

SE Features
HD **Out of the comfort zone**
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Looking to invest in a city home? Make sure you know your neighbourhoods. Pick one of these 10 and you can find a pad that's still on the up, says Emma Wells

If you fancy yourself as a bona fide overseas **property** investor, then you no doubt congratulate yourself on thinking beyond the obvious. Not for you the traditional Spanish holiday villa, run-down French gîte or Bulgarian flat in your quest for the next global hotspot. But to really stay ahead of the game, say the experts, you'll have to take a big leap out of your comfort zone.

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"It is important to look at micro-locations to outperform the market," says Liam Bailey, Knight Frank **estate** agency's head of research. "The relentless march of gentrification and upscaling of neighbourhoods in inner urban areas in the world's leading cities offers opportunities."

1 WEST KOWLOON, **HONG KONG** "Asian arts capital" is probably not what springs to mind when you think of **Hong Kong**. But a "cultural quarter" is under way on the western edge of Kowloon. Plans to transform the eerily quiet area into a buzzy harbourfront include museums and a high-speed rail link that will connect it to the rest of the city and to mainland **China**.

According to Knight Frank's number-crunchers, homes here can cost up to 50% less than prime **property** in the wider city. At the Harbourside development, a 1,051 sq ft unit is for **sale** for HK\$39m (£3.15m). Visit hongkonghome.com for comprehensive listings.

2 RUNDA AND GIGIRI, NAIROBI Suburban East Africa is not the most obvious move for cautious British investors, but in these adjacent areas north of the Kenyan capital's central business district, Knight Frank quotes discounts of up to 50% for a prime home, compared with other desirable neighbourhoods in the city.

Separated from the CBD by the urban Karura Forest, Gigiri has beautiful high-end properties that appeal to the many workers at the local international offices and diplomatic missions from the UN, according to Faraaz Charania, head of marketing for Pam Golding Properties in Kenya. He is selling a four-bedroom bungalow, with 2.6 acres adjoining the forest, for 245m Kenyan shillings (£1.7m; pictured opposite).

Runda, a private **estate** built on a former coffee plantation, is popular with senior business executives and expats, as well as for rentals.

3 CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT, CAPE TOWN Few British buyers tend to head away from Cape Town's sun-drenched shores to the CBD, or "City Central", as the locals call it, where the permanent population has leapt from less than 2,000 to more than 5,000 in the past five years. Prices in this upcoming neighbourhood can be 44% lower than in wider Cape Town: two-bedroom flats typically go for ZAR2.75m (about £155,000).

"The area attracts a mix of high-earning professionals, creatives, families and young entrepreneurs, who love the combination of historic Cape environment and trendy atmosphere," says Laurie Wener,

managing director for the Western Cape Metro region at Pam Golding Properties. A one-bedroom, one-bathroom flat overlooking Greenmarket Square, with views of Table Mountain and the city, would make a perfect lock-up-and-leave (ZAR1.2m; 00 27 82 331 4261, knightfrank.co.za).

4 BUSINESS BAY, DUBAI The vast new waterside, office and **residential** area known as Business Bay — former scrubland bordering downtown Dubai — has had a few false starts. In the past 12 months, however, many projects have been refinanced, and **residential** prices have risen by about 18% in a year, according to Edward Macura, managing director of Core Real **Estate** in the city (core-me.com).

Knight Frank data shows that properties here can cost 40% less than in the rest of prime Dubai, but don't expect a homely address — "Executive Towers" and "The Citadel" are as imaginative as it gets. SPF Realty is selling a one-bedder in the Clayton Residency for AED1.55m (£260,000; 00 971 4 339 6222, spfrealty.com).

5 TOYOSU-KACHIDOKI BAY AREA, TOKYO This vacant stretch of land, close to the CBD and on Tokyo Port, is about as big an opportunity you can find in Asia's most populous city. Knight Frank's research shows that a home here can still cost up to 35% less than elsewhere in Tokyo, but with work for the 2020 Olympics set to involve several "legacy" buildings, this could be changing soon. The average local price is £510 a sq ft.

"Most properties on the market in Kachidoki and Toyosu are resale flats in high-rise buildings," says Yukiko Takano, manager at Japan Sotheby's International Realty, who is selling a two-bedder in the Kachidoki View Tower for 59.8m yen (£330,000; 00 81 3 3449 3355, sothebysrealty.com).

6 TIONG BAHRU, SINGAPORE The words "Singapore" and "hip" aren't often found in the same sentence, but this revived 1930s housing **estate** is now the place to be seen. New cafes and bookshops, designer boutiques and second-hand record shops, along with traditional food stalls and old-timers playing streetside mah jong, have revived Tiong Bahru's fortunes. And you can still pick up a **property** for 33% less than the city average. See what's for **sale** in the area at tiongbahru.sg, and check tiongbahruestate.com for daily updates on events.

7 16TH ARRONDISSEMENT, PARIS With film-star residents, art-deco architecture, museums and some of the city's top tourist sights, Passy, as it is known to Parisians, is rarely considered a place for bargain-hunters. A four-bedroom flat on the second floor of a period building is on **sale** for €1.886m (£1.48m; 0870 011 5151, frenchestateagents.com).

"Prices have remained **firm** over the past five years," Knight Frank's Bailey says, "but, importantly, they remain below the levels seen in the most established arrondissements, the 6th, 7th and 8th. If you want a safe but buzzing area, this is it."

8 VICTORIA **PARK**, LONDON E3 Yes, yes, we know it's not abroad (unless you're an expat), and there have been so many London regeneration stories, it's hard to believe there are any neighbourhoods left to gentrify. But Knight Frank has picked out Victoria **Park**, in the borough of Hackney — northeast of the City, with London's tech scene pushing demand and values from the south, and the Olympic **Park** to the east — as one with plenty of potential. You can still **buy** a home for up to 15% less than in the wider city: flats start at £350,000, but family homes around the **park** can run into the millions.

9 BARANGAROO, SYDNEY Last summer, all 159 flats in the two Barangaroo South blocks **sold** within three and a half hours of going on **sale**, including a four-bedroom penthouse for AUS\$10.5m (about £5.7m). Over the next 10 years, 1,000 flats have been masterplanned for the harbourfront district, until recently a disused wharf on the western edge of Sydney's central business district. It is wildly popular with **Chinese** buyers, and James Packer should get the go-ahead to build a casino.

According to Knight Frank, the discount for a prime home in this neighbourhood sits at about 13%. Savills Australia puts the average price of a luxury off-plan two-bedder in Sydney at AUS\$2.76m.

10 WILLIAMSBURG, NEW YORK "In 10 years, Williamsburg has transformed from a mecca for artists displaced from Manhattan's quickly changing East Village to hipster central, attracting both young professionals and international buyers looking for a bit of authentic NYC grit along with fabulous yet affordable condo living," says Uri Hanoch, a broker for Douglas Elliman Real **Estate**.

The average price per sq ft for new-build condos was \$850 four years ago; today, it's about \$1,400 (£880). Yet, although huge retailers such as Apple and Whole Foods Market have established their presence in this part of Brooklyn, Bailey says you can still **buy** a fantastic home for up to 13% less than elsewhere in the Big Apple, as the market is not fully mature yet.

RE hkong : Hong Kong | kenya : Kenya | captw : Cape Town | sydney : Sydney | africaz : Africa | apacz : Asia Pacific | asiaz : Asia | ausnz : Australia/Oceania | austr : Australia | bric : BRICS Countries | china :

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