



Added extras: La Estancia de Cafayate (above) offers polo and riding while Dinkweng (inset) boasts a private game reserve

Something for nothing

In a buyer's market, sellers are banking on freebies to make their properties stand out. **Laura Latham** discovers what's on offer

There was a time when property companies could guarantee sales just by building a golf course. When that became old hat they included spas, tennis courts and cinemas, to differentiate themselves from the competition.

However, now that such high-grade facilities have become ubiquitous and the recession has created a buyer's market, developers are starting to offer unique incentives in a bid to attract buyers. There's been an upsurge, for example, in resorts with resident-only beaches and numerous estates have private vineyards or olive groves from which owners are entitled to receive produce.

There's also been a raft of new properties offering experiences that are out of the ordinary. South African company Zorgvliet, for instance, is selling Dinkweng, a collection of luxury lodges in the spectacular wilderness of the Waterberg Biosphere.

Ownership includes access to Zorgvliet's private, 16,000-hectare game reserve, Ka'ingo, with daily drives to spot rhino, lions and elephants, and a chance to be involved in the company's ongoing conservation work. "Today's buyers are more sophisticated and have higher expectations," says Zorgvliet's Mac Van Der Merwe. "They want to see and do more, they no longer want standard holiday property."

Dinkweng is being marketed under South Africa's shared ownership system, based on the fractional model. Unit prices start at £10,000, which gives you a week's use per year in perpetuity. Buying more units give you more time on the reserve and purchase includes addi-

tional rights to swap into Zorgvliet's sister properties, including a spectacular wine lodge in the Stellenbosch at which owners can enlist in wine tutorials.

French company Garrigae also understands that buyers are seeking properties with individual character and is responding with one-off developments. At Jardins de St Benoit, near Carcassonne, where prices start at £180,800, it's possible to take cookery classes and archery lessons. "All the activities in our resorts have been selected for their authenticity, allowing for the discovery of local traditions," says Garrigae owner Cécile Viennet.

It seems that buyers may even be seeking to escape the trappings of traditional resorts. At Estancia de Cafayate, in the stunning Salta region of Argentina, there is a spa and golf course but developer Diane Romero claims these aren't as important to purchasers as they once were. "The second home market is no longer about facilities but the lifestyle you can have," she says.

Owners, who pay from £66,000 for plots of land, prefer to ride the estancia's horses, take polo lessons from the resident professional, or join excursions into the surrounding wilderness. They also get a share in the estate's vineyards and orchards, complete with the opportunity to take part in the harvests. "People are bored with golf and spas, and even luxury," says Romero, "what now attracts buyers are unique locations and new experiences."

Zorgvliet: 01204 397 367;

www.zorgvliet.com;

Estancia de Cafayate: 54 0387 422 3146;

Garrigae Resorts: www.garrigae.com;

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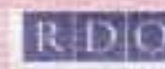
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