

South-west Turkey is a success — and still offers good value against Spain and Portugal, says **Cathy Hawker**

SOUTH-WEST Turkey has been one of the property success stories of recent years — prices have been rocketing since 2000. It has an established holiday market and a long summer season, a great coastline with clear waters that are perfect for messing around in boats, and an easy-going, affordable lifestyle. So with its building boom well under way and the recent introduction of local mortgages, how is Turkey looking as 2008 approaches?

The builders have certainly been busy on the Bodrum Peninsula, where the distinctive, flat-roofed white houses cover the green hillsides like scattered sugar cubes. Centred around Bodrum marina and its 15th century castle, the peninsula has been a popular second-home market for wealthy Turks for more than 20 years.

"In 2000, prices started at £15,000," says Nihat Çepnioglu of Property Republic. "You can't find that now, but Bodrum still represents good value compared with Spain or Portugal." Çepnioglu says British buyers want sea views, and spend

'The Bodrum area has been an attractive second-home market for wealthy Turks for 20 years'

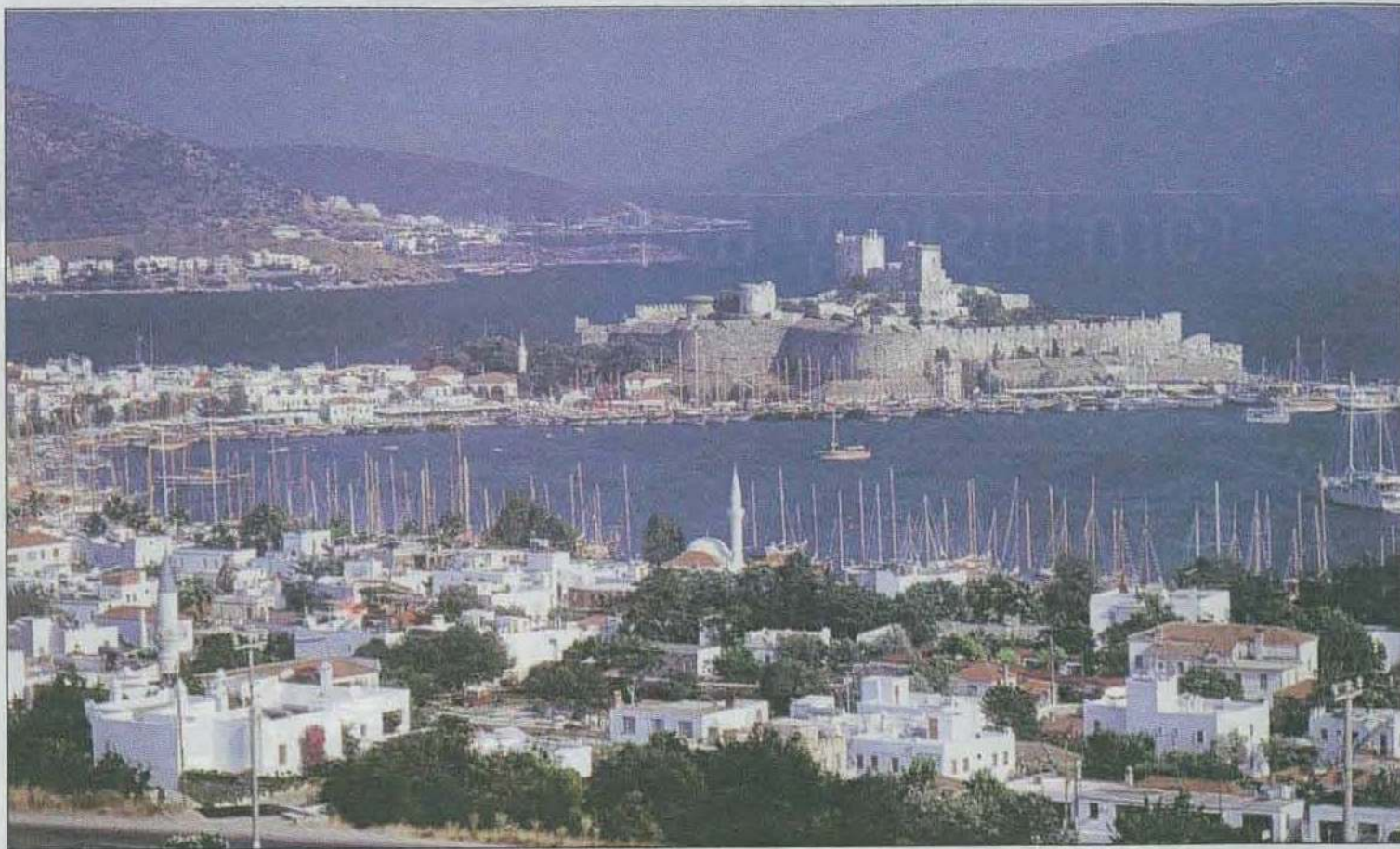
between £50,000 and £130,000 on two- and three-bedroom properties.

