

Islamabad: the capital of capitals

Islamabad - the symbol of progress, innovation and architectural marvel, steadily increasing quality of life, a booming economy and a consumer market, makes it one of the hottest destinations for investment.

With the utmost commitment, CDA has been serving Islamabad for decades.

Whether it is CDA's administrative services, building and construction services, surveys and research, parks and recreational outfits, urban plant and wildlife management, transportation and infrastructural management, environment and zoning enforcement or maintaining Islamabad's sanitation, CDA has proven its mettle and all who live in the city or visit it can see what the commitment of CDA has gifted.

This marvelous city is best known as the place to be - a city of happenings, a city with world class infrastructure, it is aptly known as the city of dreams... the city of life.

The most viable investment available around is that of the real estate in Islamabad. There is seldom a reason to fear a downturn whereas the returns are substantial.

Property in Islamabad almost always appreciates in value because of right purchases and proper care.

Real estate in Islamabad can be purchased in many forms, including shopping centers, industrial buildings, warehouses, apartments, and raw land.

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real estate investments.

The Centaurus, being constructed by PGCL, narrates the marvelous story of the investment opportunities in Islamabad and puts the hills of Islamabad superior to the sands of Dubai as it is a patent evidence of direct foreign investment in the capital of Pakistan.

The project is situated in the heart of Islamabad between the two main avenues - Jinnah and Faisal - covering 7.2 acres of land.

The PGCL made history in March 2005 when it purchased this plot offering highest-ever open bid in the history of Capital Development Authority.

The realty sector of Pakistan is on an upsurge and this is the best time to materialize a property deal in one of the most prominent cities of the world.

A property in Islamabad will be a prized possession as it is centrally located and most of the prominent cities of Pakistan and the metropolitans are well connected with the real estate in Islamabad.

Islamabad also houses some of the premier national & international educational institutions and universities and it is also a home to a number of renowned intellectuals, great museums, art galleries and places of historic importance.

In short, investment in real estate in Islamabad promises high returns on investments, as government policies in Islamabad are amongst the most liberal and attractive in the emerging economies of the world.

So invest in the real estate of Islamabad and be a part of this most promising economy in Asia.

Company profile:

About Premiers' Real Estate Division

Premiers Real Estate Division is in business since 1999. Premiers is enjoying the reputation of highly professional and transparent Real Estate investment consultants and brokerage house in Dubai. Premiers has gained great expertise in Dubai Freehold Properties.

Premiers strategy is to act as a consultant for Premiers clients in identifying and securing best possible investment opportunities in Dubai Freehold Properties. Premiers also consider itself a consultant to the Developers we represent by giving the developers market visibility and guidance to offer the product which satisfies investors and end-users needs.

Premiers Property Division is enjoying the confidence of clients and investors from various countries including, but not limited to South Africa, Pakistan, UK, Iran, and Russia. Additionally, we have our own in-house investment which adds to our buying power.

Premiers has represented / promoted properties of some of the leading private developers in Dubai which includes but not limited to Masaya Real Estate, Al Fajer Properties, Al Sharaf Group, Al Attar Group, Dheeraj & East Coast, First Gulf Bank and Reef Real Estate.

A room of my own!



With the growing population and increasing rate of inflation and mounting house rents, not many can afford to live in big houses.

However, there are many ways by which you can make your room look spacious and airy. Here are a few tricks to create an impression of space.

• Doing walls in lighter hues, gives continuity to the room. There shouldn't be any breaks after each wall to disrupt the harmony. Besides, a single colour gives a mysterious depth to the room. Do the trims, borders and edges

all in the same colour.

• If a dramatic change in the length or width is required, different tones of the same colour may be used but not two different hues altogether. If the room needs to feel longer, the shorter sides are painted in a lighter tone but if a deception of width is required, the longer sides are kept darker; whichever pair of parallel walls is darker will seem closer. The ceiling should be done in a much lighter tone than all the walls so it feels higher. Metallic textures on the ceiling create the illu-

sion of height.

• Keep the furniture to a minimum. Both the number of pieces and dimensions of furniture should be as small as possible.

• The bed must not have very high head and foot boards. It should be in a light finish such as oak or beech. The lighter the finish, the less oppressive the furniture feels, rather than a big mass occupying a large space in the room.

• Do away with bulky dressing tables. Instead,

hang glass shelves with a sleek mirror.

• Addition of metal also gives furniture a lighter look. Say, a metallic frame for the mirror, legs in steel for the bed, night stands and any seating for the room.

• Avoid furniture with too many carvings and striking colours; choose products which are more geometrical and simple.

• Keep the items low; very high beds or chairs give a cluttered look.

• Interchangeable furniture as sofa-cum-beds and multipurpose items, such as tables with drop-down or extendable panels, are encouraged in small rooms.

• In a nutshell, keeping one or two big pieces of furniture in the room is better than having many small pieces clustered all around as that makes the room look crowded.

• Shelves and cabinets come in very handy but try keeping them off the floor as much as possible. Closed shelves and opaque cabinet doors are very convenient as they keep many items away from the eye which would otherwise give an untidy

look. These can come in combination of steel and light finished wood, so they don't create a heavy, bulky impression on the walls.

• Seating that provides storage — a couch with storage under the seat — is also very practical. A sleek chest of drawers, with six to eight drawers, is one of the most practical pieces of furniture you can buy.

• A combination of baskets can be hung to store small items such as children's toys. If a straight, unoccupied wall is available, a storage unit can be designed with varying heights. It can have drawers and shelves to house a television and DVD or, coupled with a mirror, can serve as dresser.

