



Bow Tie, the smart-enabled Rabie Property Group development in Burgundy Estate, Cape Town

Where to invest this year

● Residential property below R2m is the hottest investment asset right now. We look at what's on offer where



Balwin Properties' Greenpark Lifestyle Estate in Boksburg

PROPERTY TREND

Sought-after property: where to invest in 2021

Residential property below R2m is the hottest investment asset right now. We look at what's on offer where

WORDS: MARLENE BOWEN - PHOTOS: SUPPLIED

For the first time in almost a decade, agents are reporting a spike in enquiries and sales in many areas as a record-low interest rate and lower prices drive the first-time buyers' market. According to Lightstone Property, Cape Town has had the highest number of these buyers investing in the R1.5m to R3m price band, compared with the other metros where the most activity is being seen in the R700,000 to R1m band. By the end of October 2020, 189 freehold homes and 40 sectional title units had already been registered. Langa and Bellair lead the list of top 10 suburbs for first-time buyers with 112 and 91 purchases respectively in 2020. Plumstead, Wynberg,

Observatory, Kenilworth, Rondebosch, Claremont, Ottery and Sea Point are also popular.

Many of these buyers are looking for freestanding family homes and are often viewing higher-priced properties than they would normally look at in the hope that sellers will accept lower offers," says Arnold Maritz, co-principal of Lew Giffen Sotheby's International Realty in Cape Town's Southern Suburbs.

This agency's sectional title specialists for the area, Dave Burger, says during lockdown he received 30% more enquiries for apartments in Mowbray and Rosebank, where beautifully renovated one-bedroom units can be found for under R1m. "Since the start of

Level 4 restrictions, I've actually had an increase in buyer enquiries, especially from first-time buyers and investor purchasers anticipating a spike in student rental demand," Burger says.

Wellington in the Boland is enjoying a surge of market activity at entry to mid-level.

"Despite Covid-19, the median sale price increased to R1.55m, with the sectional title median price also increasing in 2020 from R680,000 to R778,000," says Chris Gilliers, CEO and co-principal of Lew Giffen Sotheby's International Realty in the Winelands.

Richard Day, CEO of fixed-fee agency Eazi Real Estate, says: "In Cape Town's southeastern suburbs and surrounds, including Grassy Park, Gilray and Bellair, several buyers are competing for the same properties. In some instances resulting in a higher-than-asking price being achieved. In October our median time to sell was only 11 days."

Day has noticed high demand for freehold properties below the R2.5m mark among those seeking a change in lifestyle or more space for their family, as well as extended families buying together. Mature buyers, too, are on

the hunt for smaller, low-maintenance properties.

"With dual living becoming more popular, properties with a flatlet for additional income or to provide space for adult children – university students or young professionals – or elderly parents are sought after. Generally we find that our sellers are prompted mainly by changing lifestyle needs rather than financial constraints, and are scaling up or down accordingly," he says.

BIG SHIFT

Survey investors who want to grow their property portfolio and homeowners putting down roots are snapping up the more affordable homes on offer by SA's leading developers.

Devmark Property Group national sales manager Bruwer de Jager says the country is facing a big shift away from the traditional freehold neighbourhood segment to very secure sectional title schemes.

"Owner-occupiers are happy to settle for smaller but newly constructed units with the peace of mind that comes with safety and convenience. And property investors spot the potential for asset appreciation in well-located sectional title

schemes, especially if they are able to secure units in the first phase of the development period under the R2m mark," De Jager says. The resale market in this price bracket will remain liquid in high-demand neighbourhoods due to affordability and a low interest rate."

The Glen, Devmark's sectional title apartment block in Bellville in Cape Town's Northern Suburbs, comprises 64 sectional title apartments ranging from R640,000 to R875,000. The area has a family-orientated culture, with buyers seeking secure living as well as amenities close by.

"Devmark Property Group took the initiative to support this community, which has long cried out for a good-quality sectional title scheme. Our product caters for those who wish to work and play close to their families and provides safe, affordable homes for those seeking independence," De Jager adds.

Mearns Bow Tie, Rabie Property Group's arrangement of stylish apartments and townhouses in Burgundy Estate, attracts purchasers who want to be at the forefront of innovation.

With Milnerton and Bloubaai beaches to the west and the Durbanville wineyards to the east, its location is just one unique selling point. Smart design, green building principles, high-speed fibre and verdant landscaping add to the appeal. Apartments with open-plan living areas start from R845,000, and three-bedroom townhouses with private gardens from R1.88m.

RECORD SALES

Along with enthusiastic buyers, Balwin Properties is celebrating unprecedented sales worth R1bn in seven weeks since November 2020 at Wedgewood Sandton, a lifestyle development offering studio, one- and two-bedroom apartments priced from R850,000, including bond and transfer costs.

Balwin CEO Steve Brookes describes this achievement

as "a massive positive for this country and the property market as a whole."

The company is now also selling super-secure, ultra-modern apartments from R499,900 for a one-bedroom unit and R699,900 for a two-bedroom unit at Greenpark Lifestyle Estate in Boksburg. And in Tshwane it is launching Mooikloof Eco Estate, which comprises upmarket apartments and a net-zero six-star rated Edge-certified green lifestyle centre with a fully equipped gym, a communal swimming pool and a restaurant. The options range from one-bedroom, one-bathroom apartments starting from R799,900 to three-bedroom, two-bathroom homes from R1.69m. No bond or transfer costs apply.

The Amdek Group has announced the development of a R500m affordable housing estate of 1,000 apartments in Ottery, Cape Town. The group is applying its experience in delivering high-end residential estate living to providing housing for lower-income citizens. Its philosophy is to create a sense of community among residents with greater consideration of lifestyle benefits.

Golden Grove Estate will be developed on an 18ha site on the corner of De Wet Road and Elm Street. On offer are 24m² one-bedroom units, 36m² two-bedroom units and 54m² three-bedroom units, let to those with an employment history and a joint household income of no more than R22,000 a month. The rent will not exceed 30% of a tenant's household income.

The estate will include a convenience retail centre and laundry communal gardens and a children's playground, a creche, daycare and aftercare/supervised homework facilities; an on-site furniture workshop where residents can build and/or assemble their own flat-pack furniture; five-a-side soccer pitches and basketball courts; and a communal recreational clubhouse for residents.



Arnold Maritz, co-principal, Lew Giffen Sotheby's International Realty, Cape Town Southern Suburbs



Bruwer De Jager, national sales manager, Devmark Property Group



Richard Day, CEO, Eazi Real Estate



Steve Brookes, founder and CEO, Balwin Properties



The Glen in Glenhaven, Bellville, is a sectional title apartment block by Devmark



On site at Golden Grove Estate, the Amdek Group's affordable housing project in Ottery