

The Happy Couple's Guide to Investing in Real Estate

Chakib and Jinan Jaber

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When it comes to working with one another in a business venture, many couples might be wary of the negative effects it could have on their relationship. As Chakib and Jinan Jaber suggest in their excellent book, however, sharing a common business goal (in their case, investing in real estate) can actually bring a couple closer together.

The Jabers wanted a long-term investment that was likely to grow in value over the years. They became intrigued with investing in rental properties when they sold a townhouse at a tidy profit. Over the years, they have perfected their investment approach, and they willingly share it in this informative, instructive how-to guide. With a narrative that weaves their own story together with practical advice, the authors cover the gamut: how to save money to invest in real estate, how to research different areas, understanding the motivated seller, financing and pricing, how to negotiate, how to work with outside professionals, closing the deal, getting the properties rented, and tax considerations.

Each chapter starts by highlighting key points and ends with a "Couples' Action Summary," offering helpful tips for how to proceed. The chapters themselves are relatively short, but they're packed with useful information. For example, in "Money Matters: Financing and Pricing Strategies," the authors include their "secret formula" for investing that offers a high-level guideline so that any reader can do a quick evaluation of properties for potential purchase. In "Negotiation Strategies," they provide a chart of negotiation tips with explanations based on their own experience.

Just as important as the information conveyed is the overall tone of the book. The Jabers share details about how they have integrated real estate investing into their family life; for instance, they turn road trips to evaluate properties into excursions with their daughter, Natalie. They even take into consideration Natalie's reaction to a property, calling it "the Natalie Yucky Test." They write, "It may seem silly that we are listening to a three-year-old, but for us it has made the decision-making process more fun and helped us stay closer as a family." This novel perspective makes the book particularly enjoyable to read and lifts it above the typical how-to manual.

In the end, *The Happy Couple's Guide to Investing in Real Estate* is a delightful glimpse into the personal lives of this "happy couple," coupled with good advice and wise counsel so other partners can minimize their risks investing in real estate.

BARRY SILVERSTEIN (December 13, 2012)

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