

TRANSACMER® immobilier

Saint-Tropez – La Garde Freinet & Grimaud– Megève - Paris

PRESS OVERVIEW

July-August 2009 **L'EXPANSION**
Those with influence in Saint-Tropez

Olivier Le Quellec runs the real-estate agency Transacmer and does not seem to be suffering from the crises. *“Saint-Tropez is still attracting as many French and European clients as before. Following the crash of Lehman Brothers, we made two very important sales, one of which for over 20 million euros.”*

27 June 2009 **LE FIGARO**
Saint-Tropez is still the most popular holiday destination in France

An Expert's opinion
“A completely unspoiled peninsula, frequented by people that read like a Who's Who, with lots happening Thanks to all this, Saint-Tropez has withstood the crises”, explains Olivier Le Quellec, president of the Transacmer agencies and member of the FNAIM. *“The record-breaking prices we saw during the boom period are no more. However, sales of between 15 and 20 millions are still taking place. Despite the hesitation seen among certain buyers, this is quite definitely a time for the best deals.”*

14 March 2009 **LE FIGARO MAGAZINE**
A Special Real Estate edition – The Riviera, the foreigners are leaving but demand remains high

The vacuum of the last few months seems to be dissipating with the arrival of Spring, awakening longings for holiday homes. On the periphery of the Mediterranean the market has slackened. This is not the opinion of all real estate agents. *“When Lehmann Brothers went into liquidation we thought that our clients would be cancelling deals, but instead they maintained them, including acquisitions for 10 or 20 million euros”,* explains Olivier Le Quellec of Transacmer, specialists in exclusive real estate in Saint-Tropez. *“Obviously buyers are more hesitant, but it must be pointed out that the market in Saint-Tropez only gets under way in mid-March”.* Wealthy or otherwise, candidates looking for second homes are waiting for the prices to fall. But a decline is by no means systematic where a micro market such as Saint-Tropez is concerned. *“Properties that offer almost everything are not negotiable, but sellers needing cash to continue in business will no doubt be ready to negotiate in 2009”,* observes Olivier Le Quellec, and he continues : *“however, don't wait for the market to bounce back before buying in Saint-Tropez, because prices will be even more expensive.”* Here, properties with sea views sell for at least 10 million euros, the more luxurious going for around 30 to 40 million euros. And in this ultra confidential market, there is always a demand. However, *“for properties between 5 and 10 million euros, sales will be more difficult”,* foresees Olivier Le Quellec.

12 September 2008 **LES ECHOS – LIMITED SERIES**
Collector's Stones

Architect Richard Neutra's Kaufmann House in Palm Springs, Louis Kahn's Esherick House in Philadelphia: architects houses are now reaching very high prices at auction. Is this an epiphenomenon? No, it's an indication of a hidden market, that of collector real estate.

[] Because collector real estate does exist. Including in France where the market is, of course, disconnected from interest rates and other (bourgeois) tax distinctions between main and secondary residences. We are beyond functional, maintains a smiling Nicolas Hug, specialist in this type of product and buyer. He is not the only one to have foreseen this tendency. Olivier le Quellec, Director of Transacmer, specialists in top quality real estate in Saint-Tropez and Megève, and just back from California where he has been visiting Richard Neutra's houses (well, well!): "*We need to speak the same language as our clients*". And as you can catch more flies with honey than with vinegar, he has opened a "cabinet/design library" in Paris to attract this clientele. []

March 2008 **DEMEURES & CHATEAUX**
The Agencies on the side of art

The outward aspect of the real estate business is changing. Particularly the agencies, the indispensable showcases, which are now looking to putting the accent on the personalisation of their welcome by breathing an air of conviviality and luxury into their premises. Certain have decided to install an art gallery, a reading room or a temporary exhibition. Demeures & Chateaux have visited five of these Parisian Ali Baba caves.

Transacmer where real estate moves into the 'salon'

When one passes in front of the Transacmer Agency which opened recently in the heart of the Rive Gauche antiques district, one wonders what is hiding behind their windows. Is this an agency or a library? Both my General! "*Our very high quality Parisian Agency had to catch the eye, be above the usual standard. Personally I buy lots of books. So I decided to create a "café littéraire" in Saint-Germain-des-Prés. The atmosphere is retro with leather armchairs, reading desks and high chairs. You can find books on architecture and design, two inevitable subjects when buying a house. Potential buyers can come and find ideas on decoration and house lay-outs. Getting to know people over a coffee in this context helps us to better understand their tastes. It's a relaxing, intimate place to meet and share things. The idea is not to multiply the numbers of our wealthy clients but to better understand their desires.*" Olivier le Quellec of Transacmer.

February 2008 **CAPITAL PRIVE MAGAZINE**
Real Estate, from prestige to collection

What is true in Paris is also true in the micro markets such as Saint-Tropez: "*Here our best clients are British, Belgian, Dutch, Scandinavian*" explains Olivier le Quellec, owner of the Transacmer Agencies of Saint-Tropez and Megève. And of course there are the Russians. "*They are behind all the record sales, over and above 40 million euros*" Olivier le Quellec continues. In other words, like the Grand Dukes before 1917, they break the Bank but prefer doing it with bricks and mortar rather than on green baize. Olivier le Quellec has just returned from a long trip to America, where he was able to explore the architect Neutra's Californian houses. "*It's a case*" he explains "*of speaking the same language as our clients. They don't just buy houses.*

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They also like design, photography.” Nicolas Hug, Philippe Ménager, Nicolas Libert or Olivier Le Quellec (the young guard) are not (just) dreamers. They are “passers of wealth”. They have split away from the classical agencies. They believe in the Internet, places of exchange such as the “salon-bibliothèque” that Le Quellec has opened in Paris to receive his clients. They themselves are passionate collectors of design. They offer a real plus by being more like hunters than just property merchants. Their motto? That of Raymond Loewy, the Pope of design : “ Ugliness does not sell”. Their ambition? Quasi revolutionary. For finally these grandchildren of May ’68 want beauty to be accessible to all, in everyone’s daily life. Paradoxical when one’s speciality is top-end real estate, a word which makes them shiver with horror? Less than one could imagine. Their methods probably correspond to a real movement that the classical agencies do not know how or do not want to seize upon.

