

BEFORE YOU REACH FOR SECONDS...

Many homeowners are diving into second-home ownership, for a variety of reasons. If you've given any thought to the possibility, you may have already formulated a list of questions and answers for yourself and your family. If not, here are some important considerations...

First, if you are going to travel between two residences, just how far are you willing to travel? You can consider a close-by destination if you're planning to just get away on the weekends, but a once-a-year vacation destination could be anywhere your imagination takes you. Your reasons for getting away will impact the features you'll look for: mountains, beaches, "big city" entertainment, etc.

Perhaps more importantly is the question of how much you are willing to spend. Consider the equity you've built in your current home, and the impact a second mortgage will have on your budget. The manner in which you'll use the second home will affect those figures, since you might plan it as an investment, either for rental or resale. If it would be for retirement or recreation, then you'd look at the financing differently.

Finally, don't forget who else might be able to use that second residence as well, like your children or your parents, even your friends. A professional opinion never hurts, but you'll benefit from bouncing the idea around with others. Happy second-home hunting!

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