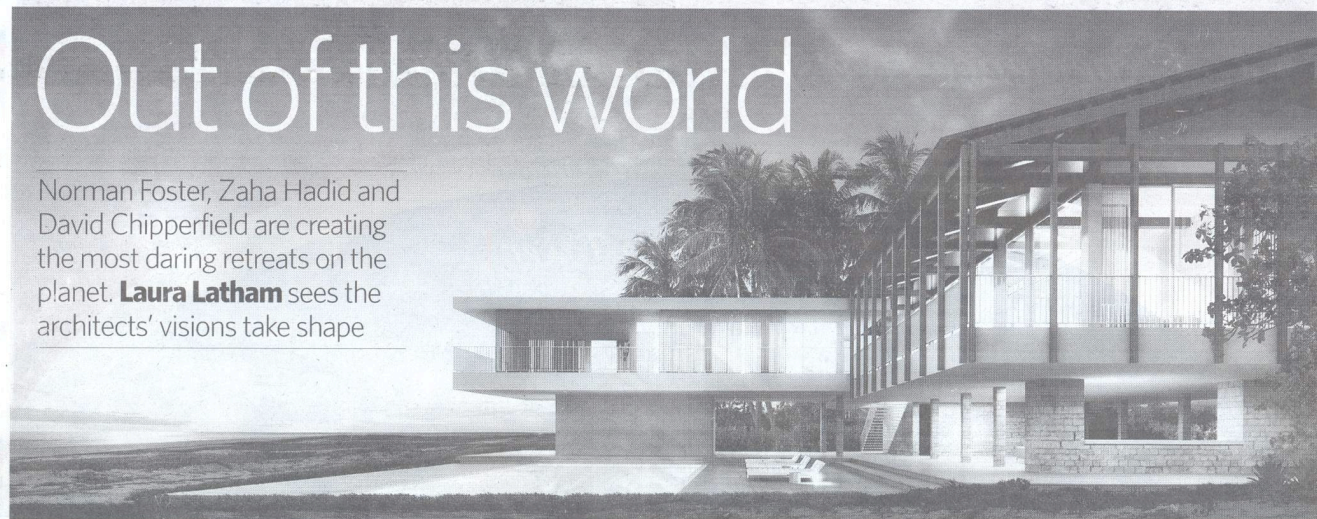


OVERSEAS

Out of this world

Norman Foster, Zaha Hadid and David Chipperfield are creating the most daring retreats on the planet. **Laura Latham** sees the architects' visions take shape



It does not take a huge leap of imagination for the phrase "luxury overseas property" to conjure up images of fairly grotesque villas. But overseas developers who cater to international high-rollers have learnt a new trick to dispel the tacky overtones: they attach the name of one of the world's most celebrated architects. Can you see yourself in a home that's come from the drawing board of David Chipperfield or Zaha Hadid? Well, there may be a resort for you.

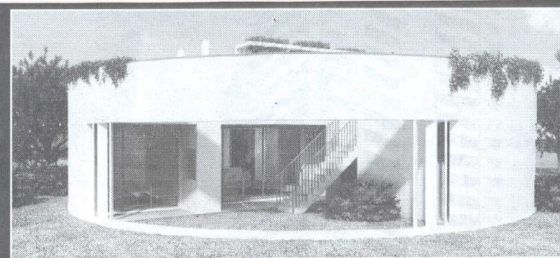
It all started with the hero worship of Sir Norman Foster. A global star who now has his name on everything from Egyptian spas and French bridges to London offices and villas in Mauritius. But a new gang of creatives is moving into his spotlight.

One of the biggest and most heavily publicised of these resorts is Dellis Cay in the Caribbean. The large private island is part of the beautiful Turks and Caicos archipelago and is now owned by Dr Cem Kinay, a Turkish medic who became a tourism magnate and is now a developer. The resort, dubbed the "O Property Collection", is of the highest order.

Kinay has engaged a string of the most glamorous names in building design. Alongside Shigeru Ban (who designed the Pompidou Centre in Metz) and winner of the Stirling Prize David Chipperfield, there's the immensely fashionable Zaha Hadid, Italian interior specialist Piero Lissoni, Chad Oppenheim, who has designed hotels and offices across America, and Kengo Kuma, a huge force in his native Japan.

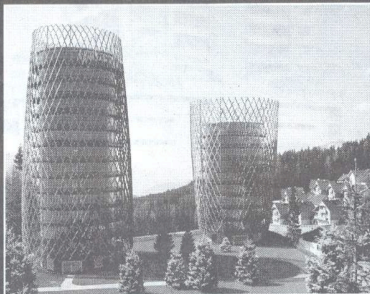
Lissoni is designing the main hotel and apartment complex, plus a villa collection, in his trademark bold, simple style. He thinks it's an "interesting idea" to bring together so many well-known names, though he claims (wrongly) that he's the least well-known among them. Despite the modern look of Dellis Cay's properties, Lissoni doesn't feel they are incongruous with their island setting. "What we think of as traditional Caribbean style isn't actually so traditional after all - it was invented by US architects. We have the chance to design something special here," he says. He believes that though contemporary architecture is more risky in this setting, the right buyer will see its appeal.

