pays to search out something that is suitable for use all year round – especially if you aim to rent it out.

And, surprisingly, the answer can lie in a ski resort. As they are invariably set in stunning mountain surroundings that are as attractive in summer as in winter, they offer massive potential for all-year fun – as developers have now realised.

The ski region of Bansko in Bulgaria, for example, has been specially developed with the year-round concept very much in mind and fishing, mountain biking, white water rafting and hiking are already well-established summer activities in the area.

Bulgaria has another advantage too. As ski resorts go, its property prices are currently by far the cheapest in the EU – so could well soar when more people catch on to its appeal.

And if you thought Alpine ski resorts were out of the

question because they are so expensive, think again. The rise in property prices in the UK means holiday homes in the Alps can now offer surprising value – and potential for profit.

Low-cost airlines flying into so many destinations also mean that weekend use of a holiday property is increasingly possible. Further afield, Canada is opening up as a very attractive year-round destination and Brits are at the forefront of a mini-invasion of overseas investors.

The appeal is three-fold – there are excellent skiing and winter sports. Canada has always been a top destination for those passionate about outdoor pursuits, and there is a whole other country of potential American holidaymakers next door, ready to rent your property!

Another plus is that low-cost airlines have also begun making their own six-hour flights to the east coast of Canada, so regions such as Newfoundland and Quebec have more and more British tourists heading there too.

Here we show you six of the areas with year-round appeal. But many prices are rising fast, so if you want to grab the best bargains, you'd better get your skates on....

By ALACQUE MEEHAN

Picture: SHAWN YELLOWS/NEWTEAM.CO.UK/JAP



Geneva believers... Andy and Alannah

ANDY Miller loves Switzerland so much he has bought a two-bedroom apartment being built by Lake Geneva.

The £273,657 cost includes mooring for a boat in the Marina Port Valais, which he hopes will help attract rentals in the summer as well as skiers in the winter.

IT consultant Andy, 40, from Northampton, has owned buy-to-let properties in the UK, but this is his first overseas venture. He says: "My

friend bought a property about an hour away, and I have stayed with him to go skiing a few times.

"I enjoy skiing and adore Switzerland so I thought it would make sense to buy my own place."

Andy, who has also developed a few properties in the UK with his girlfriend Alannah Savage, an interior designer, sees opportunities for growth in the area. "I like the town of Le Bouveret where the development is situated," he says.

"I think it has lots of potential and that the new marina will do a lot for it as it is close to both Montreux and Evian and I could see it becoming as popular as them in time." Andy plans to rent out the apartment for 15-20

weeks a year and use it himself the rest of the time.

"I live just 20 minutes drive from Luton and fly with easyJet to Geneva which takes an hour and a half. Then it is just a one-hour drive around Lake Geneva and you are there," he says.

"As an investment Marina Port Valais made a lot of sense as I didn't want to rely on just the skiing for a rental return.

"And, of course, I haven't ruled out learning to sail myself at some stage in the future."

APARTMENTS at Marina Port Valais cost from £156,000. Moorings start at £4,200 for a five-year lease. Contact: Pure International (020 7331 4500, www.pureintl.com)



£158K

### HUMBER VALLEY RESORT, CANADA

One-bed apartment: £158,000

**Summer** As well as all the usual leisure activities, Humber Valley Resort (main picture, left) in Newfoundland also has hiking, kayaking, mountain biking, tennis, lake or ocean sailing, caving, bird watching, angling, salmon fishing and golf.

**Winter** Alpine-skiing, snowboarding, back country skiing, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing.

**How to get there** Weekly direct charter flights from Gatwick to Deer Lake airport from December to April and June to September. The flight takes six hours. The transfer time to the airport is 20 minutes. Flights cost around £350.

**Contact** Newfoundland Property International (020 8605 9540, www.newfoundproperty.com).



£76K

### SAN DONATO GOLF, SANTI, ITALY

Studio apartment: £76,000

**Summer** A state-of-the-art golf course, the vineyards that produce the famous Montepulciano D'Abruzzo are nearby and Adriatic beaches a 45-minute drive. The area also boasts an abundance of romantic medieval villages.

**Winter** There are numerous different ski resorts, but Campo Imperatore and Campo Felice are the best known and they offer downhill skiing for beginners, intermediates and advanced plus snowboarding and cross-country skiing.

**How to get there** Rome is 90 minutes' drive from San Donato Golf and regular flights go from most UK airports. The one-and-a-half hour flight costs from as little as £50.

**Contact** Overseas Homesearch (0800 652 0768, www.overseashomesearch.co.uk).



£343K

### L'AQUILA, VAL D'ISERE, FRANCE

One-bed apartment: £343,000

**Summer** An expensive option, but France is still the favourite with Brits – and this resort has the lot even in summer – there's hiking in the Vanoise National Park, swimming, tennis, horse riding, paragliding, mountain climbing and quad-biking.

**Winter** Val D'Isere has a long ski season with slopes and pistes for beginners through to expert skiers. It is also famed for its après ski activities – the likes of Hugh Grant, Cameron Diaz and Kyle Minogue can be spotted there.

**How to get there** Chambéry airport is about two hours away – check out the low-cost airlines. Flights start at around £70.

**Contact** Pierre Vacances (0800 001 5501, www.pierre-vacances.co.uk).