

BROKERAGE

Christie's adds on new St. Martin/St. Maarten affiliate

The new location builds on Christie's existing Caribbean network, which has a presence in The Bahamas, British and US Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, St. Barthelemy and Turks & Caicos



BY [LILLIAN DICKERSON](#)

Christie's International Real Estate has continued its expansion throughout the Caribbean with the addition of a new affiliate in St. Martin/St. Maarten, the brokerage announced on Wednesday.



Nick Vanassche

The firm formerly known as Oceano Homes is now known as Oceano Christie's International Real Estate and will be Christie's exclusive affiliate on the island, headquartered in Orient Bay and operating in both French St. Martin (the island's northern side) and Dutch St. Maarten (the island's southern side).

Pablo Yahuda and Christophe Cassar, who founded Oceano Homes in 2016, will lead the new affiliate. As one of Christie's Caribbean affiliates, the company will also be a part of the newly established [Christie's International Real Estate Caribbean Affiliates](#), a "network with a network" created to forge inter-island cooperation between the various Caribbean Christie's affiliates. The network is led by Managing Partner Nick Vanassche.

"Pablo and Christophe have built a successful, independent brokerage with a focus on innovation and a wealth of local market knowledge — which makes them a great addition to the network," Vanassche said in a statement. "St. Martin is a key market for the brand, and we look forward to working with Oceano as we continue to grow Christie's International Real Estate throughout the Caribbean."

Yahuda and Cassar have a combined 25 years of sales experience in the industry. Prior to co-founding Oceano Homes, Yahuda was a

marketing executive and was able to channel that experience into Oceano Homes' marketing efforts through a strong digital marketing presence via international advertising channels, social media and professionally produced listing videos.



Pablo Yahuda

Since its founding in 2016, Oceano Homes has seen consistent annual growth, with sales up about 40 percent year over year in 2022, according to a press release.

“We admire Christie’s International Real Estate’s commitment to providing exceptional service and value, and we’re honored to be joining the network,” Yahuda said in a statement. “We have been in growth mode since day one, but partnering with Christie’s International Real Estate — a brand known around the world for luxury — increases our value proposition many times over by giving our clients a global platform.”

St. Martin and St. Maarten are part of the Caribbean’s Leeward Islands, which include Antigua, Barbuda, Montserrat and the British and U.S. Virgin Islands, among others. With the territories’ picturesque beaches, fine dining, shopping and nightlife, both the French and Dutch sides are a big draw for tourists.



Christophe Cassar

Nearly 60 percent of the island's homebuyers are [international ones](#), largely originating from the U.S., Canada, France and the Netherlands, according to Christie's. The regions' favorable taxation models are also a big draw, particularly in St. Maarten, where there is no property tax or capital gains tax on the sale of real estate. Although the island's market has slowed down in recent months, like many markets in the U.S., Yahuda added that it's still in a strong position.

"The market on the island is still very strong, although the buying frenzy we saw during COVID has diminished," he said. "Buyers are being more deliberate and thorough with their decisions."

In addition to St. Martin/St. Maarten, Christie's is also located in the following Caribbean markets: The Bahamas, British Virgin Islands, U.S. Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, St. Barthelemy and Turks & Caicos.

The Christie's International Real Estate Caribbean Affiliates agreement is the second master license agreement that Christie's has entered. It first entered a similar agreement with the Hokkaido-based [H2 Group](#) in July 2022 to expand its services into Japan.