

Mike Oldfield's house for sale

Prices may have fallen on Majorca but it's still a playground for the rich and famous, writes Anna Tyzack.

By Anna Tyzack

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Bling isn't over in Majorca just yet. Zen Vida, a brand new mansion in the hills above Palma, is far from the "new modesty" Karl Lagerfeld of Chanel believes we are embracing. It has a sparkling granite-clad infinity pool, marble walls, floors made of tropical hardwoods and all the latest Armani and Gaggenau gadgets. The price is €16 million (£14.7 million) and apparently there are more than 20 serious buyers circling. No one has written out a cheque, but the owner is confident. "At the end of the day if you've got a quality product, people are willing to pay for it," he says.



Island in the sun: Mike Oldfield is selling his traditional style home on Majorca

Majorca might be a playground for the rich and famous (home owners include Catherine Zeta Jones and Anna Friel), but the island is not exempt from the economic downturn. House prices have fallen up to 15 per cent since the peak and Michael Cunnington, an associate for Savills in Majorca, admits you can "now buy more than a shed for €2 million (£1.8 million)". But the market, he says, is hotting up for Easter, with enquiries rising over the past few weeks.

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For the super rich, Majorca is the ultimate second, third or fourth home destination. There are golf courses, Michelin-starred restaurants and pristine beaches. "Majorca now rivals Antibes as the super yacht hub of the western Mediterranean," says Andrew Hawkins of Chesterton International. The most expensive houses – some cost more than €50 million (£46 million) – are found around Deià, Andratx and Son Vida.

"Buyers tend to be entrepreneurs in their fifties," says Georgina Richards of Knight Frank. "They have large

boats and often have other homes in the Caribbean, the South of France and the Home Counties."

Or they move to the island permanently, like Mike Oldfield, who bought a *finca* near Santa Maria four years ago with his wife. "It dawned on me that because of the internet it wasn't necessary to be tied to one place," he says. "So we decided to move somewhere sunny." Their house is surrounded by mountains yet a short drive from the sea. "Majorca is an incredibly inspiring place to work. It's lush and mountainous and in other places it looks like the moon."

There he wrote *Music of the Sphere*, an orchestral album which won a Brit award and worked on a remix of *Tubular Bells*, to be released in June. The Oldfields are now moving to the Bahamas, and are asking €3.95 million (£3.6 million) for their home.

Zen Vida, in the exclusive gated community of Son Vida, is less traditional in style. It is a feat of modern gadgetry, with taps that shine red or blue to show the water temperature and panels on the wall that can change colour to suit your mood. There are dining terraces with sea views and landscaped gardens with bonsai trees and cacti.

The owner is selling up to spend more time in the Far East and America. No, he is not a victim of the credit crunch. "It was paid for in cash, I don't have the bank pressuring me to sell," he says.

And there is no such thing as "new modesty" in Majorca, he adds: "I don't think people will start riding bikes and stop wanting flat screen televisions. A quality product will survive the financial crisis. And besides, Zen Vida is not over the top – there's no gold swimming pool."

- Zen Vida is on the market with Savills: 020 7016 3740
- Jan Westwood is a buying agent with specialist knowledge in Majorca (0034 971 233207; www.thepropertyfinders.com)
- Mike Oldfield's house is 15 minutes from Palma and has views across the Tamuntana mountains. There is a sitting room with open fire, five bedroom suites, and large gardens. Savills: 020 7016 3740