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What makes a successful mountain property location?

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EDITORIAL, TRAVEL + LIFESTYLE

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Ski season is well underway with growing demand for ski property, but what makes a successful mountain location?

Leading developer, MGM, has published a new white paper, *10 Key Points for Successful Investment in the Mountains*, which points out, "While bricks and mortar are still very attractive, a property purchase, like any other investment, still requires a minimum of precautions to make it a sustainable investment with few risks.

"As the French know, bricks and mortar are a sound investment. It must be said that the low returns from the banks to which we have grown accustomed over the past few years leave no room for doubt."

It is reinforced by a recent survey by Crédit Foncier with its investor clientele, which finds for more than half (51%) of people surveyed, rental property remains the first choice when investing their savings. Assurance vie is in second place (27%), followed by savings accounts (12%) and financial investments (10%).

MGM Sales Consultant, Richard Deans, tells OPP.Today what makes a successful mountain property location. "Location is of course the single most important factor, but to elaborate on what that means to us as an Alpine developer, ideally we want the development as close as possible to both the ski slopes and the centre of the resort / village / town. If not both then one is important.

"Then you have elements such as beautiful views! This is not hard to find in the Alps but it certainly helps when you have a spectacular view. The resort/town or village itself is obviously also important i.e. a well-known popular resort is always going to have appeal and generally be easier to sell or if not well-known then the village or resort needs to have something special about it. It could be that it links into a stunning ski area or the town has a special history or point of interest etc. In addition, all points in the White Paper are relevant and important to a successful purchase."

The strong demand for Alpine property is likely to continue during 2017, he says. "I think that we have seen that the Alps market is almost bullet-proof, consistently performing despite financial and political crisis. There is always going to be an appetite for beautiful property in beautiful locations that are accessible with an abundance of activity – and skiing remains a passion for a huge amount of Brits and this won't change soon."

However, investors are putting more thought into their purchases, Mr Deans says. "Investors are likely to consider their purchases in a bit more detail than several years ago, given everything that is going on in the world. Investment is generally coming from people with very secure, well-paid jobs – doctors, lawyers etc. Basically, buying an MGM apartment in the Alps is a fantastic long term investment but you have to be able to afford it."

The 10 key points for successful investing outlined in the brochure are:

- The choice of location
- The location within the resort
- The local developer
- Go and have a look
- The quality of construction
- The size of apartment
- The Residence de Tourisme
- A strong point for your investment
- The facilities
- Preparing your finance.

"Purchasing in the mountains is an excellent way to combine pleasure and capital Investment, so it is essential to get all the advantages on your side when making your purchase. This is a delicate chemistry. Geographic area, choice of resort, location, transport links and amenities must all be subtly evaluated and weighed up to make your investment a success," says the report.

Haute-Savoie notary, Maître Stéphane F., says, "If your budget or the property available doesn't enable you to invest at the foot of the pistes, have no hesitation in favouring the centre of the resorts.

"When on holiday, consumers look for the facilities and comfort they enjoy all year round. The facilities and products on offer must incorporate these expectations, although original and innovative products also have their markets, which are often niche markets. These days, convenience, practicality and comfort are part of the norm."

MGM French Properties specialises in residences and apartments for sale in the top ski resorts in the heart of the French Alps and builds in exceptional locations. It has over a half century of experience in the Savoie, Haute-Savoie, and in the Hautes-Alpes regions.

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