



The wight stuff

A New England-style home and an island lifestyle in the UK and without having to pay stamp duty is news indeed in these straitened times. But that is what's on offer with The Savoy: holiday cottages on 28 acres of grounds close to the yachting haven of Yarmouth on the Isle of Wight. The island – an hour's ferry ride away from Hampshire – looks set to stage a renaissance and has already seen a steady increase in visitors (savoyholidays.com).

coastPROPERTY

Why the ISLE OF WIGHT is fast attracting a new crowd and the best ways to track down the seaside home of your dreams **WORDS Graham Norwood**

DEVELOPMENT OF THE MONTH Victoria Dock, Caernarfon Marina

WHAT'S THE STORY? Victoria Dock is a scheme of 50 new apartments set around Caernarfon's smart new marina in North Wales, with views over the Menai Strait.

WHAT'S ON OFFER? Modern apartments with shops, bars and restaurants. There's plenty of maritime action to watch as you overlook 48 new pontoons for residents' boats, plus a visitors' pontoon for 30 vessels.

HOW CAN I GET THERE? It's an hour west of Conway by car. The nearest mainline station is Bangor with connections to Anglesey,



North Wales and north-west England.

WHAT'S THE DAMAGE? Prices are from a credit crunch-busting £225,000 for a two-bed flat up to £599,950 for a big four-bedder. *Through Savills (0161 236 8644, savills.co.uk).*

PHOTOGRAPHS ALAMY



COAST ABROAD

After two years of roadworks, Nice is back as the cultural centre of the Côte d'Azur with a gleaming new tram service. For just one Euro, you can travel the length of the Promenade des Anglais; spend a little more and you can own a new apartment in this beautiful coastal city. Just inland from the promenade, Jardin Pastorelli apartments are from £110,000 to £500,000. *Savills (020 7016 3811, savills.com).*

HOW TO...

...find the perfect coastal cottage



Determined to find a seaside bolthole? Helen FitzGerald of Coastal Property Search, which specialises in finding South West properties, says you must do your homework first.

WHATEVER THE WEATHER 'Don't base your decision on a sunny holiday. See the place on a wet February day, too. Visit at different times of year.'

LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR 'Is the place too arty? Are the shops open all year? Is it easy to return to family or work inland? Talk to prospective neighbours and discover what there is to do.'

BE OPEN-MINDED 'Most people want perfection – usually a 17th-century stone cottage overlooking the sea – but end up buying something quite different when they consider practicalities, such as price and availability.'

FIND AN AGENT 'Remember that the best coastal homes sell quickly, whatever the state of the market, which is why local search agents can be invaluable.'

BE REALISTIC ABOUT THE COSTS 'When living by the coast, you'll need to budget more than before on looking after your home. Paintwork, roofs, fencing and even gardens take more of a battering, so factor in additional maintenance costs.' *Coastal Property Search (01297 443891, coastalpropertysearch.co.uk).*