

## Title:

Louis Vuitton and Chanel Come to Panama

## Word Count:

752

## Summary:

Multiplaza Mall in Panama City is now host to a Louis Vuitton Shop and a Chanel Store.

## Keywords:

asset protection, offshore banking, offshore bank account

## Article Body:

Introduction - Multiplaza Mall in Panama City is now host to a Louis Vuitton Shop and a Chanel Store. Multiplaza Mall has always been the high-end mall of Panama. It is now possible to buy high-end Swiss watches like Breitling and Omega along with Montblanc pens and now we have these two high-end boutique stores as well.

Discussion - Can Panama support these high-end stores? We have had Nautica and Hilfiger for some time down here and they seem to do well but they are hardly high end stores, high middle class products would be more descriptive of them. Do we have enough people willing to spend \$900 on a purse or sunglasses, which is thrice what the average worker makes in Panama in a month? We have had Cartier and Rolex stores in Panama City for some time. There is also a Maserati, Ferrari and Porsche dealership as of recent in Panama City. We do see a fair amount of Porsche Cayenne SUV's running around but precious few Porsche cars. It is very rare to see a Maserati or Ferrari but if you go to the causeway on a Sunday afternoon you will see the car collectors do their drive by just for an excuse to drive the car. We do not have a Bentley or Rolls Royce Dealership. Maybe I should say - yet.

High End Goods and Crime - Panama has no car jackings, or if there are any no one ever hears about it. There is no place to go with all the traffic the thief would surely be caught within blocks. People would see the crime, get on their cell phones and the police would soon show up on motorcycles and that would be the end of it. Now what happens if women start to carry \$1900 Vuitton purses? Will kids make a running grab for them hoping to sell them for \$50 in the local neighborhood? Will the kid be able to tell what is an expensive purse and what is not? Will the kids need a Fagan type guy to train them and to fence the

goods? Of course the contents of a \$1900 purse would be of interest to the thief as well. Panama City has had a number of enterprising vendors who managed to get Vuitton franchises without even having a storefront (just kidding) and they have placed a lot of Vuitton, Chanel looking products into the country, which may confuse the thieves. What if people take to wearing \$20,000 gold and platinum wristwatches in Panama? How will the thieves react to that? One can make a temptation readily for some thief by wearing a \$20,000 watch in a country where the average wage is \$300 a month.

What Next - Well if Vuitton and Chanel are here we can expect the rest of the high-end designer labels to start opening up? They generally do not like to want to miss out on a market that brands like Vuitton and Chanel are in. Are we going to see Bloomingdales, Saks Fifth Avenue, and Neiman Marcus opening up here? I would think you could safely bet on it. I would think antique dealers and art galleries will soon follow. Then we will see ultra high end branded restaurants charging outrageous prices for small portions of food like Emerils. We already have rumors that the Hilton Hotel people are going to open up in Panama City and more high end branded hotels can be expected.

Implications - It could be that Panama real estate is just on the way up and the peak prices are far from what they are now. All these high-end retailers have site location analysts that are good or else no one would use them. If they are giving the green light to Panama this is significant information. Panama real estate may be selling for \$5,000 a sq. meter or more before you know it. One of the arguments against the high prices has always been the lack of an infrastructure. The city is cleaning the bay, which will actually create something like a useable waterfront. They have plans to manage the traffic. The houses are going up. The hotels are coming in. The airport is being expanded at this time. A cruise terminal is being built. The Canal is being expanded. The Causeway is already developed and looks as good as any Causeway anywhere in the world. This could be it, put on your seats and take the ride the might just get off the ride a lot richer than when you got on.