

Homes for sale in Italy for one euro

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Photo - Public Domain
(via Leop81 at it.wikipedia)

It sounds like a dream come true for anyone looking to get on the property ladder - a home for one euro (about \$1.14). A picturesque town on the island of Sicily, Italy is selling houses for just €1.

The bargain price is to attract people to move to the hilltop town of Sambuca because of a rapid decline in its population. Like many rural towns in Italy, the number of Sambuca's residents is dwindling because many young people are moving to cities. The Sambuca mayor believes the houses will be easy to sell because his town is so attractive. It overlooks the Mediterranean Sea, is close to gorgeous beaches and has retained its heritage with its cobbled streets and Arabesque architecture.

Like all bargains, there is a small catch to the one-euro houses - the buyer must promise to spend \$17,000 on renovating the property within three years of purchasing it. Sambuca's deputy mayor said the houses are owned by the town, so there is little of the red tape normally associated with buying a property. He said: "We're not intermediaries who liaise between old and new owners. You want that house, you'll get it in no time." He promised potential buyers would love the town. He said: "This fertile patch of land is dubbed the "Earthly Paradise". We're located inside a natural reserve, packed with history. Gorgeous beaches, woods and mountains surround us. It's silent and peaceful - an idyllic retreat for a detox stay."

Sources: cnn.com / independent.co.uk / dailymail.co.uk

Writing

Homes around the world are overvalued and should be cut in price. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

dream come true / property ladder / picturesque / island / rural / cities / architecture / bargains / promise / property / red tape / fertile / beaches / woods / idyllic / detox

True / False

- a) The article says everyone needs a ladder with their property. T / F
- b) The town of Sambuca is increasing in population. T / F
- c) The mayor thinks the houses will be difficult to sell. T / F
- d) The streets in the town are cobbled. T / F
- e) Buyers of the house must spend \$17,000 on repairs. T / F
- f) The houses for sale are owned by the town. T / F
- g) The mayor said the town is dubbed the "Fertile Patch". T / F
- h) The deputy mayor said the town is a good place to go for a detox. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. picturesque | a. countryside |
| 2. decline | b. building design |
| 3. rural | c. nicknamed |
| 4. heritage | d. refurbishing |
| 5. architecture | e. beautiful |
| 6. promise | f. work together |
| 7. renovating | g. reduction |
| 8. liaise | h. perfect |
| 9. dubbed | i. tradition |
| 10. idyllic | j. pledge |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think of the property ladder?
- b) What are the pros and cons of getting on a property ladder?
- c) How picturesque is your town?
- d) Would you like to buy one of the one-euro houses?
- e) What would it be like to live on Sicily?
- f) How can rural towns stop people moving to cities?
- g) Is it better to live by the sea or in the mountains?
- h) What heritage does your town have?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. It sounds like a dream | a. in its population |
| 2. anyone looking to get on the | b. no time |
| 3. a rapid decline | c. streets |
| 4. the number of Sambuca's residents | d. with history |
| 5. cobbled | e. property ladder |
| 6. spend \$17,000 on renovating | f. retreat |
| 7. red | g. come true |
| 8. you'll get it in | h. tape |
| 9. packed | i. is dwindling |
| 10. an idyllic | j. the property |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- What do you think of red tape?
- How easy or difficult is it to buy a house?
- What is "earthly paradise" for you?
- Where in the world would you like to buy a house?
- Where is the most idyllic place for you?
- Where would you go to detox from the stresses of life?
- What questions would you like to ask the town's mayor?

Spelling

- get on the rytpopre ladder
- A itqsurepecu town on the island
- the number of Sambuca's redsitens is dwindling
- close to egogrous beaches
- retained its eetriga
- Arabesque tucahcriteet
- spend \$17,000 on torevninga
- little of the red tape normally ocesidtas with...
- npletoait buyers would love the town
- iefletr patch of land
- located inside a natural eesrver
- an icdyllil retreat

Answers – Synonym Match

1. e	2. g	3. a	4. i	5. b
6. j	7. d	8. f	9. c	10. h

Role Play

Role A – Mountains

You think mountains best represent paradise. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their places. Also, tell the others which is the least representative of these (and why): chocolate cafes, all-you-can-sing karaoke bars or 7-star hotels.

Role B – Chocolate Cafes

You think chocolate cafes best represent paradise. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their places. Also, tell the others which is the least representative of these (and why): mountains, all-you-can-sing karaoke bars or 7-star hotels.

Role C – All-You-Can-Sing-Karaoke Bars

You think all-you-can-sing karaoke bars best represent paradise. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their places. Also, tell the others which is the least representative of these (and why): chocolate cafes, mountains or 7-star hotels.

Role D – 7-Star-Hotels

You think 7-star hotels best represent paradise. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their places. Also, tell the others which is the least representative of these (and why): chocolate cafes, all-you-can-sing karaoke bars or mountains.

Speaking – Paradise

Rank these with your partner. Put the places that best represent paradise at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| • All-you-can-sing karaoke | • Mountains |
| • Desert oasis | • Chocolate cafe |
| • 7-star hotel | • Tropical island |
| • A safari lodge | • My bedroom |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	F	d	T	e	T	f	T	g	F	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.