

# COUNTRY LIFE INTERNATIONAL

SPRING 2014



## Buying under a southern Tuscan sun

Picture-perfect properties in Provence

Arabella Lennox-Boyd's palazzo

PLUS Which are the best international schools?





## Pool your pool

**A** NEW club for owners of second and third (or more) properties, who want to put their empty weeks to better use, has launched. Members of 3rd Home ([www.3rdhome.com](http://www.3rdhome.com)) deposit unused weeks into the club's pool and, in doing so, earn 'keys', which can be used as currency to reserve a stay in another property of their choice at any time. The value of members' homes determines the number of 'keys' received for every week they deposit. Membership costs \$495 (£297) for

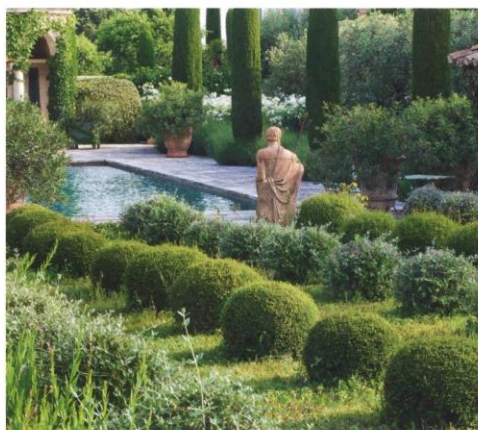
**A world away from the swarms of backpackers on the Thai island of Koh Samui, Baan Tao Talay is a secluded beachside property that is part of the 3rd Home collection**

two years and there is a fee of \$395 (£237) to \$995 (£597) per exchange.

Prospective members are carefully screened and the club's books currently hold more than 1,800 properties in 69 countries from Australia to Brazil, with an average property value of US\$2.25 million. Almost 3,000 successful exchanges have already taken place and an online map search reveals enticing options, including a beachside villa in Vietnam and an historic property in South Africa's winelands, complete with a butler, Victor.

## Garden tours: book now

**A** FEW places remain on this year's COUNTRY LIFE garden tours. In association with garden-travel specialist Boxwood Tours, the Provence tour takes place from April 24 to 29 and is hosted by leading gardens expert Louisa Jones (see pp56). It explores old country estates and *bastides* of the Alpilles and Luberon at a time of year when the Mediterranean spring is coloured by cascades of banksia roses and bee-foraged tresses of wisteria. It costs from £3,890, including flights from Heathrow. Alternatively, David Wheeler is hosting a tour of horticultural gems in the Côte d'Azur from May 9 to 14, with prices from £3,498 per person, again including flights from Heathrow. For more information, telephone Boxwood Tours on 01341 241717 or visit [www.boxwoodtours.co.uk](http://www.boxwoodtours.co.uk)



**Tour fashion magnate Pierre Bergé's garden in Provence**

## Investments of passion



**B**EST-in-class investments continue to set records, says the Knight Frank Luxury Investment Index, with classic cars again posting the largest gains, producing values up 28% over 12 months. Stand-out sales over the past year have included the Pink Star, a 59.6-carat, oval-cut, pink diamond, sold for US\$83 million (\$49.8m) at Sotheby's Geneva last November, and a Patek Philippe 3417 that grabbed the headlines, setting a record at £28,750.

The coin market is still undervalued, although interest is growing, but the jewellery market is seeing record sums paid for the best untreated stones, with interest coming from such diverse quarters as South America and Korea.

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## COUNTRY LIFE in Monaco

To celebrate this year's Monaco Grand Prix, Country Life (along with Savills and EFG Private Bank) is holding a party at the renowned Hôtel de Paris on May 22. Following the success of last year's party—at which COUNTRY LIFE staff entertained guests including Her Excellency Evelyne Genta, the ambassador of the Principality to the UK—the Winston Churchill suite of the iconic hotel will once again be transformed into a corner of Britain for the evening. We will be publishing a special focus on Monaco—from highlights of the summer season to the yachting via the property market—on May 21 to coincide with the party.

[www.countrylife.co.uk/international](http://www.countrylife.co.uk/international)