THE 5 R MASTERCLASS · PROFITABLE INTERNATIONAL REAL ESTATE INVESTING

LESSON 1

The Right Place

Welcome back. In our first session, you heard me talk about Cabo San Lucas, a little fishing village that turned into one of the most sought-after destinations in Mexico. I also told you about buying my first condo there for $336,156 and watching comparable units later list for $725,000.

That story wasn't just about luck. It was about being in THE RIGHT PLACE.

Because no matter how good your property, your developer, or your price, if you're not in the Right Place, none of it matters. The Right Place is the foundation of every great deal.

Today, I'm going to show you how to identify markets before the crowd, and how to recognize the patterns of progress that appear again and again all over the world. This is what I call following the people and the path of progress.

If I could reduce twenty years of global scouting into one simple rule, it would be this: find out where the people are going, and buy before they get there.

It sounds simple. And it is. But it's powerful.

People create demand. When people move, invest, retire, or work remotely in new destinations, property values rise behind them like a tide. Governments follow people with infrastructure. Developers follow with resorts and condos. Investors follow with capital.

I've watched this pattern unfold countless times, from Mexico to Portugal to Panama. The early buyers, those who see it coming, make multiples on their money. The latecomers, the ones who wait until the glossy magazines call it "the next big thing," pay retail prices and wonder where the profit went.

So your first job as an international investor is not to find a specific deal. It's to identify the Right Place, the location that's just starting to attract people, investment, and attention. That's where you plant your flag before the rush begins.

To make this practical, I use a simple formula: Access + Desire + Catalyst = Demand. Let’s break that down.

Access is how easy it is for people to get there. An airport expansion, a new highway, or a ferry route can transform a market overnight. Every time a new international flight opens from a major hub, a new group of buyers arrives. I call these “runway opportunities.”

Desire is why people want to be there. Beautiful scenery, great climate, safety, healthcare, and culture. These are lifestyle drivers. If people want to live there, not just visit, that’s a powerful foundation for long-term value.

Catalyst is what pushes everything into motion. It might be a new marina that brings in yachts and high-net-worth visitors. It could be a world-class golf course or the arrival of a major resort brand like Four Seasons, Ritz-Carlton, or Hyatt. Sometimes it’s a government incentive, like a digital-nomad visa or tax reform that makes relocation easier.

When these three forces align — when Access, Desire, and Catalyst come together — the result is demand. And demand is what drives profits.

Let’s start with infrastructure, because it’s the earliest and most reliable signal of progress. Whenever I see governments or private groups investing heavily in connectivity — new airports, upgraded highways, bridges, marinas, ferry ports — my radar lights up.

Infrastructure always comes before the boom. Think of it like a wave. First comes infrastructure, then people, then capital appreciation. If you wait until after the new terminal opens and the headlines appear, you’re already too late.

Today, when I analyze new markets, whether it’s southern Portugal, Colombia, or Greece, I start by checking flight routes. Who’s adding direct flights? How many new hotel rooms are under construction? Are major resort brands staking a claim? If the answer is yes, that market is on the move.

So, as a rule of thumb: follow the infrastructure. Every runway, road, and marina is a vote of confidence in the future of that place.

The next layer is people movement. The human side of progress. Right now, we’re living through one of the biggest global migrations of the modern era. Technology, lifestyle priorities, and cost of living are reshaping where people choose to live and work.

Think about what's happened since 2020. Millions of people can now work from anywhere. All they need is good Wi-Fi, sunshine, and affordable comfort. That's why places like Portugal, Mexico, and Costa Rica have seen surges in long-stay visitors and remote-work communities.

Then there's retirement migration. Baby boomers and early retirees looking for better value and better weather. They're selling high-priced homes in the U.S., Canada, and Europe and moving their capital abroad.

Everywhere people go, demand follows. Rental markets expand. Shops, cafés, and services grow. And investors who position themselves early ride that wave of inbound migration.

So, whether it's remote workers or retirees, remember: follow the people. Because where people go, prosperity follows.

Now let's revisit Cabo San Lucas, because it's a perfect example of how this formula plays out in real life.

As I mentioned in the previous Session, when I first came to Cabo a little over ten years ago, it was already a world-famous destination, with luxury resorts, world-class golf, and a constant flow of travelers escaping the winter cold.

But beneath that polished surface, I saw something different. A second wave forming. New infrastructure was coming online. The airport was adding routes from across North America. Developers were breaking ground on new master-planned communities along the Pacific.

That's when I knew it was time to act. So in 2015, I bought a two-bedroom, two-bath ocean-view condo in the Copala community inside Cabo's five-star Quivira resort. The RETA-only price was $336,156. Today, similar condos list for around $725,000, an uplift of nearly $390,000. And my condo rents for about $3,000 a month in high season.

Those numbers tell the story, but here's what really made it happen:

- ✓ **Access:** The new highway to Todos Santos opened, and the airport expanded to handle direct flights from more than twenty U.S. and Canadian cities.
- ✓ **Desire:** Cabo became the go-to destination for people wanting beach life without the long-haul travel — sunshine, golf, fine dining, and safety.
- ✓ **Catalyst:** Global brands like the Ritz-Carlton Reserve and Waldorf Astoria poured in hundreds of millions of dollars, signaling confidence and raising the bar for the entire

> destination.

When you combine Access + Desire + Catalyst, you get one thing — demand. And where demand flows, prices follow. That's exactly what played out in Cabo.

Every successful RETA deal I've ever led follows that same pattern. The biggest gains come in that short window when everything is lining up for growth. That's when you want to be in.

Here's your quick checklist for identifying the Right Place:

Follow the People. Look for growing populations of expats, retirees, and remote workers.

Follow the Progress. Track infrastructure projects — airports, highways, ports, rail lines.

Watch the Big Brands. When global hotel chains commit capital, they've done their research.

Check Accessibility. Direct flights and shorter travel times widen your buyer pool.

Study Government Signals. Incentives, tax breaks, and visas show where policy is heading.

Look for Lifestyle. A market with beauty, safety, and recreation attracts long-term demand.

Buy Early, Not First. Don't be the pioneer in the jungle, but don't wait for the billboards either.

If you find a place that ticks at least five of those seven boxes, you've likely found a market on the rise. That's your opportunity window, before the prices reflect the potential.

Now it's time to put this into practice. Open your worksheet and find the section labeled "Spotting the Right Place." Here's what I'd like you to do.

Write down three destinations you're curious about — anywhere in the world. For each one, answer these questions:

What's improving access? (new flights, roads, or infrastructure?)

Why do people desire it? (climate, cost, culture, community?)

What catalysts are emerging? (resorts, investment, migration?)

Then, total up how many of those three markets show at least two of the three indicators. Those are your short-list markets. The ones worth deeper research.

To help you with this, I've included a special report: "The X Best Places in the World to Buy Real Estate Right Now." It's packed with up-to-date examples of cities and regions that already tick those boxes. Read through it after this lesson, and see which ones align with your own lifestyle goals. The point is to train your eye to recognize the same signals anywhere in the world.

The Right Place is where every great journey in real estate begins. It's the soil in which your investment grows. If you learn to spot where progress is heading — before the headlines, before the billboards, before the rush — you'll always be one step ahead of the crowd.

> ✓ **Remember:** find out where the people are going, and buy before they get there. Do that consistently, and you'll never chase opportunity again. You'll be waiting for it.

Tomorrow, we'll zoom in further and talk about the Right Property. How to choose the exact kind of home or condo that renters and buyers actually want inside the Right Place you've just learned how to find.

I'll see you there.