



## Put your property on a holiday home 'dating site'

If you are hunting for a budget holiday or want to share a home abroad with friends, match-making websites could be the answer.

Cathy Hawker | Publish Date: 16 April 2014



The works: this huge house overlooking the Bay of Cortez in Mexico sleeps 16 people and comes with a wonderful pool and six staff. Through 3rd Home

Getting away with the gang is growing in popularity with Londoners. Renting a big holiday home with friends and/or family makes financial and practical sense, and villa specialist CV Travel says 40 per cent of its portfolio now involves properties that will accommodate two or more families.

Renting a private home allows you to experience another family's life in a different country for a wonderfully voyeuristic few days. There are plenty of good home rentals sites, for example, HomeAway.co.uk and HolidayLettings.co.uk. But if you are feeling even more adventurous and want to save on costs, why not consider using your own home to access the perfect rental?

### VISIT THE SWAP SHOP

Love Home Swap (Lovehomeswap.com) is like a dating site for your home — would you consider a Parisian pied-à-terre, an Ibiza modernist villa or a Provençal beach house, perhaps? The site bills itself as the world's biggest home-swap club with 50,000 properties across 150 countries, and its portfolio is five times bigger than it was 12 months ago.

Users list their home for free but can only start talking to other owners once they take out membership, with the annual cost from £119. A big part of the site's appeal is its flexibility. Members can do a straight exchange or a staggered one a few weeks apart.

"It works more like a travel club than a straight swap," says Ben Wosskow of Love Home Swap. "Eighty-two per cent of new members have never swapped before and might have some nervousness about it, but that soon goes."



Casa Lazzari: 400-year-old farmhouse, on the Tuscan-Umbrian border. Through Lovehomeswap.com

### TOP-OF-THE-RANGE HOMES

A total of 1,700 upmarket properties are listed with 3rd Home (3rdhome.com), which also concentrates on exchanges. These are impressive holiday homes, not primary residences, and the average value, says co-founder Giles Adams, is £1.2 million.

Club members "deposit" weeks in their holiday homes that they do not intend to use themselves, and in return earn "keys" which are used as currency to bag any home on the site. Membership is £295 for two years plus a flat £295 fee per exchange. "The market is more mature in North America which is where most of our properties are but we have properties from Argentina to New Zealand," says Adams.

As well as private homes, the site features Ritz-Carlton Residences and Trump Tower New York. Properties are billed as worth a minimum of £500,000 each and the club ensures its standards are met on location and quality of furnishings.

### Featured articles



Hot homes

Picture gallery: celebrity homes



New homes

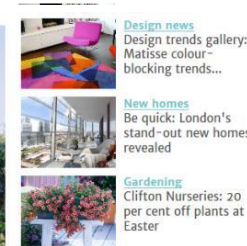
Be quick: the designer new homes are launching in London this spring



Food

Easter recipes for no fuss entertaining

### Recent articles



Design news  
Design trends gallery: Matisse colour-blocking trends...

New homes  
Be quick: London's stand-out new homes revealed

Gardening  
Clifton Nurseries: 20 per cent off plants at Easter

**Property Search** in partnership with **Zoopla.co.uk**

For Sale | To Rent | Home Values | Sold Prices

Location  
Enter town, place name or postcode  
e.g. Oxford or NW3

Min price: No min | Max price: No max  
Type: Beds | Show all: No min

**SEARCH**



**Homes & Property** in partnership with **Zoopla.co.uk**

What is your home worth?

Enter town, place name or postcode

**SEARCH**

### Follow us on Twitter

**Tweets**

ES Homes & Property @HomesProperty  
Gallery: colour blocking - how to bring this bright summer trend into your home bit.ly/1eVKZ01 Expand

ES Homes & Property @HomesProperty  
Ground-breaking green scheme with rooftop "grog gardens" in the heart of central London bit.ly/1nBX0wa Expand

ES Homes & Property @HomesProperty  
The south London waterfront warehouse complex with 247 new homes bit.ly/1RbDMR Expand

ES Homes & Property @HomesProperty  
Tweet to @HomesProperty

### More from Homes & Property

Commuter villages off the M40

Spotlight on Chichester: property area guide

Hot homes: south-east London for less than £250...

Latest house price figures reveal London's...

### HOMES & PROPERTY SHOP

## TOP FIVE MOST REQUESTED GETAWAYS

### 1 Casa Lazzari, Tuscany

If you can tear yourself away from the dreamy interiors and infinity pool at this 400-year-old farmhouse (pictured above), on the Tuscan-Umbrian border, day trips to Cortona, Florence and Siena beckon.

### 2 Crete

Beach or a hike? Combine the two in a two-bedroom villa owned and decorated by Italian floral designer Fabio Zardi.



Scottish mansion: rural splendour near Gleneagles. Through [Lovehomeswap.com](#)

### 3 Scotland

Classical architecture and a hot tub in rural splendour are yours in this eight-bedroom Scottish mansion (above), near Gleneagles golf course.

### 4 Freeport, Bahamas

A London family designed their five-bedroom holiday home in a beachfront complex. The fishing's superb and you can swim with dolphins.

### 5 Corsica

Wild and mountainous outside, cool and elegant inside — a four-bedroom 1910 house in the historic French town of Bastia.

• [All at Lovehomeswap.com](#)

## SIZE MATTERS: 'WE GET MORE SPACE FOR THE FAMILY'

London musician and X Factor songwriter Marcus Vere, the keyboard player in Eighties band Living in a Box, owns a striking five-bedroom holiday home in the Cotswolds with his wife Laetitia, where they enjoy time with their children JJ, Giselle and Nina, aged 13, 11 and nine.



Trading places: Marcus and Laetitia Vere swapped Cotswolds for the Caribbean

As members of 3rd Home they list empty weeks with the club and in return have enjoyed holidays in New York and the Caribbean. "With young children it works well to stay in private homes and in the past we have done direct home swaps," says Vere. "They work well but have certain limitations like agreeing a date and working around school holidays. 3rd Home opens up lots more opportunities."

The family is heading back to New York in the summer through 3rd Home. "It's a new concept and mainly an American one so the current range of properties is fairly US-centric," acknowledges Vere. "But for us as a family it makes a great deal of sense. You get more space and owners often pass on useful local knowledge."

• [3rd Home \(3rdhome.com\)](#)



Write a comment

1 Comment

Subscribe - RSS



HomeExchange50

6 days ago

Home Exchange is such a great way to holiday which is why it is becoming more and more popular. Why pay to stay in a hotel or rent somewhere when you can stay for free?

If you haven't tried swapping homes for travel then I thoroughly recommend it and not just for the huge savings that can be made but the wonderful experiences gained by living like a local and the great friendships gained.

Cheers

Brian Luckhurst from home exchange 50plus

Like · Reply · Share

0



Slow cookers

From £24.99

A-Z index: area guides



Thinking of moving? View our detailed property area guides on London and commuter hotspots.

[View a-z guides](#)