*October 25th 2007 THE SCOTSMAN
A land Var, far away
It’s expensive, but southern France may pay off for investors*

The southern French area of the Var is home to some of the most expensive real estate in the world. [] Prices in Ramatuelle and Saint-Tropez are similar, Gassin prices slightly lower. In the fishing village of Saint-Tropez, Emmanuelle Mainfroy at Transacmer is selling a 100 sq.m. one-bedroom apartment by the port and Ponche beach. Renovated and decorated by a top Parisian interior designer, the price is 1.5 million euros (1.08 sterling pounds). If it has a sea view and terrace, you won’t get much change out of 5 million euros for one of the attractive fishermen’s cottages. Mainfroy is marketing a villa in grounds of 8000 sq.m., overlooking the Baie des Canoubiers, in the commune of Saint-Tropez. The main house has 3 bedrooms on the ground floor, each with bathroom. The large bedroom of the owner’s apartment above opens on to a solarium terrace. For visitors, the maison d’amis has two bedrooms and bathrooms, there is separate accommodation for the caretakers – a snip at under 20 million euros (if you need the sterling conversion, you can’t afford it). [] [] Transacmer clients – today more biz than showbiz – are realising they can operate year-round from here. Properties bought as second homes are becoming main residences ; demand has dictated the opening of a Paris office. Property prices are only going one way. The Var is the second most forested department in France and policies are in place to keep it that way. “What’s green will stay green”.

*27 September 2007 LE POINT
A Special Real Estate Edition : An Agency / reading room*

Le Point: Why have Transacmer (Saint-Tropez, Megève ...) specialists in top-end real estate, opened a reading room/library in Paris?

Olivier Le Quellec: (President of the Transacmer Agencies)
Because we consider it essential to differentiate ourselves from other run-of-the-mill agencies. We consider ourselves as craftsmen, with a reputed know-how based on the quality of our connections of our understanding and of our services.

Le Point: How is this space in the Carré Rive Gauche antique district an advantage?

Olivier Le Quellec: Real estate will not be its main vocation. Our visitors will be able to quietly consult our selection of works on architecture, decoration, design ... Only this "time wasting" enables us to better advise our clients. We create this intimacy in order to understand their needs so that they may better envisage where they want to live. We could call it a relation of "haute couture", but in real estate."

September 13th 2007 THE IRISH TIMES
Petit one-bed apartments are way to buy into pricey St Tropez

Buying in France : I wonder if Palaeolithic man, swinging by the south of France around 30,000 BC, realised, as he sat carving his flints on the Cap Taillat, that the St Tropez peninsula would in time become some of the most prized real estate in the world ? writes Carolyn Reynier .

Did the Romans, who didn't go down with their ships, potter along Pampelonne beach, across kilometres of fine sand warmed by a Mediterranean sun blazing out of a cloudless azure sky, bemoaning the loss of their amphorae of wine, and think "Hmmm. This could be worse," or the Latin equivalent?

We shall never know. What we do know is that within the department of the Var, prices in the Gulf of St Tropez area are 30 per cent higher than in the rest of the department; and prices in the triangle of Gassin/St Tropez/Ramatuelle, at the tip of the lush green wooded and vine-covered St Tropez peninsula are 30 per cent higher again, with Gassin prices a little lower than in the other two communes.

Surrounded by forests, the village of Gassin has retained its authenticity and is one of the 148 Plus Beaux Villages de France.

The mayor, Monsieur Zerbone, has gone to great lengths to preserve the natural environmental heritage of the commune, as have his counterparts.

The old village, with its winding lanes and old houses, is situated on a rocky promontory less than 4km from the coast.

You'll pass ancient doors built in characteristic green serpentine and grey or black basalt, metamorphic and volcanic rocks extracted from local quarries. The oldest is dated 1422. There's a lovely panorama sweeping round from the Hyères Islands, across the Massif des Maures hills to the snow-capped Alpine peaks.

There are properties available for under €300,000. In the commune of Gassin, Cabinet Jomel is selling a small one-bedroom mas in a quiet residence with pool and garden. South/south-west facing, it is on two levels plus a mezzanine; there is a private garden of 42sq m (452sq ft). The price is €165,000.

Solène Toutain has recently joined her mother Chantal Warrick at Les Barrys, a small agency in the village itself. Warrick, who has lived in Gassin for 30 years, started her real estate agency 16 years ago. They have a similar type of property for sale for €252,000 in a domain with pool and tennis court 6km or so from St Tropez. There are two bedrooms, private parking and a little garden of 40sq m (430sq ft).

Houses in the old village are much sought after although, at rarely more than 100sq m (1,076sq ft), they are small. The average price per square metre is €6,000. In the new village, built in 1990, Warwick is marketing a 95sq m (990sq ft) property with country views and four bedrooms, two with balconies onto the garden, at €650,000.

