

# My dream DEN

Peter entered the dreaded Dragons' lair.. and came out a winner. Now he's counting his millions in Italy

By KAREN ROCKETT

**H**E hit the jackpot on Dragons' Den when the notoriously picky investors backed his gadget. Now entrepreneur Peter Moule is sitting back and watching the money roll in.

After a hectic year in the boardroom, Peter is enjoying a well-earned rest at his new holiday home in Italy. The inventor, who started off as an electrician at St Paul's Cathedral, made his first million just three months after appearing on the reality show last year.

"Going on Dragons' Den changed my life," says 54-year-old Peter, from Goffs Oak, Herts. Peter's £1 gadget - called the "chocbox", designed to protect electrical connectors - has earned him a multi-million-pound deal with GET, one of the world's biggest electrical distributors, and other DIY giants around the world.

Peter got the go-ahead for his venture after securing the backing of two of the show's "dragons", James Caan and Duncan Bannatyne. His clever device is expected to sell five million units a year in 152 countries. He already has orders worth £25million.

Peter and his family - wife Beverley, 48, and their four sons, Christian, 26, Dominic, 22, Alex, 19, and Oliver, 13 - now want to enjoy his success, so they've set up camp for the summer in a £400,000 home in the restored 13th Century hilltop village of Coletta di Castelbianco in Liguria - on the Italian Riviera.

Peter says: "From the moment we viewed the property, we knew that it was something special. I wanted to be close to the beach and the mountains and it fitted my criteria perfectly."

The Realtalia development has been sympathetically

created around the old stone walls of the existing village. From the outside it looks as if it has been there forever.

But it's a different story inside. Peter says: "Inside these unique stone facades, which are more than 700 years old, they have created the whole 21st Century lifestyle."

"In fact, the town is recognised as one of Europe's first high-speed villages, with glass-fibre broadband connection, satellite TV and conference facilities."

Not that Peter had his business head on when he bought his Italian dream home. He simply fell in love and decided to buy it on the spur of the moment, indulging in the kind of impulse buying all the property shows warn us against.

Peter says: "We did decide just to buy it there and then because we were simply stunned by it."

"Not only that, it was like buying into a community. The people are delightful and friendly, from various corners of the world."

"I love the fact the stone goes back to medieval times and I love the hilltop location with its fabulous views. The kids love the easy access to the beach and, of course, the mountains for skiing in winter."

Peter adds: "It really is a magical spot and a perfect den for a dragon to unwind in!"

● For more on the hilltop village, go to [www.coletta.it](http://www.coletta.it). Dragons' Den is on Mondays at 9pm on BBC2.

The family can relax on the patio

Natural high... the hilltop village has views for miles

## Peter's top tips before you buy

- USE an agent or developer with a good track record by speaking to previous clients.
- CONSIDER how long it is going to take to get there. One of the reasons I bought where I did was because of the short flight time from the UK.
- THINK about why you are buying. Is it purely an investment, for rental or just for pleasure?
- BUY something built to a high specification or renovated to a high standard so you won't have any trouble selling in the future.
- INVEST in an established market in a country with a good infrastructure. I would be wary about getting involved in emerging markets like Bulgaria and Croatia.

Peter with dragons Duncan and James

## In the know

It can take time to buy property in Italy and you can be hit by currency fluctuations. But buyers can protect themselves with a contract which fixes the exchange rate for up to two years. Pay by electronic transfer through a currency broker rather than by cheque as banks offer poor exchange rates.

4 TO BUY

Pictures: REALTALIA.CO.UK



£48K

**TWO-BED COTTAGE, LA SPEZIA**  
SMALL cottage with a kitchen-diner and external staircase to two bedrooms. Panoramic views.



£88K

**ONE-BED FLAT, TRIORA**  
FOUR-ROOM, first-floor apartment in a converted mansion with a kitchen, bathroom, and two bedrooms. Beautifully furnished.



from £108K

**STUDIOS, CASTELBIANCO**  
STUDIOS to three-bedroom properties in development 60 to 90 minutes drive from Nice or Genoa airports.



£135K

**2-BED TOWNHOUSE CHRUSANICO**  
RESTORED rustic townhouse in quaint hill village 12 km from the sea. It has a large terrace with panoramic views over the valley.