

Looking for a dream holiday home in Hawaii?

Owning a time-share resort condominium opens the door to a flexible, luxury and affordable vacation lifestyle

Many people are so beguiled by Hawaii's pristine beauty, fresh ocean air and warm hospitality that they return to the Islands year, after year, after year.

If you go often enough, you might have considered buying a property there, but houses and condominiums in Hawaii don't come cheap, and the purchase price and maintenance costs are a major outlay if you're only going to be able to use the property for a limited number of days each year.

One solution is time sharing — a system for sharing the ownership of a vacation home in which each of the joint purchasers may occupy the unit during a specified period each year — which is starting to become popular as a new vacation style among Japan's Hawaii-lovers.

Although time shares have only been on the market for a few years in Japan, they are a well-established vacation style among Western Europeans and North Americans who want to enjoy the "resort life" economically and efficiently. The time-share idea is said to have originated at a French ski resort in the mid-1960s, when 12 people began to share a chalet, with each one using it for one month each year.

In the early 1970s, the time-

share business enjoyed a boom in the United States and rapidly developed, replacing rental condominiums in many resorts. In the 1980s, major hotel chains such as the Hilton and Marriott entered the sector in earnest, allowing people around the world to enjoy the advantages of time sharing.

The system was first introduced to the Japanese market by Hilton Grand Vacations Club, which runs time-share properties in 47 resort locations around the world.

The system was first introduced to the Japanese market by Hilton Grand Vacations Club, which runs time-share properties in 47 resort locations around the world. Hilton Grand Vacations Club began promoting the system in 2001, targeting Japanese people who were on vacation in Hawaii, for its newly opened Lagoon Tower time-share property at Hilton Hawaiian Village Beach Resort & Spa in Waikiki Beach on Oahu Island. As a result of the positive sales response from Japanese clients, the company opened a sales office in Tokyo in 2003 and began a domestic promotion in line with the opening of The Kalia Tower in the complex. The number of Japanese owners, which was 6,000 group members at that time, had increased to over 22,000 group members by this May. As demand increased, the company added the Hibiya Vacation Gallery in Tokyo in March to its Shinjuku, Yoko-

hama, Osaka and Nagoya galleries.

"Management didn't expect such a good response from Japanese people. But with free individual travel and special interest tours becoming mainstream instead of group tours, Japanese vacation styles have changed," says Shiho Sugimoto of the company's PR department. "Even if you are not on a group trip, Hawaii is safe, secure and you can communicate in Japanese. Hawaii remains highly popular among Japanese people because it satisfies all of these needs."

In Hawaii, Hilton Grand Vacations Club's time-sharing program offers condominiums in the best locations in Waikiki Beach and Waikoloa Beach, including The Grand Waikikian, the latest addition completed at the end of last year. By sharing ownership by the week, you can buy a high-grade Hilton condominium for an outlay of just ¥4 million to ¥5 million, which is the most popular price range. "The condos are spacious and fully equipped, so staying at a time-share resort will make you feel like you are living there, rather than traveling," says Sugimoto.

The program divides one year into 52 weeks and sells

one week as a unit. Once you purchase a unit, you can use the property for a week every year, forever, with just a yearly maintenance fee. In addition, with the program's points system, you can flexibly choose to stay at 47 other Hilton time-share resorts or 8,200 Hilton and Hilton alliance hotels all over the world, instead of staying at your "home resort." Or, in years when you cannot take a long vacation, you could use your points to stay at a Hilton hotel in Japan for just a few days and save the rest of the points for the following year. The ownership rights are registered in the state of Hawaii, like ordinary real estate properties, and can be inherited by your offspring from generation to generation.

At the Vacation Galleries, detailed explanations on the program are provided, but for those who wish to stay at a property before making a decision, a range of trial accommodation plans is available, which combines stays in a time-share unit, program explanations and visits to model rooms.

Concentrating on after-sales care, Hilton Grand Vacations Club holds orientations for owners on how to use the points system, etc. At its

Shinjuku Gallery, Vacation Counselors are on hand to help owners to plan their vacation. Quarterly newsletters cover practical and detailed tips on how to enjoy your vacation, as well as service and campaign information. The official Web site features blogs by high-profile writers well versed on Hawaii about their island lifestyle. "We try to provide members with practical and interesting information that can enrich their vacation experience. Enhancing member satisfaction is the best way to popularize the time-share system in Japan," says Sugimoto.

For more information, visit www.hgvchawaii.com or call (0120)805-817 (Japanese only).



Time-share gallery: Hibiya Vacation Gallery opened in March in Tokyo's Chiyoda Ward. As demand increases, Hilton Grand Vacations Club is expanding its time-share resort business in Japan.

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Hilton Grand Vacations Club



High life: (Left) The chic wooden-floor living room of a time-share condo at The Grand Waikikian. Fully equipped, spacious rooms provide the comfort and relaxation rarely found at a hotel. (Right) Splendid night views of Waikiki Beach can be enjoyed from the balcony of a time-share resort condo at The Grand Waikikian in Hawaii.