

VERO BEACH 32963

'Hamptons' alliance seen streamlining high-end market

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PHOTO BY JOSHUA KODIS

Vero Beach has gained a reputation over the past decade as the Hamptons of Florida, because it offers the same kind of serene, seaside getaway for Fort Lauderdale and Palm Beach refugees

that the original Hamptons provide for Manhattan families seeking to escape the urban intensity of New York City.

Now, Premier Estate Properties has established a direct link between the two luxury markets, forming a strategic alliance with Saunders & Associates, which is “the Hamptons’ largest privately owned and operated real estate brokerage,” according to a press release about the partnership.

Premier Estate Properties co-owner Joseph Liguori says the intent of the arrangement is to enhance the flow of real estate information and referrals between his company’s Florida offices and Saunders’ stronghold in the Hamptons, a 200-square mile coastal enclave at the east end of Long Island that has been a playground and summer home haven for wealthy New Yorkers for 150 years.

“The partnership grew from the opportunity to create a seamless experience connecting two highly iconic destinations with a high-net-worth clientele,” Liguori says. “Premier Estate Properties and Saunders & Associates recognized a natural alignment because many of our ultra-high-net-worth clients split time between South Florida and the Hamptons. Both firms share a bespoke approach, concierge-level service, and deep expertise in luxury coastal real estate.”

The two firms are similar in other ways, too. Founded in 1993, Premier operates out of seven offices between Fort Lauderdale and Vero Beach with 50 high-performing agents who have sold more than \$22 billion worth of real estate, including \$4.9 billion in one year during the pandemic boom.

Saunders & Associates, founded in 2008 by company president Andrew Saunders with the slogan “A Higher Form of Realty,” operates out of five offices and has closed more than \$25 billion in sales, including \$1.5 billion in transactions in 2025.

Premier’s Florida listings will now appear on Saunders’ website and vice versa, expanding the pool of potential buyers and sellers for both companies. Between them, the two firms represent more than \$4 billion worth of property.

“The alliance positions both firms to better serve clients who live increasingly multi-market lifestyles,” says Liguori, adding that the firms will share market intelligence and collaborate on marketing initiatives. “We have scheduled joint networking events, strategy meetings, co-branded marketing opportunities, and ongoing communication between agents and leadership teams.”

Although Premier does more volume at its Boca and Palm Beach offices, which are in much larger markets, the Vero Beach office is uniquely positioned to benefit from the alliance because of geography and development trends.

“Honestly, homes and beaches in the estate section are so similar to the Hamptons, it would be hard to tell the difference,” says Liguori. “Vero also has wonderful luxury communities like Windsor and John’s Island, and the Land Trust is doing so much to preserve the natural beauty of the island.”

“The alliance gives our Vero Beach sellers’ properties direct exposure to potential high net worth buyers and agents of Saunders, the leading luxury brokerage in The Hamptons,” says Melissa Talley, a top agent at Premier’s 10-agent Vero Beach office.

“In addition, the partnership creates a more seamless and personalized experience for clients who maintain multi-market lifestyles, allowing for stronger collaboration between agents, more efficient referrals, and a higher level of concierge-style service throughout the buying or selling process,” adds Talley, who told Vero Beach 32963 that she has clients in Vero who own homes in the Hamptons.

“Another important factor [in the inter-agency synergy] is the growing accessibility between New York and Vero Beach, including direct flights into Vero Beach Regional Airport from New York City area airports. This increased convenience is expected to further drive interest from Hamptons buyers looking for a coastal alternative that offers luxury waterfront living, privacy, favorable tax advantages, and a year-round lifestyle. Collectively, the alliance positions our Vero Beach clients to benefit from broader exposure, stronger buyer demand, and enhanced opportunities in the luxury market.”

Liguori says a typical referral from Saunders would be an affluent family who resides in The Hamptons and wants to purchase a Florida home.

“Under the new alliance, a Saunders agent could refer that Hamptons-based client to a Premier Estate Properties agent when the client is looking to buy or sell in South Florida. The agents would collaborate throughout the process identifying suitable properties, coordinating showings, sharing market insights, uncovering opportunities, and guiding the client through the transaction from start to finish.”

In the reverse situation, a Premier Estate Properties client with homes in Manhattan and Palm Beach might mention to his or her Premier agent that he or she is thinking of buying a summer house in the Hamptons.

“Our Vero Beach agents would connect the client with a Saunders & Associates agent who specializes in that Hamptons market and lifestyle,” says Liguori. “The introduction would be highly personalized, ensuring the client feels they are working with a trusted extension of our own firm.

“From there, Saunders would coordinate private property tours, identify on- and off-market opportunities, negotiate the transaction, and manage the process through inspections and closing.

“Throughout the process, both firms would remain in communication to ensure continuity and an exceptional client experience,” says Liguori. “The referral arrangement would typically be handled through a negotiated commission-sharing agreement, with compensation agreed upon between the brokerages in advance.”

Liguori expects opportunities involving investors, land and new construction to emerge from the partnership, along with traditional residential sales, resulting “in a notable increase of both listings and sales in each respective market.”