

## *Italian Houses on sale for One Dollar*

1. Which of the following words would you use to describe the homes below? What other words would you use to describe them?

cozy

modern

gorgeous

run down

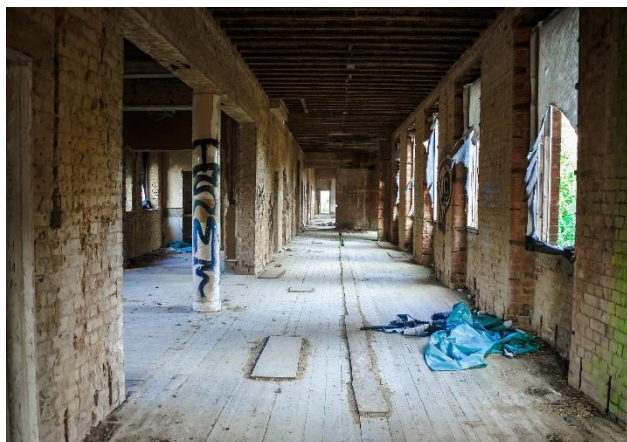
creepy

tacky

fancy

stylish

picturesque





2. In your own words, describe your dream house. Where would it be? Would it be modern or traditional? A mansion or a cottage?



3. You are going to watch a video about 1\$ homes in Italy. The video contains the following phrases. Use the words and phrases to complete the sentences below

|         |           |                 |        |
|---------|-----------|-----------------|--------|
| auction | deter     | abandoned       | stucco |
| rural   | the catch | on the verge of |        |

- a) The state of the house didn't *deter* them from buying it, so now they have a new house.
- b) Some species of rhino are *on the verge of* extinction.
- c) The deal seems too good to be true! What's *the catch*?
- d) The house is nice, but there are a lot of creepy *abandoned* buildings nearby.
- e) The *stucco* is peeling off the stone because it's so old.
- f) Many *rural* areas are struggling because young people tend to leave for bigger cities.
- g) We tried to buy the house at the *auction*, but somebody made a bid that was higher than our top price.



4. Watch the first 5 minutes of the video "[The Truth Behind Italy's \\$1 Homes](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nP2vtDLTAzM)"<sup>1</sup> and answer the questions

- a) Why is the Italian government selling homes for 1 dollar? *To encourage more people to move to the struggling rural areas.*
- b) What are some of the reasons the populations of small Italian towns are shrinking? *Young people leaving for better jobs, and an earthquake in 1968 made many people leave*
- c) What is the town of Molise offering to newcomers in addition to cheap housing? *Paying them 800 dollars a month to set up new businesses in the town*
- d) How did most of the newcomers hear about 1\$ homes? *Online*
- e) Is there a lot of competition for the 1 dollar houses? *Yes, 100,000 bids for 16 houses*

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nP2vtDLTAzM>



### 5. Use the words and phrases in the box to complete the sentences below

|                 |                |               |
|-----------------|----------------|---------------|
| in a heart beat | smear campaign | listing price |
| ground zero     | approved       | rip off       |

- I'd move to France **in a heart beat** if I could. I'd love to live there.
- The **listing price** for the property is \$300,000, but I can negotiate it down.
- 4 dollars for a bottle of water?? What a **rip off**!
- The president ran a **smear campaign** against his competitor, claiming he was untrustworthy and weak.
- The city of Wuhan is **ground zero** for the corona virus.
- The bank finally **approved** the transfer, the money should come through soon.



### 6. Watch the last 5 minutes of the video and answer the questions

- Why did most of the 1 dollar homes in Sambuca end up selling for more than 1 dollar?  
*Because they were sold at auctions, going to the highest bidder*
- What do homeowners have to do to get their security deposit back?  
*Start renovations within a year and complete the renovations within 3 years*
- Does the Scottish woman regret buying a dollar house?  
*No, she says she "would do it again in a heartbeat"*
- Why has coronavirus affected South Italy more (in some ways) than North Italy?  
*Because it has a weaker economy, and so corona has hit it hard economically*
- Would you ever consider buying a 1 dollar home in Italy? Why/why not?



### 7. Ask and answer these questions with a partner.

- Have you ever bought a house? If not, do you think you ever will?
- Do you think real estate in your country is a good investment? Why/why not?
- Have you ever known someone who bought a house and later regretted it?
- What kind of house did you grow up in? What are some details you remember?
- Are there any houses in your city or area that you think are particularly beautiful or ugly? Describe them.