



**Refreshing Lyme:** seafront at Lyme Regis, listed in the Top 10 most expensive seaside towns. Average price is £308,000



**Coastal gem:** the Old Vinery in South Hams, Devon, is a five-acre marine estate with its own Napoleonic fort on a private beach and foreshore. The asking price is £4.5million



**From £370,000:** The Sky Deck, The Bay, Talland, between Looe and Polperro on Cornwall's south coast, where Knight Frank is offering holiday homes for sale. Call 01392 848844

**N**EXT time you find that you are dreaming about that little house by the coast, act fast – because you aren't the only dreamer and coastal homes are in hot demand.

Seaside properties offer a romantic retreat and a fabulous lifestyle. They are a sound investment, too – especially in this era of "staycationing", when far more people are choosing to holiday in the UK because of volcanic ash disruption, airline strikes and currency fluctuations.

Drawn by fresh air, improving local amenities and smart new housing, more and more Londoners are purchasing a weekend bolt hole, relocating, commuting or setting up a business.

After a couple of lacklustre years, the market is back in its stride. According to estate agent Knight Frank there are now 6,212 more second homes in England than in 2007 – a record high of 245,384. Wealth rippling out from London has helped push up prices.

**REINVENTED CORNWALL**

Research by Halifax shows that the 10 priciest seaside towns are all in the South-West, where Londoners are the main buyers. But there are less-hyped locations offering value for money.

Cornwall has reinvented itself in recent years. It has always had better weather than the rest of Britain, but now it has smart beachside apartment complexes, a trendy surf culture, foodie restaurants, boutique hotels and celebrity residents. Better road links and cheap Ryanair flights from London to Newquay have made weekendening possible.

Away from hot spots such as Rock and St Mawes, prices are less eye-watering. Acorn Blue, a niche developer of loft apartments in Borough and Berrymsey, has built four designer schemes overlooking Fistral Beach, a world-famous surfing venue and Unesco World Heritage site in Newquay. All the buildings are on Headland Road, and have an Art Deco or marine-like architectural theme.

Zinc is the biggest of those four developments – 52 flats with floor-to-ceiling glazing, terraces and open-plan interiors. Prices start at £250,000 for a two-bedroom apartment. Azure is a smaller 13-flat scheme that includes a five-bedroom penthouse with a wrap-around terrace. Prices from £295,000 to £1,350,000.

Pearl and Cribbar have 14 and 13 apartments respectively – prices range

# BEACH HOMES MAKE WAVES

A great lifestyle, cleaner air and stylish new homes are attracting Londoners to the coast in record numbers, reports **David Spittles**



**Resident knights:** Michael Parkinson and Clive Woodward have Salcombe homes

**Cornwall now has smart beachside apartment complexes, a surf culture and celebrity residents**

from £250,000 to £820,000. Call 01637 876000.

Knight Frank is marketing more than 30 new beachside developments in Cornwall and Devon which were launched at a London roadshow in May. The Bay at Talland, between Looe and Polperro, on Cornwall's south coast, offers a touch of French Riviera-style sophistication. Bespoke three-bedroom eco houses are built to order and are part of a private estate with spa and concierge services. Prices from £370,000. Call 01392 848844.

**HOTSPOTS HO!**

Liam Bailey, head of residential research at Knight Frank, says the premium that buyers are willing to pay in second-home hot spots can be "dramatic". At Constantine Bay, a coastal village three miles from Padstow in Cornwall, prices are 130 per cent higher than the area average.

England's most popular second-home district is South Hams, Devon, where one in 10 homes is registered as a second property. This area includes Salcombe, located at the mouth of the Kingsbridge Estuary, a popular seaside resort since Victorian times.

Sir Michael Parkinson and Sir Clive Woodward have homes here. The Old Vinery is a gem – a marine estate with its own Napoleonic fort on a private beach and foreshore. The five-acre

**'SURF'S UP' GREAT VIEWS OF FANTASTIC BRIGHTON**



ARCHITECT Paul Zara undertakes projects in London and Brighton.

Impressed by a new development in the seaside city, he decided to buy a studio flat there – for his own use and as a buy-to-let investment.

Called One Brighton, the scheme is a fresh landmark in the city and with genuinely green credentials.

"I knew that if I could see this flat from around the town, then it must have great views, and I was right," says Paul. "Brighton is fantastic and there is always rental demand."

Flats boast biomass boilers, rooftop allotments and balcony planters, plus advanced recycling facilities.

Prices start at £205,000. Call 0870 752 1820.

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**Big attraction:** Camber Sands, near the port of Rye in East Sussex, has a fabulous Sahara-like Blue-Flag beach which attracts a surfing community

estate could be transformed into a magnificent seaside retreat. It is being sold either as a whole or as three plots, with planning permission for a trophy 6,500 sq ft residence to replace an existing house, a three-bedroom cottage and a studio in the fort. There is also permission to extend the boat house and jetty. The asking price is £4.5million. Call 01392 455740.

Kent and Sussex seaside towns are popular with Londoners because of the quick escape and the metropolitan vibe. One Brighton is a "zero carbon" scheme of 172 apartments close to the station (50 minutes from Victoria). The timber-clad building is set around a new square and has "sky gardens" - roof allotments - and a car club. Prices start at £205,000 for one-bedroom flats. Call Crest Nicholson on 0870 752 1820.

Grand Ocean, a splendid listed Art Deco edifice two miles along the coast at Saltdean, has been redeveloped into a new apartment complex alongside an original Thirties lido. It sits on an elevated site, part of the Sussex Downs,

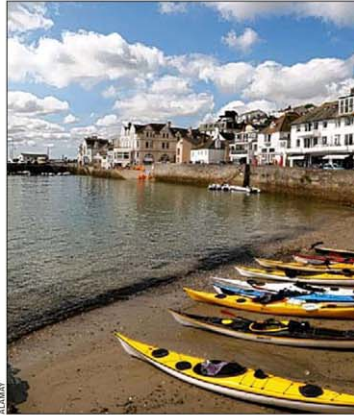
and sweeps down to the beachfront. There are 279 homes, including penthouses. Prices start at £199,995. Call Explore Living on 0845 873 9054.

Camber Sands, near the picturesque port of Rye in East Sussex, has a fabulous Sahara-like Blue-Flag beach which attracts a surfing community.

White Sand is a development of cottage-type houses, built in a mix of materials and styles to resemble a traditional fishing village. Prices range from £259,995. Call Ward Homes on 01959 568445.

**THE COASTAL TOP 10**

■ According to the Land Registry, the 10 most expensive seaside towns in England (average prices last year) are: Sandbanks (average price £544,950); Padstow (£421,954); Fowey (£335,817); Millford on Sea (£334,717); St Mawes, (£330,034) and Rock (£314,030) in Cornwall; Lyme Regis (£308,063); Sidmouth (£292,291) and Budleigh Salterton (£276,975) in Devon; and Poole (£268,186) in Dorset.



**Hot spot:** the harbour at delightful St Mawes, Cornwall

GET A TASTE OF WHAT'S ON OFFER

**£475,000:** flats at Rocky Lane overlooking Trevaunance Cove, St Agnes, Cornwall. Knight Frank (01392 848844)



**£199,995:** homes at Grand Ocean, a listed Art Deco edifice at Saltdean near Brighton. Call Explore Living (0845 873 9054)

**£250,000:** apartments at Pearl in Newquay. Call 01637 876000



**£200,000:** apartments at Ocean 1, a development in Newquay. Through Knight Frank (as before)



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