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Luxury properties by location

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# Location and Views Create Value, Says Louise Sunshine

The marketing veteran says to 'buy what you know and know what you're buying'

BY LUCY COHEN BLATTER | ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED ON MARCH 11, 2019 | [MANSION GLOBAL](#)

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*Ms. Sunshine, with her most recent project—Four Seasons Fort Lauderdale—the first five-star project in Florida's Broward County.  
COMPOSITE: COURTESY OF LOUISE SUNSHINE; FOUR SEASONS FORT LAUDERDALE*

With 45 years in the real estate business, Louise Sunshine is a well-known name in the real estate marketing world. Ms. Sunshine, 78, is currently a strategic adviser at Fort Partners, a Miami-based, real estate and hospitality development firm. The company she works for is behind Miami's Surf Club, Four Seasons Resort Palm Beach and most recently, the Four Seasons Fort Lauderdale—the first five-star project in Florida's Broward County.

Ms. Sunshine was vice president of the Trump Organization from 1973 to 1985, helping now-President Donald Trump open his first office in Manhattan.

She's also worked on 220 Central Park South in Manhattan (the building in which [Ken Griffin recently bought a \\$238 million apartment](#)).

We caught up with Ms. Sunshine to discuss the Florida property she still pines over, why she tells buyers to "keep their seatbelts on," and more.

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**Mansion Global:** Describe your dream property.

**Louise Sunshine:** My dream property would be fully serviced. Services come first for me at this point in my life. The ease of living comes first. I don't want to have to worry about anything.

Next most important to me are aesthetics. Having been involved with great architects and designers throughout my career, aesthetics are very important to me. I'm very much attracted to great design, and I choose to live that way.

I have an amazing art collection and an amazing collection of Midcentury Modern furniture, and I like to have a good home for that.

I also appreciate light and air. High ceilings, tall windows and sky are important, and the feeling of openness, too. It has to feel very open to the outdoors.

The perfect size is 3,200 square feet.

**MG: Do you have a real estate property that got away?**

**LS:** Definitely. There's no question in my mind. I had an upper floor penthouse at the Ritz-Carlton in Bal Harbour that was totally beautiful and perfectly well designed. I owned it, and I wish I had never sold it. It was the biggest mistake of my life, because I've been moving ever since.

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**MG: What does luxury mean to you?**

**LS:** Frankly, luxury is a state of mind rather than a physical description. If you can make your dreams come true in terms of a lifestyle, you've achieved a state of luxury.

**MG: What area do you think is the next hub for luxury properties?**

**LS:** Not sure it's an area, but it has to have a hospitality component. A property with a hotel component, such as the Four Seasons, the Mandarin Oriental and the St. Regis.

**MG: What's the biggest surprise in the luxury real estate market now?**

**LS:** I'm surprised that we are so overbuilt and that developers haven't been wiser and studied the marketplace.

In places like Sunny Isles (in Florida), and Midtown Manhattan—there are these pockets where I don't know what they were thinking.

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**MG: Where are the best luxury homes in the world and why?**

**LS:** They're the ones that are usually built around parks of note—like Central Park—bodies of water, like the Thames River or the Atlantic Ocean, and places such as Miami Beach or the Hamptons. The most expensive homes have views. Views and locations are the things that create value. They usually involve parks, bodies of water and expansive views of cities.

**MG: What's your favorite part of your home?**

**LS:** My bed. I work on my bed, I watch television from my bed, I talk on the phone and I eat on my bed. My two dogs sleep on my bed.

When my grandchildren were smaller, we'd play on my bed.

**MG: What best describes the theme to your home and why?**

**LS:** The theme is me. It reflects my taste in art and design and my lifestyle.

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**MG: What's the most valuable thing in your home?**

**LS:** The photos I have that reflect the very interesting life that I've led. They start with my family—my children, my marriages. Meetings with governors, senators, my 16-year career with Donald Trump, all the developers I've worked with. And on to my many travels, and many wonderful friends. And photos of the many women I have mentored throughout the years.

**MG: What's the most valuable amenity to have in a home right now?**

**LS:** A lifestyle concierge or an assigned butler.

**MG: What's your best piece of real estate advice?**

**LS:** In addition to investing in your lifestyle, you are also buying an appreciating asset. Don't get carried away with your emotions.

Do your homework. Buy what you know and know what you're buying.

**More:** [All Luxury is Local, Says Brazilian Architect](#)

**MG: What's going on in the news that will have the biggest impact on the luxury real estate market?**

**LS:** My assessment of the world today is "keep your seatbelt on." There's so much instability that you really don't know what's going to be happening in the next hour. That's why it's all the more important that you buy real estate wisely.

**MG: What is the best area now for investing in luxury properties?**

**LS:** Our Four Seasons Property in Miami Beach is the perfect example of the power of hospitality properties. All you need to do is look at someone who purchased an apartment in the past year and resold it. That asset appreciated 33% in one year. Someone paid \$7.95 million and sold it for \$9.2 million six months later. If you go to Four Seasons properties anywhere in the world (a hotel with a residence component, or vice versa) you'll see that those residences appreciate in value no less than 20% to 25%.

**MG: What area currently has the best resale value?**

**LS:** It's all about location and views. Whatever city that happens to be in—London, New York, Miami. Properties that are branded correctly and properties with hospitality components have much greater value because people want services.