Estate agency in these parts is often a family affair. Nicolas Barranco works with his father, Joseph, who has been selling property on the peninsula for 30 years. "We don't really have a price per square metre. If you ask five agents to value your property, there'll be a variance of 30 to 40 per cent."

One client is selling through Barranco père et fils, his five bedroom villa with vineyards and hills all around for €5.5m. The property is just a couple of kilometres from Ramatuelle. Each bedroom has its own bathroom, there's an open fire in the drawingroom for those winter evenings and a diningroom which opens onto the terrace with lovely views of the village. The pool and pool house (converted to another bedroom with shower) are in large grounds which are part landscaped, part natural woodland.

Ramatuelle lies on one of the foothills of the Paillas Hill, overlooking the Bay of Pampelonne and the plain. For security, it was built following a circular plan, rather like a snail's shell; traces of the high walls are still visible. The architecture is typically Mediterranean with glimpses of porches, stairs, passages, tiny squares, narrow flower-filled cobble-stoned lanes; market day is Thursday.

The commune includes the three caps of Camarat, Taillat and Lardier, linked by a footpath offering 200km of walking along the Var coast. Originally frequented by customs officers, it passes by stretches of sandy beaches, steep creeks, a variety of Mediterranean vegetation, and pine forests.

In the fishing village of St Tropez (markets on Tuesdays and Saturdays; a great wee fish market just up from the port), Olivier Le Quellec, owner of Transacmer, sells top-end properties throughout the peninsula. "It's a small market, but there are always lovely properties to sell." For instance, €1.5m will buy you a one-bedroom apartment by the port. One of the pretty fishermen's cottages with terrace and sea view will sell for €4 to €5m. You'll get change from €20m for a six-bedroom villa (four in the main house, two in the guest house) overlooking Cannoubiers bay in the commune of St Tropez.

"Prices of properties with sea views and a pool have rocketed over the last 10 years," says Le Quellec. The same applies to the 160 or so properties in the 200 hectare Parcs de St Tropez, located just outside the village, marketed by Françoise Albertone at the Agence des Parcs de St Tropez. If you're not worried about a sea view, you can buy a property from €2m. If you are, multiply by 10 for what the French call a villa pieds dans l'eau. Brigitte Bardot bought hers on sight in 1958. "At the time, comfort at La Madrague was limited to say the least, there wasn't even running water. We had to pump water from the well! While I don't care for ostentatious luxury, I do like my comfort and launched into substantial building works."

Today, it is a seller's market with agents reporting a large Irish and British clientele. There are American and Scandinavian buyers too. Access to the peninsula by car in the summer is hellish; access by boat from St Raphaël to the port of St Tropez is heaven. But if you're thinking of retiring here, think again. L'Annonciade in St Tropez, one of my favourite museums (Bonnard to Vuillard via Dufy, Signac and Utrillo), only closes in November; but lively restaurants, cafés and

shops in the three villages are only lively for about eight months of the year. Then many owners shut up shop and push off to the ski resorts; it becomes very quiet. I like that. You may not.

Having said that, Damien Rey-Brot whose family have lived in Gassin for seven generations, recently returned from Paris to retire and ended up buying Le Pescadou restaurant. It's Catch 22, he explains.

"Everyone disappeared because nothing was open. If you make the effort to open, folk come back. December in St Tropez is an amazing month, much more festive than in the Paris region. The mairie really makes a great effort all year round."

September 8th 2007 THE FINANCIAL TIMES

Reach for the stars in Saint-Tropez

Environmental protection initiatives have added to the peninsula's appeal pushing prices even higher, says Carolyn Reynier.

By reputation, the Saint Tropez peninsula must be one of the best known pieces of real estate in the western world. By road, it must be one of the hardest to get to. You leave the A8 motorway at what the 18th-century Scottish writer Tobias Smollett described as "a wretched town called Mui" and take the D25 across the verdant Massif des Maures to Sainte Maxime along what appears, in July and August, to be the most congested road on earth. But at least it provides motorists plenty of time to admire the scenery.

The Gulf of Saint Tropez is made up of 12 communes from Sainte Maxime in the east to Cavalaire in the west. Property prices average 30 per cent more than in the rest of the *department*, known as the Var. On the peninsula, the eponymous village of Saint Tropez, the smallest of the communes, along with the hilltop villages of Gassin and Ramatuelle form a triangle in which house prices are 30 per cent higher again.

"The Varois market is one of the most expensive in France, if not the world, [and] property values have increased substantially in the past 10 years," says Emmanuelle Mainfroy of the Transacmer estate agency in Saint Tropez. "The jet set and showbiz people have sold at good prices; now they stay with friends, in hotels or rent. Our buyers today tend to be captains of industry who realise they can do their business all year round from the peninsula."

Over the past five years the proportion of French buyers has increased to about 65 per cent, he says. The balance is made up of Britons, Belgians, Italians and Swiss – all exceptionally wealthy, of course, since fishermen's cottages with terraces and sea views in Saint Tropez now go for €4m-€5m.

Mainfroy is currently selling a *bastide* – five bedrooms, garden, pool – within walking distance of the Place des Lices (home to weekly Tuesday and Saturday markets as well as hard-fought games of pétanque) for about €3.7m. Although €8m-€10m will get you a villa with a view and a pool, grander homes can hit the €40m mark. One kilometre from the village is a 200-hectare development of 160 properties created by the Agence des Parcs de Saint Tropez in 1953, where prices now range from €2m for a 200 sq metre villa without a sea view to waterside properties in their own grounds for €20m.

