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"Your oasis of real estate"

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FOREIGN INVESTOR GUIDE TO REAL ESTATE IN BOTSWANA

Market Insight & Regulatory Roadmap

WHY INVEST IN BOTSWANA? THE MACRO PICTURE

As one of Africa's most stable, transparent, and economically sound nations, Botswana has increasingly become a magnet for international real estate buyers and institutional investors. Whether your interest lies in the pristine eco-tourism potential of the Okavango Delta, sprawling commercial developments in Gaborone, or high-yield agricultural investments, Botswana offers a uniquely favorable environment for global capital.

Through the strategic framework established by the **Botswana Investment and Trade Centre (BITC)**, the country actively welcomes foreign direct investment (FDI) and cross-border joint ventures to drive sustainable economic growth. According to official BITC data and international economic indices, Botswana consistently leads the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region due to several structural advantages:

Political & Economic Stability: Botswana maintains a flawless track record of institutional stability, uninterrupted democracy, and some of the lowest corruption and sovereign risk indexes on the African continent.

Zero Foreign Exchange Controls: There are completely no foreign exchange controls in Botswana. This guarantees international investors the seamless, unhindered repatriation of profits, rental yields, dividends, and original capital back to their home jurisdictions.

Favorable Tax Framework: Botswana boasts a highly liberalized tax system. Standard corporate tax is globally competitive, and strategic sectors, such as approved manufacturing or operations accredited by the Innovation Hub, benefit from a reduced corporate tax rate of just 15%.

Strategic Regional Gateway: Positioned at the geographical heart of Southern Africa, Botswana provides zero-duty market access to the entire SADC marketplace, opening doors to over 290 million consumers.

PROPERTY OWNERSHIP MODELS FOR FOREIGNERS

Foreign individuals and international corporate entities are legally permitted to acquire and hold real estate interests in Botswana. The regulatory framework divides real estate into distinct asset classes based on historical land tenure:

Freehold Land: Foreign investors are legally entitled to purchase freehold real estate. However, to prioritize citizen ownership, the state implements a higher statutory Transfer Duty on foreign purchasers of freehold land relative to local citizens.

Leasehold Land (Tribal and State Land): A substantial portion of Botswana's prime safari concessions, agricultural parcels, and eco-tourism opportunities falls under State Land or Tribal Land classifications. State Land is administered directly by urban state authorities, while Tribal Land is overseen by localized regional Land Boards. Foreign investors can acquire these secure, long-term commercial leases, which typically range from 50 to 99 years. These leases offer exceptional institutional backing for major capital developments, commercial safari lodges, and large-scale farming ventures. They are fully renewable upon expiration, contingent on compliance with designated land-use directives.

INSTITUTIONAL GOVERNANCE: REAL ESTATE AGENTS, ATTORNEYS, AND COMPANY SECRETARIES

In Botswana, real estate acquisitions and corporate holdings are strictly regulated to preserve transaction integrity and protect foreign capital. Foreign investors must engage registered local specialists to navigate the legal and corporate compliance frameworks successfully.

The Critical Role of Local Estate Agents (Okavango Properties)

Before legal or corporate structures are initiated, foreign investors require a licensed on-the-ground partner to secure the transaction environment. As your local agent, Okavango Properties assumes comprehensive responsibility for safeguarding your interests on the groundwork. Our core value is divided systematically into two critical operational phases:

Pre-Transaction Responsibilities & Due Diligence: We act as the central operational anchor, coordinating all necessary communication and workflows between buyers, sellers, corporate attorneys, Land Board personnel, and company secretaries. Crucially, our team conducts exhaustive background due diligence—vetting sellers to ensure legitimacy and directly verifying with localized Land Boards that all underlying property certificates, leases, and titles are authentic, genuine, and completely unencumbered.

Registered Property Valuation: A legally sound acquisition relies on accurate valuation. Okavango Properties provides certified in-house property valuation. Our essential valuations ensure you buy at accurate, defensible market rates, which is crucial for securing institutional bank financing or processing statutory approvals with local authorities.

Post-Transaction Asset Management: Following a successful transfer, we transition into long-term asset optimization. Our post-transaction services include comprehensive property management, rigorous tenant vetting, leasing out units, facility maintenance, and ongoing statutory compliance to protect and maximize your investment yield.

Regulatory Compliance Verification: To ensure the highest level of consumer protection, international investors should always verify that their real estate partners are fully licensed. You can view the formal registration status of practicing real estate professionals directly on the [Real Estate Advisory Council \(REAC\) Registered Members Registry](#) or via the [Real Estate Institute of Botswana \(REIB\)](#), where our Principal, Joel Chiyayo Mzyece, is fully certified across all real estate and property valuation disciplines.

