



K.M. (KEN) CARMICHAEL

B.Sc., M.B.A

#1 in Sales in Ottawa (2006, 2003: RE/MAX Individuals)

RE/MAX Chairman's Club (2006, 2002)

RE/MAX Lifetime Achievement Award (2004)

What to Consider Before Buying a Vacation Property



(ARA) - Many people enjoy vacation properties because they promote spending quality time with friends and family and create cherished memories. If you are considering this investment, it's worth your time to consider your options to make sure you get the right property for you.

"Each person's situation is different when vacationing," comments Kiersten Hegna, vice president of service delivery services at The LUSSO Collection, an organization that specializes in luxury vacation residences. "What works for one person might not be another person's ideal situation. When

taking the first steps toward investing in a vacation property, there are some things you need to think about so in the end you have what you want without regret."

Location

Where is your favourite place to vacation? Is it a lake a couple of hours away from your home or a tropical island in the Pacific? If you have a favourite area you are able to access frequently, it might be worth buying a second home. When considering a second home, you might want to think about:

- * What activities will you do there? For example, if you want to boat your vacation home should be on the water and if you ski it should be by a mountain resort.
- * How often will you visit? Think about how much time and money you will invest driving or flying.
- * Who do you plan to vacation with? How many bedrooms will you need to accommodate family and friends?
- * Do you have the time to care for a second home? Or will you hire someone for maintenance?

Those who enjoy vacationing, but don't necessarily want to be tied down to one location might consider other options. Destination clubs, for example, are a new concept in upscale vacationing that combines the spaciousness and splendour of a private home with five-star service and amenities. A destination club offers its members access to a portfolio of luxurious private homes in a variety of locations. This option has many of the benefits of second-home ownership, but with more flexibility and choice as to where you travel.



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Maintenance

The reason many people end up selling their second home is because of maintenance hassles. Before investing, consider the time and cost it takes to care for an additional home. Often seasonal homes will have to be opened and closed depending on the weather. In addition there is yard maintenance, home cleaning and other regular chores needed to take care of a home. These can be hired out, but often can get costly. If you have the time to invest, you can do these yourself but many don't want to spend half their vacation caring for their home. If you decide to purchase a permanent property, be sure to anticipate the maintenance responsibilities.

With destination clubs, each member pays a fraction of the maintenance costs through the annual dues. Each property is maintained by professionals so that it is clean and updated each time you visit. Maintenance processes are determined and managed by the club.

Amenities/Service

Second home ownership gives you complete control of your home, but you are pretty much on your own to navigate the area and schedule your vacation's activities. Destination clubs often offer services that you would normally only receive at high-end hotels. This means that someone is there to assist you with your family's needs.

Cost

Cost is a priority when considering a vacation investment. For a second home, consider the property cost, the annual taxes and cost of maintenance and regular updates to the home. For a destination club, consider the initial deposit to join and how much is refundable should you decide to leave, annual dues, and any extra costs associated with services. After deciding on what you want and the overall costs of the investment, the right choice should be clear.