"Turkish planning laws prohibit any building over three floors, so there are no high-rises here," he says. "Also, lots of land is zoned for military use, where you can't build at all." The Turkish government has recently released a White Paper aimed at restricting the intensity of construction in coastal regions, and many developers are building to EU standards, but not all of them. "Check the title deeds and the quality of building carefully," advises Çepnioglu. "You will need a good bilingual lawyer."

The Mandarines complex comprises 48 apartments on a hillside 15 minutes' walk from Bodrum marina and has two communal pools and attractive low stone walls. The two- and three-bedroom apartments have private gardens and start from £123,300, including all white goods.

Twenty minutes from the throbbing heart of Bodrum in Gümüşlük, Olive Hills has prices from £80,000 for a two-bedroom apartment. The inviting pool overlooks the Aegean Sea, which is just a five-minute shuttle-bus ride down the hill.

Central Bodrum is busy and remains popular



The Bodrum Peninsula, with its hills covered in flat-roofed white houses like sugar cubes, centres on the harbour and the 15th century Castle of St Peter

The new Turks

mainly with a youthful market. Standards are improving but it is becoming harder to find a peaceful corner of this delightful peninsula.

Kalkan

Ninety minutes' drive from Dalaman airport on Turkey's Lycian coast, Kalkan has carved a niche as an upmarket destination beloved of British buyers. The small shops on the steep cobbled street leading down to the marina sell bijou treats, and there is none of the pulsating music of Bodrum. The Kalkan property market is thriving but so far building has been kept in check and the village atmosphere retained.

Investment company Bridgehouse International is selling LaVanta, a development of 150 high-quality properties set high above Kalkan with glorious views over Kalamar Bay. The apartments and villas start at £69,000, rising to £350,000 for a five-bedroom detached villa. LaVanta is being built by established Turkish developer Kemer Group and will feature pools, tennis courts, gym, a 14-room boutique hotel and a children's club.

"Kalkan attracts a sophisticated buyer," says Louise Andrews of Kemer Mediterra. "LaVanta's location, surrounded by pine forests and protected hills, means that owners can be close to Kalkan and its great restaurants while enjoying fabulous views from their holiday home."



From £80,000: two-bedroom apartments at Olive Hills. Through Property Republic (020 7749 7999)

Bridget Karaaslan of estate agent Black Lion in Kalkan says apartments start at £48,000, while top-end villas with pools sell from £300,000. "Buyers in Kalkan are looking for quality build with sea views," she says. "The trend in the past two years is for duplex apartments in smaller developments. Sea-front property and traditional houses in the old town remain in demand, but little is available, so prices are at a premium."

For more about Turkey, see page 44



£89,000: two-bedroom, first-floor apartment in Kalkan. Through Black Lion (0871 990 2077)

'TURKISH PROPERTY CURRENTLY REPRESENTS SOME OF THE BEST VALUE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN'



Richard and Julie Maxted bought in Kalkan for £99,000

CITY insurance broker Richard Maxted and his wife, Julie, a veterinary nurse, from Keston in Kent, recently bought a two-bedroom holiday apartment off-plan at LaVanta in Kalkan for £99,000.

"We have looked abroad for five years, always thinking we would end up in Spain," says Richard, 48. "But the lack of development in Kalkan, and its sophistication, impressed us." The Maxteds were also impressed by the investment case for Turkey.

"Turkish property currently represents some of the best value in the Med," says Richard. "With the new mortgage rules and the potential for capital appreciation, we think this makes a great buy."



£235,000: three-bedroom villa with pool at LaVanta, Kalkan. Through Bridgehouse International (020 7478 9253)

Contacts

- Property Republic: 020 7749 7999; www.propertyrepublic.co.uk.
- Bridgehouse International: 020 7478 9253; www.bridgehouseinternational.com.
- Black Lion: www.2blacklions.com; 0871 990 2077.

Buying tips

- Allow five to seven per cent for buying costs in Turkey, including a transfer tax of three per cent.
- Running costs of Bodrum property average £500 to £1,000 annually; at LaVanta, it is £1,500 to £2,000 a year.
- No capital-gains tax is payable in Turkey on property owned for less than five years.