The Critical Role of Property Attorneys (Conveyancers)

Foreign investors cannot execute a property transaction without the direct appointment of a registered Botswana legal practitioner. The legal conveyance and formal transfer of ownership must be executed exclusively by a specialized attorney certified as a Conveyancer. Your attorney conducts title verification at the Deeds Registry, manages audited legal Trust Accounts to securely hold transaction capital, drafts protected Agreements of Sale, and manages statutory registration requirements.

The Essential Role of Certified Company Secretaries

Because most international buyers prefer to register a local holding company through the [Companies and Intellectual Property Authority \(CIPA\)](#) to buy real estate, a qualified Company Secretary is a mandatory legal anchor. Under the Companies Act of Botswana, every registered corporate entity must appoint a certified Company Secretary to ensure ongoing corporate governance. The core structural responsibilities of your local Company Secretary include:

Corporate Formation and CIPA Compliance: Orchestrating the formal registration of the asset-holding company, managing share allocations, and lodging official constitutional documents with CIPA.

Statutory Record Maintenance: Safekeeping mandatory corporate books, tracking director appointments, updating the beneficial ownership registry, and maintaining official share registers to prevent compliance failures.

Annual Return Filings: Ensuring the company files its formal annual returns and statutory forms punctually with CIPA, protecting the local entity from hefty penalties or administrative deregistration.

Board and Shareholder Governance: Coordinating official corporate meetings, issuing legal notices, and meticulously recording board resolutions regarding property acquisitions, bank financing, and asset sales.

Strategic Regional Recommendations: Navigating regional variations across Land Boards and regulatory offices requires seasoned legal and administrative experts. Because of our deep roots in the Botswana property market, Okavango Properties can strongly recommend highly reputable, certified property attorneys and company secretaries in the region who specialize in cross-border corporate structuring and foreign direct investment. Partnering with our vetted network ensures your transaction moves smoothly without administrative delays.

THE ACQUISITION PROCESS: STEP-BY-STEP FOR FREEHOLD LAND

PHASE	OPERATIONAL DESCRIPTION
1. Asset Identification	Sourcing and evaluating prime property portfolios through Okavango Properties' specialized advisory team.
2. Offer & Due Diligence	The investor signs a Deed of Sale (Sale Agreement) with the private owner. A conveyancing attorney verifies the Title Deed at the Deeds Registry to ensure it is free of undisclosed bonds or caveats.
3. Fulfilling Suspensive Conditions	The investor secures financing (if using a local commercial bank) or arranges the offshore transfer of funds through a local bank in compliance with Bank of Botswana / BIFM anti-money laundering regulations.
4. Clearance Certificates	The seller obtains a Rates Clearance Certificate from the local City or Town Council, proving all municipal dues are paid up to date.
5. Payment of Transfer Duty	The conveyancing attorney calculates the non-citizen tiered Transfer Duty: 10% on the the first P2,000,000 of the property value, and 15% on the remaining balance.
6. Lodgement & Registration	The attorney signs off on the transfer documents and lodges them at the Deeds Registry in Gaborone or Francistown. The registry issues a new Deed of Transfer in the investor's (or corporate entity's) name.

THE ACQUISITION PROCESS: STEP-BY-STEP FOR LEASEHOLD LAND

PHASE	OPERATIONAL DESCRIPTION
1. Asset Identification	Sourcing and evaluating prime property portfolios through Okavango Properties' specialized advisory team.
2. Corporate Structuring	Engaging a certified Company Secretary to register a local asset-holding company via CIPA for operational tax optimization.
3. Legal Appointment	Appointing a certified Botswana conveyancing attorney to oversee transaction security and title checks.
4. Contract Execution	Executing the formal Agreement of Sale and placing capital securely into the attorney's Trust Account (Escrow).
5. Statutory Approvals	Securing any necessary Land Board, ministerial, or environmental clearances required for the specific asset class.
6. Formal Registration	Final lodgment at the Deeds Registry, legal title transfer, and the authorized release of transaction funds.

PARTNERING FOR INSTITUTIONAL SUCCESS

While Botswana offers an exceptionally stable and profitable investment landscape, achieving optimal yields requires seasoned, on-the-ground market intelligence. Navigating local land board directives, evaluating remote agricultural soil capacities, and projecting tourist occupancy trends requires trusted regional guidance. At Okavango Properties, we bridge local regulatory landscapes with world-class agency standards. Operating from our central headquarters in Maun alongside our regional support offices, we ensure your real estate acquisition is secure, compliant, and structurally sound. Discover our active investment portfolios, premium listings, and specialized advisory services directly on our website: www.okavangoproperties.com.

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