

Ask the experts



Mario Volpi, Sales and Leasing Manager of Ocean View Real Estate

Every week, we invite you to have your property questions answered by an expert. This week, **Mario Volpi*** tackles the task.

Q What do you forecast for Dubai's property market in 2009?

A The correction in the market has accelerated faster than expected and prices will be reduced enough for buyers to continue investing in Dubai. In comparison with other global markets, I think Dubai will continue to be a place that is attractive and worthwhile to live, work and invest in.

Q What advice would you give to an expatriate who is currently renting in Dubai but would like to purchase property?

A Anyone looking at completed properties at a price comparable with the previous 18 months should consider buying rather than renting. This year, mortgages are likely to become more readily available to keen investors.

Q Do you think the present correction in the market will be good for the industry in the long-run?

A The pricing correction will be good for the market as it will become more realistic and stable. Sometimes a correction is what it takes to move forward in a more cautious manner. Everyone has learned hard lessons during this period, but the correction would not have been so severe had it not been for the global credit crunch. The blame cannot be laid at the door of the UAE, we are still the world's number one destination for wise investments.

Q What are likely to be the investment hotspots in the UAE for 2009?

A Dubai and Abu Dhabi will attract investment, especially family developments. The most in demand



Q How do you think the Abu Dhabi market will fare in the next 12 months?

A All the statistics show that Abu Dhabi has no liquidity problem in comparison to other capitals in the world. For Abu Dhabi, the future looks promising. This year should see many international investors setting up base in Abu Dhabi because of the media attention the capital is receiving.

Q Will it be beneficial for homebuyers in the long-term?

A Yes, if homebuyers use their common sense and buy at a correct price. The UAE is still the best market to invest in.

Q Is Dubai's golden era of property growth coming to an end? Will global inflation and rising oil prices gradually refuel the sector?

A Dubai's freehold market is only seven years old and the era of the real estate market around the world has continued for over 100 years. How can Dubai's era be over so soon? This is a price correction that comes in the infant stages of all markets. As history shows, they all bounce back. Rising oil prices would certainly help, especially in Abu Dhabi.

Do you have a property question that needs answering? Mail freeholdweekly@alnisrmedia.com along with your contact details.