

“LICENCE TO SELL”

Brits wind up working for overseas property agencies for all sorts of reasons and many have great stories to tell. Rosie Bailey was enticed into the world of Spanish real estate by the agent who sold her her own property...

So how did you end up working in property on the Costa Cálida?

It took plenty of arm twisting on various fronts to persuade me into a career in real estate. The first twist came from my husband, Ray, who sowed the seed of buying a holiday home abroad. We began looking in Torrevieja – terribly *à la mode* a decade ago – where several agents, despite being told we wanted a detached property, dragged us around semi after terraced after apartment...

Frustrated, I tried to throw the southerly resort of Mazarrón into the hat but was assured that we’d “find nothing down there”. Well, lo and behold, we did and bought our dream home on Camposol Golf in Mazarrón, for €117,000 (£99K).

Then the second arm twist commenced, when the agent that found us the property suggested I was “Mercers material”. Despite my retorts that “I have a degree in Business Studies and Business Law, so why on earth would I want to be an estate agent?” he didn’t let up. The owner of Mercers then applied some pressure and eventually I gave in.

It wasn’t long before I got the bug and I’ve

really never looked back. The only time I haven’t been selling property since then is between 2007 and 2010 when I went back to the UK to do another degree.

What kind of property do you sell?

I don’t actually do the selling as I am office manager. My role is to market a wide range of homes priced from just €39,995 (£33,900) up to a princely million and give prospective clients enough first-hand information on the area and way of life to enable them to make their own informed decision.

Who’s your typical buyer?

We don’t really have one. I speak daily with clients of all ages, from all walks of life and from all across the world. We’ve sold to Dutch shipping magnates and builders from Essex.

Have you had any memorable clients recently?

I looked after a couple in their early 40s who flew in from Northern Ireland with a view to buying a holiday home that could also be suitable for permanent living further down the line. With a youngster living at home and the husband working in Iraq on security projects just organising the travel arrangements was a test. The three days spent with us were the first in 20 years without their children so the couple were naturally anxious but we all ended up feeling like we were holidaying with old friends.

I found them a villa with a pool, low maintenance gardens and double garage

for €160,000 (£136K). They’ll be signing at the notary in the February half-term.

Could you tell us a bit about your own home?

I live on the Camposol Golf resort in a three-bedroom, three bathroom villa with an en-suite bedroom up top opening on to a massive roof terrace. We’re 15 minutes from the beaches of Mazarrón and even closer to the proposed Paramount Pictures theme park. Ray and I also have homes in Pilar de la Horadada, a resort 20 kilometres south of Torrevieja, and Calasparra, a pretty Murcian town.

What makes a good overseas estate agent?

Someone who listens, empathises with the client and finds properties that are both desirable and represent good value – whatever the budget. A good agent should also always ensure that clients’ personal criteria are met, such as proximity to medical facilities, and that they get to know the surrounding area where they will live or holiday. It’s certainly not all about the house.

What would you be doing if you weren’t working for an overseas estate agency? Where would you be living?

When I finished my second degree in July 2010 I planned to go to North Korea to take up a teaching position, but the arm got twisted again and I returned to Mercers. I must like it here.

What’s your idea of a perfect day off?

Ray and I pack a picnic and head for the beach at Calnegre, between Mazarrón and Aguilas. I swear it is paradise and many times my husband and I are sat alone on this beach with palm trees swaying, the sun shining and I know I am one of the luckiest girls alive. ☀

Rosie manages the Mazarrón office of Mercers estate agency (00 34 968 199 188, www.spanishproperty.co.uk)

