

How coronavirus is affecting the super-rich: billionaires search for country estates and islands to avoid Covid-19

The super-rich are looking for mansion houses with moats, Scottish castles and Caribbean islands in a bid to avoid the coronavirus.



Billionaires are in a class of their own when it comes to [coronavirus](#) avoidance tactics, according to Penny Musgrove, chief executive of top people's [property](#) services specialist, Quintessentially Estates.

She says her phone has been hot with requests from the super-rich searching for Scottish castles, mansions with bunkers, Cotswolds manor houses with moats, uninhabited Caribbean islands to buy, superyachts for a long charter and private jets to get clients home from abroad without their having to go near international airports.

Musgrove says: “Thoughtful billionaires are hitting a romantic note. Instead of sending his girlfriend flowers, one client has asked us to deliver a bouquet made up of hand sanitiser, face masks, wipes — and, of course flowers.

“But one of the more bemusing requests was a long-standing client who was returning from abroad. He has a £35 million mansion in Mayfair. He asked me if I could find him an apartment to rent. When I asked what was wrong with his house, he said he didn’t want to return to it in case he infected the premises.”

He is currently looking at a four-bedroom duplex in Grosvenor Square for a rent of £18,000 a month.

Another client wants a new home with a large spa for his wife who will be having beauty treatments at home in future.

Private islands have suddenly become popular, too. One client is taking a private jet to the Caribbean to view Île de Caille four miles off the coast of Grenada. Location is everything — it’s 15 miles from the airport.

The choice of islands for sale is vast. If Greece is your preference, Patroklos, an easy hop from Athens, would be perfect. It has 250 acres of fertile land, 150 sheep and 5,000 olive trees. Price on request — but who cares?

There is also an Ionian island with 1,100 acres for £45 million. And if you are feeling particularly paranoid you could ask the sole occupant to leave. He's a shepherd.

Musgrove adds: "As [buying](#) agents and advisers, we are used to unusual requests. But these are a bit extreme."

European favourites for billionaires are the Balearics. She is arranging for a client to view a £25 million house in Majorca.

Meanwhile, private tutors are in for a pay rise.

"We are receiving requests from parents taking their children out of school for home tuition," says Musgrove. "And we have seen a big demand for places in UK boarding schools. Expat parents are locking up their daughters."