Dr Kinay always intended the resort to be design-led and invited the "best architects worldwide" to contribute, because he aims to offer buyers the ex-

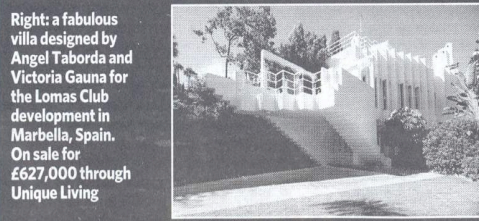


Above: innovative circular homes designed by local architect Manuel Graca Dias in the Portuguese resort of Bom Sucesso. Townhouses and villas start at £426,000

Right: apartments in Matteo Thun's unusual-looking Edel:Weiss 'fir-cones' development in Austria. Prices start at £156,500, through Erna Low



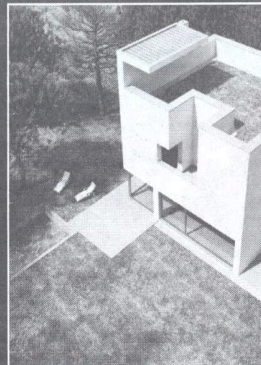
Left: chalets in the Matterhorn Village in Switzerland have sold well because of their clean, contemporary styling by local architect Eric Papon. Prices start at £780,000, through Investors in Property



Right: a fabulous villa designed by Angel Taborda and Victoria Gauna for the Lomas Club development in Marbella, Spain. On sale for £627,000 through Unique Living

Top: Caribbean-based Dellis Cay is employing the talents of a string of well-known architects. Piero Lissoni's Ocean Villas are selling in the region of £2.3 to £3.7m

Below: for those who can't shake the Foster bug, there's the chance to buy his amazing three- and four-bedroom villas in Corniche Bay, Mauritius. Prices start at £1.78m, through Aylesford International



Above: another of the properties in the inspired Bom Sucesso resort in Portugal, which Stirling Prize-winning architect David Chipperfield is involved in

nessed the talents of no less than 23 popular European architects. So innovative are the designs that the resort has been backed by the government, as a "project of national importance". Many are big names locally - such as Alcino Soutinho, Goncalo Byrne and Alvaro Siza Vieira. And David Chipperfield puts in another appearance. The large contemporary townhouses and villas start at £426,000, which isn't too bad considering the quality.

In fact, not all these architect-designed homes do cost a fortune. In Marbella's Lomas Club, a community masterplanned by architect Melvin Villarroel, for example, you can buy a stunning villa, the work of Angel Taborda and Victoria Gauna, for £627,000. Villarroel is also designing for a number of Spanish golf resorts, such as Polaris World in Murcia, where prices start at less than £120,000.

It's all change in the mountains, too. In Switzerland, local architect Eric Papon has created a series of chalets that eschew traditional, chocolate-box styling for something more sleek and contemporary, and start at around £780,000. In the Austrian resort of Katschberg, Matteo Thun's incredible Edel:Weiss "fir-cone" apartments are likely to be controversial additions to the landscape.

But if those names aren't big enough, you can snap up a piece of Sir Norman Foster. Serrenia is a vast development in Egypt, where apartments start at £190,000. Go to another of his projects, the new Corniche Bay resort in Mauritius, and the admittedly amazing Foster-branded villas will set you back £1.78m.

It's fair to say that few architects milk their celebrity and you can't deny that with property you're buying something more substantial than a showy status symbol. "My name may appeal to buyers," says Piero Lissoni of his striking Dellis Cay properties, "but, honestly, people would want to own my houses anyway because they are well designed."

Dellis Cay: 020-7016 3740, www.dellis-cay.com; Bom Sucesso: 020-7581 8000, www.bomsucesso.com.pt; Unique Living: 0845 430 0185, www.uniqueliving.com; Serrenia: 020-7399 3270, www.serrenia.com; Aylesford International: 020-7351 2383, www.aylesford.com; Investors in Property: 020-8905 5511, www.investorsin-property.com; Erna Low: 020-7590 1624, www.ernalowproperty.co.uk

perience of living in a "beautiful Caribbean environment, combined with architectural masterpieces."

He may be an aesthete but there is also a strong commercial instinct at work. "The architects are our biggest selling point," says Kinay, admitting that

those names bring vital publicity as well as sales. There has, he adds, been the occasional episode of prima-donna behaviour, but he feels "you cannot create anything without passion" and accepts it's the price you have to pay for working with a genius. Buyers will have

to pay too - from £835,000, for the cheapest Lissoni-designed one-bedroom apartment to several million for a villa.

Dellis Cay bills itself as unique but isn't the only development to have lined up a stable of famous names. Bom Sucesso, on Portugal's Silver Coast, has har-