



Trans-Tasman flight to water

Coastal, riverside, lakefront and canal properties have a charismatic lure for buyers in New Zealand and Australia, with a new cross-country partnership set to optimise opportunities.

McGrath

Bayleys, together with its global real estate partner Knight Frank, has joined forces with leading Australian real estate firm McGrath Estate Agents which has a proven and consolidated presence along the eastern seaboard.

Johnny Sinclair, Bayleys national director residential, says sporting rivalry and pavlova origins aside, there's always been a great synergy between the people of New Zealand and Australia and the alliance with McGrath celebrates this.

"The two countries are close geographically, have established trading relationships and shared values, there are strong family links between the countries thanks to two-way residential population movements, and there's a mutual love of the outdoors and the water.



"Under governance terms of agreements, New Zealanders and Australians can easily travel, live and work in either country. Bayleys' alignment with McGrath builds on this broader sense of 'family' to optimise our clients' property experiences on both sides of the Tasman."

Sinclair says the parallels between the waterfront markets in both countries are strong.

"There's been a 'flight to water' by buyers, particularly post-pandemic as priorities were challenged, the ability to work remotely was accepted, and lifestyles, friends and family came under the spotlight.

"Australians have a love affair with New Zealand, particularly with the South Island where the Otago Lakes area has a magnetic pull with its striking landscapes, activities for active relaxers and capacity for year-round water, snow and land adventures - including golf.

"But it goes both ways - Kiwis gravitate to the Gold Coast for its reliable weather and laid-back welcome, while Sydney and wider Brisbane remain enduringly popular."

John McGrath, founder and CEO of McGrath Estate Agents, says the partnership with Bayleys-Knight Frank is compelling, as more than 60,000 Australians and Kiwis swap addresses across the ditch each year.

"They all need access to great property so one shouldn't underestimate the value of having New Zealand's leading real estate company, Bayleys, and the most prestigious global residential agency Knight Frank, as our partners.

"Direct access to international buyers, especially high net worth residential buyers,

is fast becoming a must-have if you want to compete in the premium end of the market, particularly the waterfront sector."

McGrath was established in 1988 and is well-represented in the eastern seaboard's premium real estate market, setting numerous price records.

It has a significant waterfront presence in key markets including Greater Sydney, the south coast, north coast and northern rivers of NSW - up to the Brisbane riverfront, and through coastal Queensland.

The just released McGrath Report 2025, where John McGrath shares his insights

on what's next for Australian homeowners and investors, and what areas and suburbs to watch, has identified the 'Allure of the Coastal Azure' as one of the trends in residential property.

Australians continue to flock to the coast, where dwelling capital growth is outperforming the national market. Along the eastern seaboard this varies from absolute waterfronts with unrivalled lifestyle advantages to areas within easy access to the coast.

Sydney has taken the crown for the world's most desirable real estate, beating iconic markets such as Miami, Lake Como, the Bahamas and Barbados. Sydney's iconic harbourfront is well-serviced by McGrath's premium property specialists located in each precinct.

When making the move, Queensland is the most favoured by buyers with the Sunshine Coast taking the top position, followed by the Gold Coast. Next up is the Central Coast (NSW), and Greater Geelong in Victoria.

McGrath Central Coast Principal, Mat Steinwede says the firm has been inundated with enquiries from potential Sydney buyers planning to move up to the Central Coast for the first time.

Other strong trends noted by McGrath are cross-border enquiry, an uptick in foreign investors, and expats returning home driven by lifestyle aspirations and to escape international turmoil, with many cash buyers at the premium end of the market.

The Bayleys-Knight Frank-McGrath partnership is an exciting one for clients on both sides of the Tasman as the flight to water continues. Thanks for coming along for the ride.

