



RUBENSTEIN PUBLIC RELATIONS, INC.

THE REAL DEAL

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Stribling makes a splash in Italy

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A Stribling listing in Tuscany

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Stribling listings in Tuscany. Top: a villa in Capalbio. Middle: a restored farmhouse in Val d'Orcia. Bottom: the villa Poggio al Pero in Capalbio.

Many New York City brokerages expand in attractive vacation locales, but Stribling & Associates has gone via Italia.

The luxury residential brokerage best known for its high-end Manhattan homes now represents about a dozen multimillion-dollar properties in some of Italy's most sought-after locales, including Tuscany and the Umbria region.

The Italian project took off after the brokerage reeled in a big client: the president of Rolls Royce. The head of the luxury carmaker listed his Italian property with Stribling three years ago, encouraged by a friend who had sold through the brokerage. From there, "it kind of snowballed," said Barbara Evans-Butler, a senior vice president with Stribling. Today, Evans-Butler said, the company has listings ranging "from a monastery to a castle."

Evans-Butler, who is also a Manhattan specialist, and Irene Grassi, who is originally from Italy, are at the helm of the brokerage's burgeoning Italian portfolio.

Real estate in Italy is a different game, the brokers said, particularly the attitude toward pricing properties.

"[Buyers in Italy] really are quite negotiable. ... The difference between the asking price and the closing price is [often] quite substantial," Evans-Butler said. "The pricing process doesn't have to be as meticulously researched."