



Exclusive bubbles

Pandemics, depressions, Wall Street crashes – these exclusive real estate gems in the UK, India, Monaco and the US will never lose their enormous value

While the property market around the world is in a state of constant flux, there are homes that remain crisis-proof, always delivering an experience worth the extravagant prices attributed to them. We look around four of the highest valued residences on the planet – in London, Mumbai, Monaco and Bel Air – and explore why these properties have been deemed worth so much to begin with.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE

As one of the most famous dwellings around the world, Buckingham Palace has earned its top spot on this list. An astounding 240 bedrooms, 19 state rooms, 92 offices and 78 bathrooms exist in this London home for the Queen of England. Worth a staggering \$6.7bn, this palace is unlikely to ever be sold on the market, as it has been the ancestral home of the British monarchy for more than

150 years. Apart from the state rooms and offices needed to run the British Palace institutions and monarch, the home also includes a pool, a personal doctor's surgery and vast gardens, the largest private gardens in London.

A private cinema also exists in the depths of the castle-like structure, as well as a personal post office and even a jeweller's workshop, no doubt in the event that the all important Crown

Jewels need repairing. The state rooms are available to tour during August through September, but tour dates are often sold out in advance.

ANTILIA

Antilia lies in the centre of Mumbai, India, climbing to over 54 incredibly impressive storeys and boasting unique and fascinating architecture. The street it sits on is affectionately referred to as Billionaires' Row in Mumbai, which describes Mukesh Ambani, the owner and resident of the ➤

Above: The iconic view of Buckingham Palace, the main residence of the British Monarch, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II



building, well. While the architects who designed the building were from American firms in Dallas, Texas and Los Angeles, California, the building was inspired by traditional and natural elements of the lotus flower and the sun, both of which are connected to the country of India in various ways. With 27 floors, all with vaulted ceilings, three helipads, and a garage for up to 168 different vehicles, this home is considered to be the tallest, largest and most expensive private residence in the world, valued at around \$2 billion. The building is also kitted out with nine elevators, a private theatre, terrace gardens, a swimming pool with accompanying spa and health centre, a temple, and perhaps most uniquely, a snow room, which spits snow in the event that the local weather may call for a cool getaway, even for just a few hours.

VILLA LEOPOLDA

Nestled between the tiny principality of Monaco and France's southern haven of culture and history, the city of Nice, this incredible villa boasts a fascinating history that includes a royal heritage. While the estate was owned by King Leopold II of Belgium, the current villa was designed by the American architect Ogden Codman, Jr., and finished in 1931. It is currently owned by Lily Safra, whose husband Edmond died in 1999

Above left: Antilia has been Mukesh Ambani's private residence in Mumbai's Billionaires' Row since 2012

Top right: The Villa La Leopolda on the French Riviera **Below:** Known as 'The One', this Bel Air mansion was listed for \$500m, but settled for less than half that amount in March 2022



and left the estate to her, but it has been owned by many over the years, and was even used as a military hospital during WWI.

The 18-acre property is situated on the French Riviera and boasts a beautiful Belle Époque style, with immense gardens and grounds, a swimming pool, and pine forests across the acres. The villa has also been used as a location for major Hollywood films, including *The Red Shoes* and Hitchcock's *To Catch A Thief*. The entire property was valued at around €370 million in 2008, with a further €20 million for the furniture.

THE ONE

As the most expensive home in not only the state of California, but the entire US, this property extends across eight acres of Bel Air land and has been embroiled in money controversies since

the owner, Nile Niami, began building the estate in 2012. While the house is unfinished, it still commanded a value of \$500m until it sold in March 2022, (the actual sale price was much lower due to Niami's investments in the property).

The house is surrounded by its own moat and boasts 21 bedrooms, as well as 49 bathrooms, five pools, a jacuzzi and other water features. Floor-to-ceiling glass windows provide incredible views of the ocean, the LA skyline, and the mountains of San Gabriel. Staff quarters are also on the property, as is a separate guest house with three bedrooms. There is a private theatre, nightclub, beauty salon, a wellness centre, four-lane bowling alley and more in this incredible mansion, with room to expand and to continue adding value. ■

