

ultratravel

DIRECTORY

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MANY CAREFUL OWNERS

When such names as the Duke of Roxburghe, Theo Fennell, Hugo Bulmer and Joel Cadbury put their funds into a private retreat company, it is quite clear this is not your average holiday club. Botiga, launched by Kit Harrison, of luxury ski company Descent, is the latest UK fractional ownership membership club – a somewhat clunking phrase, meaning it provides a number of properties around the world that are available exclusively to members.

Its first such property is pretty impressive: the Moroccan home of the late Mark Birley, founder of Annabel's nightclub in London, set in five acres of gardens designed by Miranda Brooks with interiors by Nicholas Haslam. Within six years, the company aims to own 60 equally attractive options, from ski chalets in Whistler to a townhouse in New York and a villa in Thailand. Experts have been drafted in to advise on all aspects. "Every single property has to be absolutely top-notch," says Harrison, "and that means the candles, the cigars in the humidors, the cellars and the staff."

An investment of €625,000 (£490,000), plus €35,000 in annual dues, gives between four and six weeks in peak periods, or up to 30 weeks off-peak, per year. That, apparently, is a snip. "The kinds of people we have been talking to say they spend about £100,000 on holidays a year," says Harrison, "so investing half a million pounds for a lifetime of holidays is no big deal for them." When he puts it that way, we are almost convinced... Further details: 020 3326 4000, www.botiga.co.uk

Timeshare of your life

Botiga's first property is a Moroccan villa which once belonged to Mark Birley