"We have a large English clientele – City traders – as well as Norwegian, American and Irish buyers," says the Agence des Parcs's Michel Wegelin. "There's a shortage of properties to sell and it's impossible to find building plots." When older houses come to market, many are redeveloped

or pulled down but this requires permits and there are exacting building controls defined by the Plan Local d'Urbanisme.

Joseph Barranco has been selling property in Ramatuelle for more than 35 years. The village is built on the flanks of the Paillas hill and dominates the entire bay of Pampelonne and the agricultural plain. Originally constructed to follow a circular plan for self-defence, it unwinds like a snail's shell from the centre. The architecture is characteristic of Mediterranean villages: glimpses of porches and steps here, passages and tiny squares there. Craft shops, restaurants and flowers line the narrow cobbled lanes and there is a weekly market.

"There are not many openings to the outside unless you're on the boulevards exiting the village such as the Rue Georges Clemenceau," he says. Prices also serve to keep newcomers out. "I've sold three small village houses this year and the average price is €5,000 per square metre," he says. "A 250 sq metre villa built with modern, quality materials with a pool in well laid-out grounds of 3,000 sq metres will sell for €2m-€3m. Owners pay a lot of attention to the exterior; we live so much outdoors here."

He says that 99 per cent of his clients are buying second homes. But when he retires he'll probably amuse himself somewhere else during the winter because he says there's nothing to do in Ramatuelle.

Prices are lower in Gassin but not by much. According to Chantal Warrick of local agency Les Barrys, two-bedroom apartments in a *domaine* with a pool and tennis court now sell for about €250,000, while a small house with a terrace and studio in the old village with its lively cafés and restaurants would go for €600,000. A Provençal villa surrounded by vines – the Var produces Côtes de Provence reds, whites and rosés – can be yours for €4m.

"The average price in the village is €5,000-€6,000 per square metre," she says. "No two buildings are the same but, in general, the floor area will be less than 100 sq metres. They're small houses, two or three floors, often divided [with] no outside space. But they are popular with lovers of old stones who appreciate the charm, the tranquillity." Villas "in the plain", meanwhile, are priced between €8,000 and €10,000 per square metre. And, as in the rest of the triangle, supply is low. "Today, there is no land available for sale," Warrick says. "There may be some in areas already built on that can take a bit more cement but what's green will remain green, what's agricultural will remain agricultural."

In the village sales are also rare, she adds. "Properties tend to remain in the hands of the same families."

The supply problem is exacerbated by the fact that the caps of Camarat, Taillat and Lardier belong to the state-owned Conservatoire du Littoral and so cannot be built on. A 200km footpath follows the coastline through pine woods and past beaches, including Pampelonne's 4.5km of fine sand. In 2000 the Solidarité et Renouvellement Urbains came into force obliging the *mairies*, or town councils, to concentrate all areas of construction – mains sewerage, water and electricity distribution – in urban zones. "So today this countryside and the forests will be even more protected," says Barranco. "I'm not saying whether it's a good or bad thing but it puts up the prices."

UK-based chef Michel Roux has owned his shepherd's cottage, with a small vineyard and a few hectares of land, in the valley below Gassin since 1981. "For many years, as soon as we closed [the restaurant] on Boxing Day, we flew down for New Year," he says. "A glass of Dom Pérignon in front of the log fire, batten down the hatches – it was the perfect way to unwind after a busy year." Now, he typically spends a couple of weeks in Gassin in the summer with his grandchildren.

Another long-time resident of the area is Peter Beale, who bought his *bastide* behind Pampelonne beach in Ramatuelle commune in 1968. "It's basically remained the same," he says. "They've built

a new port, a few more houses but I [still] have 360° views with no houses. In my pasture I've got seven horses, three donkeys and a mule. It's a truly remarkable place."

Newcomers do break into the market occasionally, however. Last year Philippe Wagner and his wife, residents of the Metz area of eastern France, bought a 50 sq metre second home in Gassin village to use during school holidays with their seven-year-old son. "For us, Gassin's geographical situation is ideal – 10 minutes from Pampelonne and from Saint Tropez," Wagner says. The couple can lunch outside even in winter, their son often plays in the streets with his new local friends and the house is the perfect size. "It's a pied-à-terre. We don't want any upkeep or expensive charges. We arrive, we open the shutters, we're at home."

As for those traffic jams on the road to the peninsula, owners of top-end villas might have a helipad (or a friend who has one). There's also a heliport at Grimaud and an airstrip for private planes to land at La Môle. Seafarers tie up in Saint Tropez's colourful port in front of the red-chaired terrace of the Sénéquier café.

"It is an exceptional market," says Mainfroy, "and, thanks to the environmental protection policies in place, it will remain so. Prices won't go down. It's a good deal for buyers."

28 July 2007

MADAME FIGARO

Madly Saint-Tropez – Deco: A refuge in Ramatuelle

In the shade of the umbrella pines stands a house entirely built of wood, resembling a Californian villa from the Fifties. Thanks to Transacmer, discoverers of exceptional places, and the architect François Vieillcroze, the owners are in perfect tune with nature.