• A combination of small square and/or rectangular pictures is better than one huge picture that dominates an entire wall, to break the monotony.

• Use sceneries in perspective. This gives depth to the wall when the painting narrows down capturing the distant.

• Use mirrors wherever possible. They reflect light

and also create the illusion of a bigger, deeper room.

• Use meshes such as Macramé or other usings as room dividers. These can be made of fabric, paper or even rope. These are less solid than screens or other partitions and give a spacious look.

• Lighting plays a very important role in making a room look big or small. Use spot lights on the ceilings as the brighter a room is, the bigger it looks. But use white light and not yellow light. Coupled with mirrors a few spot lights can do wonders.

• The lighter and glossier the floor finish is, the better it is for a small room. Keep very few things on the floor and if cushions are very necessary, keep small ones, and only on one or two spots.

• For a small room use miniature floor tiles as large tiles and patterns will 'fill up' the room.

• Spacing things out to create clear areas makes the room look wider and longer. Rugs and runners should be avoided in small rooms as they cut down open space.

You may not be able to use all these tips, but they will serve as a guide to creating an illusion of space whenever you need to do up your rooms.



Vue Du Lac Tower (Tower on the Lake)

Currently Premiers is promoting Vue du Lac Tower which is 100% residential tower that is located at Al Humaid City, Ajman. It consists of 5 floors of podium parking with 25 residential floors. Each floor has 8 units of studio, 8 unit of 1 bedroom and 4 units of 2 bedroom. Each apartment is provided with a balcony. The amenities include swimming pool, jacuzzi, sauna, prayer room, BBQ area, VIP service centre, reception lobby, party hall, billiard room, 24 hour security access.

The product is designed keeping in mind capital appreciation and good rental returns. The expected completion date is August 2011. The 6 year payment plan is unique as it continues even after handover of the project. Vue du Lac (Tower on the Lake) is a freehold property and all nationals can buy apartments in Vue du Lac on a freehold ownership basis.



Times have changed

The other day, while chatting with my 29-year-old friend Ahsan, we somehow began to discuss a break up of his salary.

Surprisingly, he knew his grocery list and he even suggested a shop where eggs are sold for a rupee less than the market rate.

He works for a multi-national, has a six figure salary, a school going kid and a six month-old baby.

Ahsan lives in the upper portion of a rented house in an upper middle class locality but the three bedrooms with a view of Margalla do not come cheap.

He pays Rs30,000 per month to see the clouds over the hills and the sky change hues.

His other colleague, Baseer falls in the same income bracket but lives with his parents, at a walking distance from Ahsan. Baseer has two kids as well but he is oblivious of the price of eggs.

Living in free accommodation, he enjoys many luxuries of life. These perks don't come easy and demand a different debate altogether — pay out and live alone or save that money and live with a joint family.

For Ahsan free accommodation would be like buying a National Saving certificate, which gives profit and multiples over years.

Times have changed and so has the income strata. Classifications of upper, middle or lower income are being re-defined.

For the likes of Ahsan, the real estate scenario in Islamabad eats up a major chunk of his pay cheque and that is where the cookie crumbles.

The budget goes topsy-turvy and just to save oneself from falling, pride is held back while the pay cheque's gone.

The Bel Air sectors of Islamabad demand a two years' advance and it is exclusively for 'foreigners only' whereas the Malabo drive, a la Margalla Road boasts of money and power.

The rentals begin at \$2,500 with bills at the rate of \$125,000 every month. Driving down this road one can see flags of different countries fluttering in the breeze but for Ahsan, just a drive through is free of cost.

"Karachites interested in moving to Islamabad on their present-day salaries are for a shock once they are clued in on the real estate scene in Islamabad.

The first jolt comes after the seeing quality of construction of the houses and the second on comparing it with the demand," says Badar Saeed Siddiqui, who runs a real estate business in Islamabad for the last 20 years.

The first question Badar confronts is, "We want a house in F-8, F-7 or G-4," which happen to be top of the line localities that people have heard about in Karachi.

The knock-out punch comes when they discover that the rent is in dollars, not rupees and that houses with the capital 'F' are out of their jurisdiction while a lower case 'F' as in F-10, F-11, just might be able to accommodate them.

With the dollar hike, the pound doing somersaults as the rupee slides, numbers shrink while digits increase in the salary. In Islamabad, the income level tallies with the sector you live in.

Sector F, E and a hint of G are 'upper

upper income inhabitants and a person with under Rs50,000 salary can't even dream of renting a house there.

People with big families look for accommodation miles away from downtown Islamabad.

New, legal and illegal housing schemes are mushrooming due to the fact that Capital Development Authority (CDA) has not come up with development of a new sector since the last few years.

Driving down 20 kilometres from the heart of Islamabad to the outskirts (not suburbs), a 500 square yards house with four bedrooms is priced at Rs25,000 without gas facility.

"In sectors F, E and G, property value for rental, sale or purchase has never seen a dip," says Badar Saeed.

Badar agrees that post 9/11, the real estate scene, especially in Islamabad took a 360-degree turn and became bullish. "Pakistanis living in US, UK and even in Middle-East suddenly became very insecure and patriotic at the same time and there was a heavy downpour of green bills in Islamabad.

"What better avenue than property!" Gone are the days when customers would fly in from London, Dubai and New York for a four to five-day business trip and pick up the site on cash.

They were so eager that quite often deals for millions of rupees were done over the telephone, the customer could spare no time to go and see the land he was buying," recalled Badar.

"Now I take the buyers at least four to five times to the same place before I hear a yes or see a nod," smiles Badar. Times have certainly changed — Bilal Agha

Vue Du Lac (Tower on the Lake)

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