

## What kind of house will \$1 million buy?

ORLANDO, Fla. -- Nov. 7, 2005 -- The Orlando Regional Realtor Association says 687 homes valued at \$1 million or more changed hands between January 2002 and July 2005 in Orange and Seminole counties.

Central Florida's million-dollar housing market is getting a boost from low interest rates, interest-only mortgages and rapid home-price appreciation. Homeowners are increasingly putting the proceeds from the sale of their starter homes toward more expensive properties.

Demand from foreigners also fuels the market, as U.S. property is considered a bargain to these buyers. However, today's million-dollar homes are smaller, and some even need extensive improvements.

Nevertheless, many buyers are willing to give up space for upscale amenities, such as outdoor kitchens and granite countertops. It is estimated that only 2 percent of Florida residents could afford a million-dollar home, as they would need yearly incomes of more than \$225,000 to qualify for financing.

Source: Orlando Sentinel (FL) (11/06/05) Hamburg, Jay