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Anguilla Real Estate Market Trending Upward

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By Joe Pike, Special Contributor to CJI





"Over the pandemic, the interest in real estate on the island has increased significantly," said Jackie Pascher, owner and broker at Island Dream Properties. "All agents are busy and sales have been brisk in both land and existing villas and condos."

Pascher said Island Dream Properties has properties for sale from \$600,000 to \$15 million with properties in the \$900,000 – \$2 million range being the most popular.

"We have significant interest from investors seeking to build multi use developments with condos, villas in waterfront locations both in the east and west end of the island," she said.

So, who is buying and why are they choosing Anguilla?

"Our primary market is the U.S and Canada with some sales from European clients from the U.K. and a few other countries," said Pascher. "Many are looking to live on Anguilla for part of the year and work from the island. With good internet, great beaches and restaurants and a laid back lifestyle, they are now happily living, working and enjoying life in the Caribbean and Anguilla."

She said the pandemic "certainly showed them they could work from abroad and essentially have it all." One large villa sold in the \$14 million range and interest in the \$3 to \$5 million market has also increased, she said.

"Interest in lock and leave properties has also significantly increased with sales of residences at the high end resorts and condominiums being at an all time high," said Pascher.

"Real estate sales have been up this year in Anguilla. At Tranquility Beach Resort, we sold/have under contract half of our 15 units between June 2021 and now and other realtors are expressing strong growth in sales interest across the island, said Ian Edwards, developer and partner of Tranquility Beach Resort Anguilla and founder of Sunset Homes. "Most of the interest is from US market reflecting our usual tourism source markets."

Edwards, like many selling Caribbean real estate, points to the pandemic as the main motivator for potential buyers.

"We believe that the pandemic has increased people's interest in getting a tropical escape and embracing a better quality of life," said Edwards. "The ability to work remotely is also a good influence on persons being able to see themselves spending more time on the island."

Neil Freeman, principal for Tranquility Beach Anguilla and manager at Freeman Caribbean Investments, agreed.

"Like much of the world, especially more rural areas, the Anguilla real estate market is now a sellers' market," said Freeman. "During the past five years Anguilla has seen some sales, but not a lot of sales. With people being able to work remotely, increased airlift, and positive indicators, such as Aurora Anguilla's \$15 million investment in their golf course, sales in Anguilla have now heated up."





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"A fellow villa owner was proactively approached by an investor and offered double what the owner had paid for his property just a few years ago," he said.

Four Seasons Resorts has sold several condominiums exceeding \$1 million, including at least one villa that sold for over \$5 million; and Tranquility Beach has sold more than 40 percent of its condominiums.

"We've even seen situations on island where a buyer has lost out on a recent deal because another buyer came in with a significantly higher offer," said Freeman. "The outlook for real estate in Anguilla looks favorable.

Tranquility Beach had a phased opening in 2020. It opened the beachfront villa in February 2020 and the additional two villas that April. In March 2020, the island closed its borders due to the threat of COVID-19 and didn't re-open for travelers until November.

Vacation rentals dried up and prospective owners could not access the island. When Anguilla did re-open, business activity remained slow as for another eight months, visitors to Anguilla were required to stay in place, only moving between select restaurants and activities as part of a socially-distanced vacation bubble.

"We closed on our first residence sale in June 2021," said Freeman. "We sold 40 percent of our total inventory, approximately \$6 million in sales, in the following six months through the balance of 2021. We are seeing a lot more investment activity in 2022."

Prospective buyers tend to be frequent Anguilla visitors, said Freeman. They are looking for a vacation home with staff and services that they can enjoy for between four and eight weeks a year, and also want the rental income of a beachfront resort.

"West End Meads Bay Beach is one of the most beautiful beaches in Anguilla and in addition to Tranquility Beach, it is home to Malliouhana and the Four Seasons and top restaurants, such as Blanchards and Jacala," said Freeman. "Because of the beach and ability for guests can walk to almost everything they want to see and do, Meads Bay properties attract the highest occupancy on island and can garner higher rental rates. It is a location that is attractive to owners as both vacationers and investors."

The owners Tranquility Beach attracts "are also looking for a turnkey investment with low HOA dues and an attractive rental revenue share," said Freeman.

"They don't want to have to deal with maintenance, guest services or getting heads in beds when they are thousands of miles away," said Freeman. "Our 60/40 owner to developer revenue split is the most generous offered on Meads Bay and Tranquility Beach's natural landscaping and conscientious building design keep costs lower than many other properties."

Tranquility Beach has seen ownership interest from couples, including empty nesters, as well as families with





While the Northeast continues to be the primary feeder market, new non-stop flights from Miami and St. Thomas, as well as increased service from San Juan, "should open up more of the United States and even the world," he said. American Airlines currently offers three flights a week between Miami and Anguilla and in April will increase to daily flights.

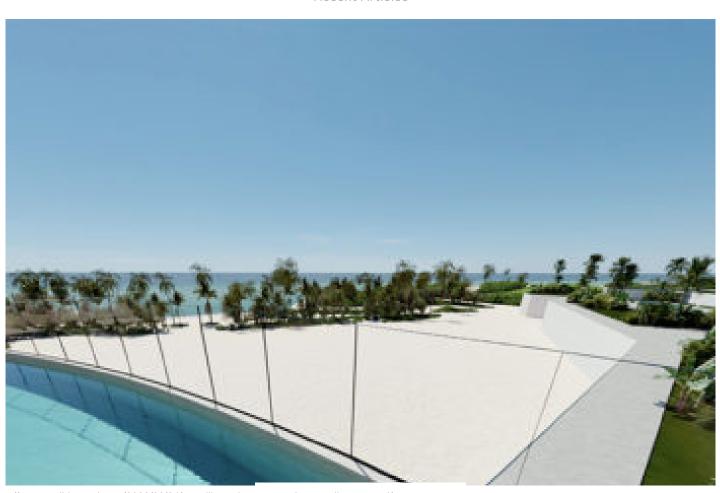
"This is a game-changer, as now an owner or vacationer doesn't have to carve out a week to visit or deal with the extra transfer through St. Maarten," said Freeman. "Enjoying a long weekend in Anguilla is feasible."

Rentals at Tranquility Beach have been building, said Freeman. He said festive 2021/2022 was solid and February bookings are strong.

"This is good news for both rental income and condominium sales," said Freeman. "After a year's delay because of border closures and reduced traffic due to the pandemic, we are now able to provide better rental history and pre-rental numbers for 2022 to prospective buyers. For example, our two-bedroom beachfront unit is available for purchase and already has \$180,000 in future bookings."

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