

REAL ESTATE

Nota Bene Global rounds out services with real estate advisory

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London; image courtesy of Burberry

By STAFF REPORTS

NEW YORK Responding to demand from its wealthy clientele, bespoke travel and lifestyle curator Nota Bene Global is branching out into real estate.

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Drawing from Nota Bene Global co-founder Anthony Lassman's experience in the super prime real estate market, the firm is now offering advice to those looking to buy in affluent enclaves. While an extension of its existing services, Mr. Lassman stressed that this is a natural progression, as the audience is the same.

"The kind of person who likes wonderful travel invariably loves beautiful real estate, invariably loves art, invariably loves wines," Mr. Lassman said in an interview with Luxury Daily. "It's one language, one demographic."

Same audience, different interest

Mr. Lassman has an extensive background in marketing and selling prime real estate, including properties tied to some of London's historic estates. In the 1980s and 90s, he ran his own boutique agency.

Following his career in real estate, the entrepreneur and his wife founded Nota Bene based on a passion for travel.



Image courtesy of Nota Bene

Mr. Lassman had considered returning to real estate, and was spurred to move on this idea when an American Nota Bene client said he was looking to buy an apartment in London. Mr. Lassman realized it would be a better move to advise the client in this area himself rather than sending him elsewhere.

Much like Nota Bene's travel services, the company's real estate advisory will not be in the business of selling, but rather merely advising, which it says makes it an impartial resource. Leveraging relationships with top brokerages, Nota Bene will help guide its clients toward properties that are sound investments, bypassing overpriced homes or those with too many bells and whistles.

"I'm finding that whilst conspicuous luxury will always be something that the newest money will be attracted to, sophisticated money doesn't want [it]," Mr. Lassman said.

"I think there's almost an anti-bling, an anti over spec period that we're entering into, and I think you'll probably see more of that as the world is showing this reaction that we've seen with Brexit, with the American voting, with populism," he said. "I don't want to be dramatic about this, but I do feel that it should certainly temper people in terms of conspicuous luxury.

"Coming out of some big-named overly opulent apartment building filled with all of the gizmos, getting into some flashy car dressed up to the nines wearing a load of jewelry, of course it's going to exist I'm not saying that that's just going to go away but I think you will find that there will be a lot more reversion to quieter luxury."

For instance, this may mean buyers pick high-quality wooden floors instead of marble.

A few years ago, entrants into the luxury housing markets in both New York and London drove up prices, as buyers looked for the biggest, best properties. This led listings to stay on the market longer.

In London, this was only aggravated by the pound's decline after Brexit, giving what is essentially a discount based on the currency exchange.

Across the luxury market, Mr. Lassman noted that things have generally calmed down after "[going] past fever pitch." Noting recent auction records for art, he pointed out that items at the very top end are selling, but what does not fit into this category for instance real estate that is not super prime will take longer to find a buyer.



Edvard Munch's "Girls on the Bridge" sold for \$54 million in a Sotheby's auction this fall

Beyond London, Nota Bene sees itself assisting clients in purchasing properties in New York and Los Angeles. Other areas of interest include Caribbean islands such as St. Barts, European destinations for the affluent such as Sicily, islands off Greece, Ibiza and Costa Smeralda.

Nota Bene as a brand is also planning to expand via a return to print publishing in 2017. The company used to print guidebooks to destinations, and having seen that very few of its clients read online media, Nota Bene is again taking its advice to offline channels.

Since the launch of Ipsos' Affluent Survey in 1977 the way media is consumed has drastically changed, going from analog to digital, but the wealthiest individuals' behavior and sentiment has stayed relatively unchanged.

With many more options for media today than in 1978, affluent consumers still consistently read magazines. According to Ipsos' survey, 84 percent read a median of six magazine titles ([see story](#)).

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