Summer 2007

TENTATION

Top businessmen - Top Ten : Olivier Le Quellec

Olivier Le Quellec, President of Transacmer, grand specialist of luxury real estate in Saint-Tropez, La Garde Freinet and Megève has, he too, finally "gone up" to Paris. But not with the same arms, because by setting up in the Rue du Bac in the centre of the Carré des Antiquaires or antique district, he has completely zapped the concept of a real estate agency. By creating a place where a different type of client can pass through and talk about his wishes without the pressure to buy or sell, he has invented a reading room or "salon littéraire". With a library of 300 works on architecture and design, decoration or landscape gardening He's not crazy Olivier, he recognises the value of his 3,850 referenced clients, all of whom will inevitably one day pass through or live in Paris. But he is also looking at owners of mansions or luxury apartments in the 7th arrondissement. The synergy will happen, because the golden triangle of Megève-Saint Tropez-Paris is an economic reality. And who cares if this craftsman of real estate is not a pure product of the bank or insurance. With him, we enter the world of haute couture. So it's not surprising that in Saint-Tropez he can sell properties with sea view for 20 million euros (20 million francs 10 years ago) and even estates for 70 million euros. The obvious progression of his turn-over is a secret. Just as a future Transacmer on the Basque Coast is an evidence.

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June 2007

LE TROPEZIEN

Along with Olivier Le Quellec, Transacmer has cast anchor in the Capital

The real-estate agency established in 1964 in Saint-Tropez has found its niche in the “Carré des Antiquaires” ready to meet the Parisiens.

For a long time now, OLQ has wanted to establish Transacmer in Paris. First with the Saint-Tropez agency which he joined in 1989, followed by the ones in Megève and La Garde Freinet and setting-up in Paris became a must. But not anyhow or anyway. “I visited many places”, OLQ recognises, “but I wanted somewhere really evocative. Not avenue Montaigne nor Neuilly, but somewhere which connected with a certain image of Saint-Tropez. Saint-Germain des Prés!” The occasion presented itself when an antique-dealer retired. His boutique was at 19 rue du Bac. A truly remarkable site. “There was no question of opening just another real-estate agency in Paris, but to develop another concept more in line with the clientele in order to better share their tastes and projects. Also, it was important that our image evolved in an era of intense globalisation within the world of real-estate.”

With the image in the back of his mind of the famous “cafés littéraires”, OLQ tried to imagine how to diversify in order to remain as close as possible to the clients without aggressing them. By welcoming them in a place more like an office-cum-library where one could relax, meet, exchange ideas, consult books on architecture, decoration, design and all things artistic. A space, a salon given over to thought and reflection.

January 2007

LA VIE IMMOBILIERE

Paddling in Saint-Tropez

The most famous village in France is only accessible to the wealthy. The price of a dream : more than 1 million euros. [] “*the lowest prices in the heart of the commune fluctuate between 1.5 and 2.5 million euros for a villa with swimming-pool*”, according to the Agency Transacmer. [] “*To be a property-owner in Saint-Tropez means membership of a very exclusive club with its rules, codes and customs. The sites are protected, the properties designed by world-famous architects. And it isn't subject to trends – the Village attracts as many people as before, if not more. What was worth 4.5 million francs in 1995 was worth 4.5 million euros in 2005. Today, prices rise to 20, 25 million euros. At this pace, I think in 2 years' time we'll be seeing sales at more than 50 million euros, maybe even 80 million.*”

September 29th 2006

LES ECHOS

The price of exception

[] What is true for the Capital is also true for the Côte d'Azur, which is also overrun by foreigners. Here it's not a famous monument that counts but the view over the sea and the quality of the resort. The list of best value sites: Saint-Tropez, Cannes, Cap d'Antibes, Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat ...where the prices continue to defy all market laws. “*Good valued properties begin at 4 or 4.5 million euros, but for a sea view you need a budget of at least 8 million euros*” according to the Agency Transacmer, specialised in top-grade properties, and they add: “*Above 3 to 4 millions, the market remains very dynamic, below it's more difficult, the artists who were very present in the 50's to the 70's no longer have the means to pay such prices.*” *And, as in Paris, it is the foreigners who can afford these budgets (English, Swiss, Italian and Belgian).* The French are not however completely absent from the Tropezian

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market as they represent 50% of the market. Even though prices are now stable, we still witness a few excesses. *“For the young French executive, price is not an obstacle,”* Transacmer underlines. *“The acquisition of a high-grade property is a prize for their excellent results, in some ways a medal, but only the best in their fields can afford the best in Saint-Tropez”*

July 28th 2005

LE POINT

Saint-Tropez – instructions

Transacmer can be compared to an antique dealer or an art merchant who knows all the whims of its clients and who will find them the real gem.

July - August 2005

SAINT-TROPEZ SUR LA TERRE &

PURE SAINT-TROPEZ – LA REVUE DU GOLFE

The background of an up-and coming profession

Since 1964, TRANSACMER Real Estate Agency has offered its exceptional clientele outstanding sites. But this doesn't happen by magic : an out of the ordinary market and clientele need out of the ordinary management, marketing and human resources.

May 2005

HOMES AWAY FROM HOME

Ask the expert section

A very dynamic property market but...

For more than 40 years Transacmer has offered its exceptional clientele outstanding sites on the peninsula of Saint-Tropez.

Since the mythical Sixties, the fascination for Saint-Tropez and its peninsula has not ceased and whatever people may say, this is more than ever true .

If the V.I.P.'s of show business and the Jet set are a little less present than before, the captains of industry have invested in the area and prove, if this still has to be proved, that real estate on the peninsula remains a very strong investment for pleasure and family, as well as being considered a highly secure investment.

“For 40 years the property market has known fluctuations and cycles which keep recurring. There was of course the property crisis in the Nineties, due mainly to the bubble created by the property dealers. From 1998 on, the market started all over again and today we have reached prices far beyond those prevailing in 1991.

A lot of professionals said at the time that the prices before the crisis could never be reached again as they were already considered to be exorbitant. I notice that this is not the case. On the contrary we are in a totally atypical and exceptional micro-market.

