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How To Buy a Castle

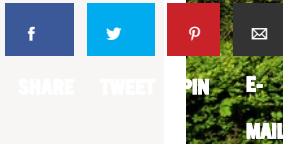
Solid advice for the next time you've got a cool \$60 million hanging around.



By Eric Tegler

47

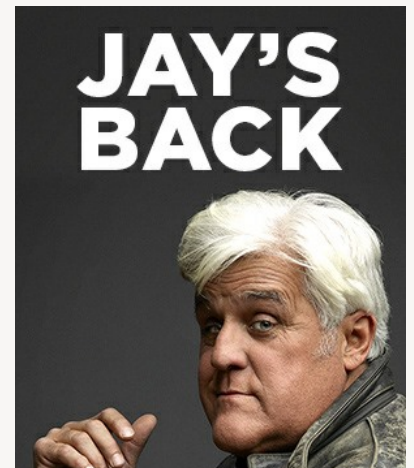
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Lots of once-in-a-lifetime real estate deals will happen in a lifetime. But only this one will let you live like a king.

[Chateau d'Hauteville](#), an 18th century castle on Lake Geneva near Vevey, Switzerland is for sale. Owned by the d'Hauteville family for 11 generations, [the Chateau](#) sits on 67 acres full of picturesque views across the lake to the Alps. Put on the market last year by Swiss-based Riviera Properties, it's just the sort of place for those in need of a little grandeur (and who doesn't need grandeur?).

It seems ridiculous that buying a castle is something a person can actually do. But with sufficiently deep pockets, it's possible. Here's what you should know going in:





Be obscenely wealthy



Let's start with the most obvious. Chateau d'Hauteville can be yours for \$60 million. It is offered exclusively as a whole, so don't get any ideas about turning it into condos. You'll also want to note that estimates for renovating the castle and its grounds are around \$31 million.

Riviera Properties

Be ready to redecorate



You get 21,000 square feet of living space with 30 rooms. Chateau d'Hauteville has five outbuildings including a stable and accommodation for staff. The grounds include 4.5 acres of

Riviera Properties

vineyards as well as orchards, woods, and formal gardens. The central grand hall remains in its original Louis XV style, with crimson bergere armchairs sitting under a baroque style frescoed cupola and a teardrop crystal chandelier lamp.

Period painted wall panels with matching original fittings still adorn other rooms from the same era. The capacious dining room is comparably modern, renovated at the turn of the 20th century, with 1906 furnishings according to the family.

Two major auctions, including one in September have thinned out the interior furnishings and significant works of art. The d'Hautevilles have donated or retained other items. Still, that means you have the opportunity to fit the castle out according to your desires—if you have very deep pockets. The renovations would probably take about five years and the projected annual maintenance will run about \$400,000 according to Riviera Properties director Michel Colatruglio.

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Be Swiss



Obviously, the pool of buyers is limited. It gets smaller still if you're buying the chateau as a residence. Only Swiss citizens or permanent Swiss residents are allowed. Buyers must also undertake renovations which conform to historic preservation standards set and checked by Swiss authorities.

Riviera Properties

If you're not Swiss, turn it into a hotel





There's always a loophole. If you're buying the property for commercial or diplomatic purposes, you don't have to be Swiss.

Riviera Properties

"For example we can imagine uses as a small luxury hotel, a head office, or diplomatic representation," Colatruglio says. "In this case everybody, or companies, are eligible to buy the Chateau."

Be into wine, as befits a royal



Along with the 4.5 acres dedicated to wine grapes, there's an actual vintage wine press. Add in some stainless steel fermentation tanks and a few other bits and pieces, and you're ready to produce your own vintage. The name is easy. Oenophiles will one day reverently speak of a "2016 Chateau d'Hauteville". Pro-tip: Have the castle art-worked on the label.

Riviera Properties

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Be interested in history





Riviera Properties

Among its ancestors, the d'Hauteville family counts the founder of the Bank of France and a 19th century American general. The current owner, Philip Grand d'Hauteville, explains that after fleeing France as a Huguenot Protestant, banker Philippe Canacc purchased the land in 1760 and began to transform the extant structures into the castle that stands today. The process included installation of the castle's lightning rod by none other than Benjamin Franklin... or so the story goes.

Meanwhile, another member of the extended family, General Alexander Macomb, was fighting the War of 1812, winning the Battle of Plattsburgh and a Congressional Gold Medal before becoming commanding general of the U.S. Army in 1828. The d'Hauteville honors go on from there, but that's what you get with 250-plus years of family ownership.

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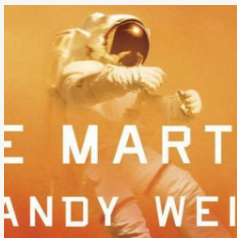
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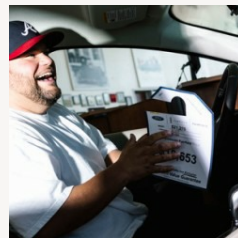
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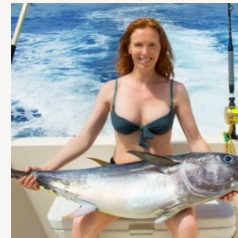
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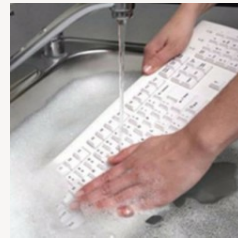


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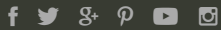
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