

Can I get house in Panama for under \$250,000?

Written by T. Rob Brown (aka Roberto Chocolate)

Wednesday, 12 May 2010 16:59 - Last Updated Friday, 14 May 2010 12:34

Lynn is from Canada, and is asking about buying a house in Panama. Her family is originally from China and she asked about buying Chinese food products in a previous e-mail. She also poses a number of questions about cars, dentists and housing prices:

Hola Roberto:

Thanks for getting back to my questions so quickly. I am glad that you will have the opportunity to do some "new" detective work on the Chinatown question. We saw Anthony Bourdain's No Reservations show where he filmed in Panama's Chinatown and this is what actually peaked our interest in Panama. As for the housing question we would prefer a small house. No more than 2 bedrooms and 2 baths. Ideal would be 1 bedroom and 2 bathrooms. Little to no maintenance. Newer better. If there were views of the ocean or mountains that would be fine. Do not want a pool. Initially living there off and on. As for the price range we want good quality but upper limit would be \$250,000.00 but if what we seek cost's more then let us know or LESS than would be great!

Would like to stay in the City as we are use to being close to everything. We love New York City and when we are there we take public transportation.

However, those great areas within 1 hour of the city how is the public transportation to and from these areas?

We have a car we could drive down. It is a 2004 Kia Amanti what would tags and license fees cost to register it there. Are there auto repair shops for Kia?

How far is the airport from Panama City? Are there neighborhoods along the way to the airport that are worth looking into?

By the way, I also read your 101 things to do in Panama article it is AWESOME what you put together!!

I am curious how did the dentist work out?

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Have fun in the city and Chinatown this Friday. I look forward to hearing back from you.

Gracias, Lynn MY RESPONSE: Dear Lynn, The quick answer is yes you can buy a house for a lot less than \$250,000. You can also spend a lot more too. The City is more expensive, but there are deals to be had. The interior is less expensive, and safer as far as I am concerned. Less drug/gang issues.

I have just helped friends Bruce and Melody from Ontario buy a gorgeous 2 bedroom townhouse overlooking the ocean in Gorgona (in the interior right next to Coronado) for \$89,000 (shared infinity pool with 18 other townhouses) and helping my brother buy a single family 4 bedroom house on a good sized lot for \$40,000 in Chamé (also in the interior about 45 minutes form Panama City)

Your price range for a house is good - I think you can get a good one for less - I will ask around for you, see if there are some good deals.

David is the second largest city in Panama - but it is still quite small/quiet - I think you will happier being nearer Panama City (1.3 million).

Regarding cars, I have articles on my site about bringing cars to Panama that will help you - a Kia would be good - is it 4 x 4? Better to have a 4 x 4 here. Yes, there are repairs/parts for Kia - in fact any Asian vehicle is preferred over a North American one here.

Public transportation (buses) are excellent and cheap. New, air conditioned, some show movies (in Spanish).

Thank you for your kind words on my article. I am still working on the 101 Exciting Things To Do In Panama - I hope to some day make it a

directory.

Madame Chang's in Calle Uruguay area is the best Chinese Restaurant in Panama City - but there are many really good ones.

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Here are responses to your other questions:

We have found an excellent Panamanian dentist - the quote from the gringo dentist was outrageous - \$3,500 - my wife got 9 teeth worked on

(fillings replaced), a cleaning, 6 xray's and a repair on a cap for \$27 - that's right - \$27. To be fair the \$3,500 price included a root canal which

she has not done yet - that will cost \$375. When everything is done, she will have saved over \$3,000. We have to drive an hour further to go to

this dentist, but it is worth it.

The airport is 25 - 30 km from the City - a \$30 cab ride.

Hope this helps - Roberto