The peninsula of Saint-Tropez, because of its preservation and beauty, enjoys a remarkable quality of life. There is the village of Saint-Tropez which the connoisseurs appreciate as much in winter as in summer, for different reasons depending on the seasons; and there is also this marvellous peninsula which has remained so unspoilt. No where else, less than a two hour flight away from the major European capitals, will you find a place, where it is possible in wintertime to have a quiet lunch in the sun on the beach. And that's precisely what makes the peninsula so unusual and lets us look to the future where the perpetuation and increase in the value of property assets are intimately linked to the respect and preservation of the environment and the quality of life.

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Those who chose to have their main or their secondary residence here understand this very well and that's why they are ready to pay for the privilege.

Transacmer has been working on the peninsula for the last 40 years and has never had so many new estates of high quality for sale as we have had during the last few months. This phenomenon can be partly explained by the new tax laws on capital gains and the price positioning of the market, which are very favourable for the sellers and which surely decided certain owners to put their property on the market. During the next few months we risk finding ourselves facing buyers who have a lot more choice than before and who will therefore be more demanding and tougher in the negotiations with the result that the market could have some moments of hesitation. I believe that the owners of nice villas should not lower their prices, even if sales become rarer and more difficult, and should call upon the property professionals because a lot of properties for sale are and will remain exceptional, in a market that is and will remain exceptional”.

March 30th 2005

LE FIGARO

Seaside resorts, an expensive pleasure

Many beautiful villas for sale in Saint-Tropez

Saint-Tropez is atypic ! In the stars's and multi-millionnaire's favourite town, the amount of houses for sale is important. « *We never had so many estates of high quality for sale* », says Olivier Le Quellec, real estate agent in Saint-Tropez. This past years rocketing of prices gave ideas to many landlords tempted to make capital gains. It is true that in Saint-Tropez, since 3 years, prices have shot up of more than 50% and have tripled since 1997. « *only possible problem* », precises the real estate agent, « *considering the offer which is important, potential buyers will try to make prices go down* ». Many of these prestigious villas are offered at more than 5 million euros. Nowadays, one must allow a minimum of 1 million euros to buy a villa in Saint-Tropez. []

July-august 2004

L'EXPANSION

Those who have the power in Cannes

The 15 most influent managers

Olivier Le Quellec, the multi-millionaires's real estate agent

The ex-president of Saint-Tropez tourism board is a formidable hunter of luxury villas. He finds for the most influent businessmen their dream homes, some of them being over 20 million euros. Strenuous and resolute, the manager of Transacmer (2,5 million euros fees in 2003) compares himself more to an art gallerist than to a simple real estate agent.

July 2004

COTE MAGAZINE

Buying in Saint-Tropez : a mythical address

[]The jet set has its codes that some locals happily borrow, and not without success. Olivier Le Quellec, owner of Transacmer, is one of these. At 40 he can be proud of a success that's obvious all around him, especially in his relations with the people and things “that count”. This delightful man has an address book that would make the best press attachés

turn green. He is a born salesman but discreet about figures : perhaps a score of transactions (between 500 000 and 9 million euros) pass through his hands. []

[] The Saint-Tropez peninsula is still well preserved. Although real-estate demands exert considerable pressure, the hectares of vines seem to be holding their own. The architecture hasn't suffered too much either. But how long will it last ? As for Olivier Le Quellec, he realised the benefits of surfing the sustainable development wave. For his own home, La cabane de Je-Ly, presently under construction, Olivier went for the natural approach : boardings in red cedar, a wood whose colour matures with time, rainwater retrieval system, film vapour barriers, etc... The house is designed to blend completely into the surrounding nature. "My next challenge is to convince my clients that is where the future lies, in construction that respect the environment. Even if they have a lot of money, they will see that the environment-friendly approach is just as convivial and beautiful as everything that's gone before. Mine will be the show house for it".[]

May-June-July 2003 LA LETTRE DU BUSINESS

What is the secret of Transacmer's success? « Self-discipline, a serious data bank and availability.... In our profession you have to be methodical, discrete, but always on the lookout for the right moment to propose a sale! ».

July 2002 TRAVEL + LEISURE Saint-Tropez : hot again

[] Olivier Le Quellec, a real estate agent and president of the tourist board, compares St-Tropez to a theater, « *there are two kinds of people here – those at the podium and those in the chairs* » he says. In 1998, he sold the house of Elton John's manager for \$ 7 million, the highest price ever paid for a residence at that time. Real estate values promptly doubled. « *when you have money people, you get fashion people and more hotels and restaurants* » Le Quellec says. « *And the quality goes up* » . So, too, does the level of backlash.[]

March 2002 THE RIVIERA TIMES Far more than glamour and glitz

Sea, sun and stars – a perfect description of the tiny peninsula of Saint-Tropez, infamous for its summer months of flash and cash.

In the high season, a staggering 60 000 to 70 000 people wanting to see, and to be seen, visit Saint-Tropez daily. But life in this little coastal town is not just about showing off in a café on a hot summer day.

Mr Lequellec, President of the tourist office, wants to prove to the sceptics that his beloved city has a lot more to offer for visitors and residents alike.

Born in Boulogne sur Mer in 1963, Olivier le Quellec has lived in Saint-Tropez since he was three months old, after his father, back from a fishing trip in Corsica, anchored in the bay and fell in love with the region.

Elected in 1996 as the President of the tourist office, Mr le Quellec's goal is to give back to a community that has given him so much, and to "establish a good understanding between the different associations and organisations of the city".

