Star

NEWS

The Celebrity Real Estate Trends Shaping The Market Into The New Year

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The real estate moves of the rich and famous are trending away from sweeping views and glass penthouses as they increasingly seek cover from paparazzi at home, and toward padding their portfolios with commercial properties, experts say.

After a long film shoot or sports season, even celebrities want their homes to be a refuge of peace and relaxation, no matter how spacious, but a modern vibe-killer is increasingly cramping their style: drones.

"Forget the tax headlines. This exodus isn't about cash; it's about paranoia. The era of the fishbowl penthouse is over," says Tsanko Zanov, co-founder of PropertyFinder.bg.

"If a kid can fly a 4K drone up to your balcony, the property is burned. We aren't looking for views now. Were looking for cover. I call it Fortress Real Estate. Its often ugly and a total pain to maintain — but its private. We have clients trading prime addresses for dirt roads just to get away from the lens," Zanov says.

"Stars are skipping the usual hotspots for random plots in rural Europe. Its a nightmare to do the diligence on these (local bureaucracy is real), but it's the only way. If a fan can find your gate on Google Maps, you lose," he says. "Real luxury in 2025 isn't marble. Its silence."

But even as the retreat from prying eyes grows more common, celebrities are still flocking to familiar hotspots like South Florida, according to Jill Eber of The Jills Zeder Group at Coldwell Banker Realty.

"They are leaving high-tax states, with California and New York being major movements from the U.S.," Eber said of the longtime celebrity hubs.

"We have no state income tax, so we are seeing Miami Beach, Coral Gables, Coconut Grove, Fisher Island, and Indian Creek," Eber says. "They like waterfront, big properties with privacy and security. Our waterfront is their countryside."

While established stars may be more driven to retreat from high-traffic locales, rising stars buying their first dream home are still drawn to Florida, Eber says.

"They are likely to gravitate towards Coconut Grove (hip area) and also have an interest in Miami Beach close to dining and clubs," she said. "They might also decide on a luxury condo in those areas, including downtown or Brickell, giving them access to many amenities."

But homes arent the only "trophy properties" celebs are snapping up. Theyre now investing in bigger projects, from private islands to commercial real estate, according to Todd Drowlette, commercial real estate broker and investor and star of A+E Networks The Real Estate Commission.

"Surprisingly, new trophy properties for many celebrities are no longer mega mansions or celebrity wilderness hideaways. Some celebrities are investing in passion projects like the 104-acre island Leonardo DiCaprio purchased in 2005 in Belize for $1.75 million to develop into an eco-restorative resort with Jeff Gramm Development," Drowlette said.

"Many celebrities have started to quietly invest in commercial real estate either in shopping centers and office buildings that are professionally managed or in single-tenant investment-grade properties occupied by tenants like Chick-Fil A and McDonalds. Many of these are passive ownership properties that have no landlord responsibility," Drowlette said, meaning the celebrity owns the land, the retailer/restaurant rents the land, and the tenant builds on the rented land. "These are typically done with investment grade properties owned by many of the countrys largest retirement and pension funds."

And the celebrities breaking into commercial real estate investment arent just letting their managers take the lead, theyre getting hands-on, Drowlette said.

"While typically business managers and CPAs have been the main point of contacts for real estate investments, since Covid, I am dealing more often than not directly with the celebrities who want to decide which properties and returns are best for their portfolio and want to directly understand the potential risk and reward of each property and market," he said.

"Celebrities are becoming far more business-oriented and more hands-on with their investments to ensure they not only maintain their lifestyle and net worth but grow it with tangible assets that will outlive their playing or performing careers," Drowlette said. "So the next time you are drinking your coffee on a Starbucks patio, you might be sitting on a property owned by your favorite celebrity."

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