



# Offshore Investing Made Easy

## Expert Insights



### IN SHORT

**Occupation** Offshore property expert

**Residence** I live in Camps Bay

**Books I'm Reading** Bill Johnson's *How long will South Africa survive?* and *The one thing* by Gary Keller

**My Mentor** Jack Canfield

**Quote I Live By** "You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step"  
Martin Luther King

**Favourite Travel Destination**  
Japan

For many property investors, the thought of investing in a foreign market may seem daunting. Unfamiliarity with local trends and insider knowledge can leave many hesitant to venture across borders. Few industry experts know more about this than UK-native Lisa Bathurst. Founder of Cape Town-based property advisory firm Hurst and Wills, Lisa has been investing in property since the age of 19.

Now 36, she is excited to help others explore the world of offshore investing. "I'm an investor myself and I thrive on sharing that passion. There are a lot of unscrupulous people in this industry, and I am passionate about guiding fellow investors to do as well as I have,

which is why Hurst and Wills maintains independence and works for the buyer," she says.

Complementing this, they only work with partners that align with clients' personal objectives and wealth strategies. There is also a strict vetting process, ensuring clients are only exposed to partners with a proven track record and several years' experience. "We're also sure to physically visit developments, vetting them and ensuring they pass our strict due diligence," Lisa adds.

### Advice for local buyers

Lisa has been in South Africa for nearly 20 years, bearing witness to the changes to the South African property market in that time: "At present, there is a lull in the market, exacerbated by the economic and political instability and raised repo rates."

Hurst and Wills was born from Lisa's passion for property: "I started assisting foreign buyers in Cape Town after completing a project here. I consulted for companies with clients looking to invest in offshore property and soon decided to bring this under a professional offering with international standards, which is now Hurst and Wills."

Cape Town, however, is a market on its own. Lisa explains that she still sees opportunity for investors in the Mother City, especially in smaller units close to the city centre. "The wealthy and foreign buyers will always buy on the Atlantic seaboard, so investing there is still a good bet given that there are only so many properties and no more space to build," she explains.

Lisa's golden rule for investors is a well-known one, no matter which market you're looking to buy in: "Location, location, location. Invest in markets that have good town planning, great infrastructure and a pipeline of future buyers and tenants. You make money in property when you buy, so choose properties where the numbers stack up

and try not to get emotional."

### Offshore opportunities

Lisa highlights the opportunity for investors in the north of England, specifically Manchester and Liverpool: "Also, carefully chosen student developments in the UK are offering good returns," she says. Venturing outside of the UK, Lisa advises that France offers several affordable options, while Portugal offers a great opportunity for investors: "with its new tax regime, thriving property market, and Golden Visa program, it's a great one for South Africans."

The company has an exciting year planned, with the introduction of several new markets within the UK and further afield, due to be announced later in 2018. Furthermore, Lisa explains that the company is developing the acquisitions side of the business, enabling them to scope out specific commercial and industrial opportunities for investors.

### TRENDS FOR SAVVY INVESTORS

Advising on which trends to look out for, Lisa explains that there is a growing demand for smart and sustainable buildings: "Small units with clever spacial design that are in prime central areas. Invest in buildings that are end-user orientated. These often have everything under one roof such as gyms, media rooms, communal roof terraces for entertaining and sometimes include wifi and utilities. Sustainable property is the future, so considerations for that will keep savvy investors a step ahead."