Saint-Tropez, together with its two neighbouring communes of Ramatuelle and Gassin, is an area of dramatic contrasts. And this is, according to Mr Le Quellec, why so many people are attracted to this small french town.

Contradictions and contrasts are what Saint-Tropez life is based on he explains. "The contrasts between the young and the old, the rich and the not-so-rich, the stars and the local fishermen".

As the owner and manager of Transacmer, the main real estate agency in Saint-Tropez, Mr le Quellec knows only too well that this passion for the city can sometimes provoke unreasonable reactions. "The market in Saint-Tropez is very exclusive, and people do not hesitate to spend millions on properties they know they won't find anywhere else", he says.

But he insists that the traditions of Saint-Tropez are as important for its life and reputation, as the trendy designer shops of the area or the never-ending summer parties. Perhaps even more so.

For example the Sepoun, the keeper of traditions elected for life, is a key figure of the tropezian landscape and the natives of Saint-Tropez are the ingredient adding a zest of authenticity to the town.

As an example, he talks about the personalities who enjoy living among the simplest people. "For instance, the stars love playing pétanque with the local fishermen, or going to buy a baguette at the local bakery", Mr le Quellec says. Where else is this possible in quite the same way ?

So where is Saint-Tropez headed ? "The real estate market has gone through the roof since 1998", he says. Despite the growth of this little peninsula, Mr le Quellec insists that Saint-Tropez and its environs are preserved in terms of environment, and it is this attention to detail that is partly responsible for its success.

The combination of its prestige, setting and the quality of its services have turned Saint-Tropez into an unmatched destination, but as Mr le Quellec puts it, the city is "like a fragile and sought-after object to be handled with care".

February 2002

RIVIERA-COTE D'AZUR ZEITUNG

Grüss Gott, Saint-Tropez

Im Februar reisen die wichtigsten Repräsentanten des weltbekannten Ortes nach Bayern. Unzählige Besucher aus der ganzen welt strömen vor allem in der Hauptsaison alljährlich nach Saint-Tropez, werden wie magisch angezogen vom flair des ehemaligen kleinen fischerdörfchens im departement Var. Nun haben die hauptakteure der stadt beschlossen, „den spieß einmal unzdrehen“ : renommierte chefköche und entscheidungsträger, allen voran bürgermeister und parlaments-abgeordneter Jean-Michel Couve sowie tourismus-Präsident Olivier le Quellec, bringen am 27. februar mediterrane lebensart nach München. Die initiative steht unter der schirmherrschaft des französischen botschafters, Claude Martin.

Jetzt besuchen wir euch einmal ! So etwa sieht der dynamische Präsident des tourismusamtes von Saint-Tropez, Olivier le Quellec, die reise der wichtigsten akteure seiner stadt nach Bayern. Im Münchner Kempiski Hotel Vier Jahreszeiten sind etwa 350 ehrengäste geladen, die mit provenzalischen spezialitäten der renommiertesten chefköche der halbinsel von Saint-Tropez „verführt“ werden sollen. In der vergangenen jahren hatten ähnliche initiativen unter anderem in Zürich und Paris grosse erfolge verbucht. „Wir brauchen nicht wirklich neue kunden“, erklärt der präsident gegenüber der RCZ. „Wir verstehen diese aktion vielmehr als freundschaftliche geste für langjährige besucher, die inzwischen zu freunden geworden sind.

Le Quellec, 38, sohn bretonischer eltern, kam mit drei monaten nach Saint-Tropez und empfindet sich als *enfant de pays*, identifiziert sich hundertprozentig mit seiner stadt.

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Als erfolgreicher immobilienmakler gehört er heute zu den „motoren“ des ehemaligen fischerdörfchens, dem Brigitte Bardot in den fünfziger Jahren zu Weltruhm verhalf. Eine kleine Anekdote am Rande : vor gut zwei Jahren verkaufte er, per e.mail, ein vier Hektar grosses Anwesen im Wert von 7,62 Millionen Euro an niemanden geringeren als Elton John.

Durch seinen Beruf hat er den Besuchermarkt genau analysiert : „50 Prozent kommen aus dem Ausland, dabei stehen die Deutschen an zweiter Stelle. Viele denken, die Deutschen hätten keinen Lebensstil, aber das ist total falsch ! Zu uns kommen tolle Leute, mit hohem Niveau und überdurchschnittlichem Insider-Wissen“. Le Quellec fährt fort : „Zahlreiche unserer deutschen Gäste kennen die Côte schon seit langem und sehr gut. Deswegen bevorzugen viele von ihnen die Nebensaison, weil sie wissen, wie schön es in den Wintermonaten bei uns ist“. Und was ist mit dem Massentourismus ? „Den können wir nicht verhindern“, sagt der Präsident. „Wir können ihn nur in gewisse Bahnen lenken. Das ist zum Beispiel über ein möglichst exklusives Angebot von Restaurants, Boutiquen und Hotels möglich.

Stichwort Lebensqualität : wie steht es damit in Saint-Tropez ? „Auf der ganzen Halbinsel kämpfen die Bürgermeister der verschiedenen Orte permanent dafür, dieses von der Natur so privilegierte Gebiet weitgehendst vor Lärm, Städtebaulichen Fehlern und Verkehrsproblemen zu schützen. Die lange und unbequeme Autobahn-Zufahrt etwa ist ein Segen für Saint-Trop ! Am liebsten hätte ich nur kleine Strassen mit möglichst grossen Löchern“, lacht Le Quellec. „Wer mit seinem Traumauto durch unseren Ort fährt, will schliesslich nicht rasen, sondern gesehen werden“. Weitere Garantien für bessere Lebensqualität sind laut seinen Worten auch die engagierten Umweltschützer, die in verschiedenen Vereinigungen organisiert sind, allen voran Lucien Corel.

