

The Race To Italian Properties Is On And The British Have Taken The Lead!

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Yes it's true. Great Britain has overtaken the United States in the "race" to move to Italy. Recent studies released through Gate-Away.com, the real estate portal that is dedicated to an international clientèle seeking property in Italy, indicate that, in the first half of 2014, the number of **Britons who are seriously thinking about a move to Italy has surpassed even that of the perennial front-runners, the Americans**. British interest in Italy as a permanent destination has risen dramatically. First-half numbers for 2014 show an 11% increase over the same period in 2013, a year that saw serious inquiries jump by 31% over the previous year, 2012.

Gate-Away.com found that of the 150 countries reached by the portal, at the moment requests by Brits made up 14.5% of all inquiries for Italian properties. They are closely followed by Americans with 13.3%, France (10.6%), Germany (8.5%) and Belgium (6.6%).

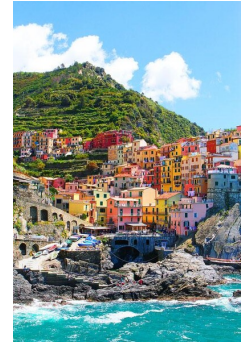
Why are the Brits so enamored of the idea of living in Italy? Indicators show that British citizens who are thinking about Italy are doing so mainly for positive reasons, not because of any great desire to "escape" Great Britain. The factors most often cited have to do with the quality of life (the "la dolce vita" factor), and a more salubrious climate. Other popular reasons were concerned with educational and professional advancement, a lower cost-of-living (particularly in suburban and rural locations), and, of course, romance.

Where in Italy are the British most likely to settle, and what kind of housing are they looking for? Well, the British do love their "shires", and interest in Italy is weighted toward small-town living rather than in urban areas. Brits are also looking for a bit of "elbow-room", with 83% of inquiries asking about **single-family residences**, contrasting sharply with the 16.7% that want information about apartment dwellings.

Curiously, **Britons are also much more likely than anyone else to take on a renovation project**, with 25% of Brits saying that they're willing to refurbish a property, compared to only 16.5% of French, and 15.5% of American prospects. The average price that British home seekers are looking at (€280,000) is significantly lower than the world average (€480,000), as they often forecast additional costs of renovations works.

The most popular regions of Italy that are under consideration, in terms of information requests, are, in descending order: Puglia (17.8%), Tuscany (16.3%), Abruzzo (11.9%), Liguria (11.4%), and Lombardy (5.7%).

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