Die Sicherheit an der Côte d'Azur gerät immer wieder in die Schlagzeilen. Wie steht es damit in Saint-Tropez ? „Um ehrlich zu sein : Bis vor einigen Jahren liess ich noch den Schlüssel im Auto stecken. Das tue ich heute nicht mehr. Aber eigentlich ist es bei uns relativ ruhig. Wir setzen auf alle Massnahmen, die kriminelle irgendwie abschrecken können, nach dem Motto : nicht bei uns ! Dazu gehört auch die Kameraüberwachung. Der einzige Weg meiner Ansicht nach : Null Toleranz“.

September 2000

LA TRIBUNE

OLIVIER LE QUELLEC : THE LODGER OF THE GOTHA

By getting with John Taylor the marketing of a one billion franc programme, Olivier Le Quellec proves that the time of revival is back for the real estate market in the “Golfe de Saint-Tropez”.

Elegant without excess, a keen look and on constant alert, the man knows how to listen. Nothing is let aside, above all good bargains. At 36, Olivier Le Quellec manages Transacmer, Saint-Tropez's leading real estate agency, as well as two other agencies located in Megève and Cannes, respectively bought in 1999 and in 2000. The turnover of all Transacmer's agencies amounts to 300 million francs (45,73 million euros).

Such a break into the real estate market is not a coincidence, yet the life of this ambitious manager is a run of lucks.

He was then only 3 months old. In 1963, his father, fisher from Brittany, anchored his ship in Saint-Tropez at his return from fishing in Corsica and then decided to stay there.

Boisterous, young Olivier was sent to the Maristes who taught him “rigour and aggressivity in fight with the aim to win and never give up”. A characteristic that still features the manager “demanding as well as precise, meticulous and obsessed by details...which leads him to see always further” as his secretary Véronique said. His meeting with Régine, a French well-known manager of fashion nightclubs, in 1986 during a summer lunch was his third chance. She appreciated him

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and gave him the responsibility of her Cabaret in rue de Ponthieu in Paris. There, he understood what a job “based on human relations and night people with whom he got important contacts useful for the following years” is. Back to Saint-Tropez two years later, he decided to work within one of the oldest real estate agencies, managed by Pierre Maeder who remembers the young man “with a keen look, a quick mind and with aggressive ambition. He knows how to use the brandname Transacmer while changing the means of sale and negotiations... with a much more financial than real thinking”. Olivier Le Quellec bought 20% of the capital for 1 million francs (0,15 million euros) : a huge investment just when real estate market slumped. But he could feel the recovery was for soon. He was on the road to chance. In 1998, he owned the agency while real estate market recovered with a 30% growth in two years. Prices boomed and demand was such that Olivier Le Quellec specialised his agency in properties over 20 million francs and focused on a new clientele : the one of Industry captains as Bernard Arnault, François Pinault or Vincent Bolloré. Chance gave its place to technique for Olivier Le Quellec who stood out a year ago by selling through e.mail a property of 4 hectares for 50 million francs (7,62 million euros) to Elton John’s manager. From his stay at Régine, he still likes night atmosphere, by meeting people which facilitate contacts. At disposal, ready to listen, he knows how to look at each detail in order to define each personality, the desires and private manners of his contacts considered as potential clients. The secret of his success : “rigour, strong data base and at permanent disposal”. An irrefutable fact shared by many competitors which are rarely his friends. The young man, very close to Jean-Michel Couve, Député-Maire of Saint-Tropez, is also the chairman of the tourism office. And he is already thinking of the town elections in 2008...

Even though he refuses to say something about Olivier Le Quellec’s politic future, Laurent Dassault, one of his former clients, considers him as “a fighter growing in a human relation environment of quality and who could have been an excellent sales manager in a huge company. He is diplomatic, politic and conscientious”.

A good profile for the one who is today celebrating this transaction made with John Taylor : 1 billion francs for marketing two golf courses and 200 properties in Gassin. “Enough to buy a new agency with the 60 million franc fees”.

February 5th 2000 FIGARO MEDITERRANEE
Transacmer : a new race of estate agents

Transacmer Real Estate Agency, based at Saint-Tropez and Megève, is brilliant proof of the excellent health of the prestige real estate, especially in the billionaire peninsula.

« We have been developing a new way of working in the real estate business, based on marketing, communication, artistic culture and of course commerce. It has become essential nowadays to understand a whole set of signals coming from the clients, if you want to make good deals. You won’t convince the buyer by the simple fact that you know your product and the market price perfectly, but equally with the capacity to know the environment and the habits of everyone ».

February /March 1995 COTE SUD

In Saint-Tropez, Transacmer Estate Agency, specialist of the peninsula for thirty years, is fully aware of this reality. « The pleasure investment » is not treated lightly. It needs time, a lot of money and a self-discipline. Once clients are in the office, they can watch a slide-show file, with five-hundred proposals. « The only thing you have to do is to sit down in front of the screen and

let the pictures, duly commented, pass before your eyes; these instant visits help us to save precious energy and avoid the clients making useless visits ».

July/August 1994

PROPRIETES DE FRANCE

« You cannot run an estate agency sitting behind your desk, waiting for things to happen. It's time to invent a new profession. This is our priority at the moment. If it is easier to win different parts of the market in difficult circumstances, this development is because of an increase of creativity and transparency. Today you need more ideas and more self-criticism to carry out as many transactions as in the past ».