

# CHARITY & WEISS: Exceptional Real Estate Services With A Global Reach

By Lalaena Gonzalez-Figueroa

When they founded their real estate brokerage in 2006, Gabriele “Gabi” Charity and Ruediger “Rudi” Weiss were establishing a company focused on meeting the needs of a diverse – and demanding – clientele.

With a cache of European clients, the pair recognized the opportunity to assist foreign nationals navigate the complex process of buying, selling and managing properties throughout the coveted Gulf Coast region.

Born and raised in Munich, Germany, Gabi was a seasoned educator by the time she relocated to Sarasota. She and her husband Bruce, a tennis pro originally from New York, came to the area as seasonal visitors. “I had a great-uncle in Sarasota, and we started visiting him here during European winters,” Gabi recalls. “Bruce and I fell in love with the climate, the people, and the lifestyle.” While the couple maintained their residence and professional pursuits in Munich, they purchased a home on Siesta Key, establishing roots that would eventually grow too strong to sever. In 2000 they arrived in Siesta Key for good. By then the couple had amassed a small portfolio of investment properties. “We were renting them out, primarily to Europeans,” Gabi says. “At some point, those renters began to ask about buying their own properties.”

It made sense, she adds, to pursue her license and continue to nurture the relationships she had already established. So in 2001 Gabi launched her real estate career in earnest. It didn’t take long for her business to flourish. “I didn’t intend to become so



extensively involved in real estate,” she acknowledges. “But once I got started, people kept coming to me through referrals. And I love it!”

In 2005 another German national was making his way to the sandy shores of Sarasota. Rudi Weiss left his position as an executive manager in the real estate department of the Dresdner Bank AG in Frankfurt. His corporate-level experience and exceptional client-care skills made him an ideal fit for a career in real estate sales, and he quickly established himself as a knowledgeable professional. By then Gabi had launched her own brokerage and Rudi, who originally joined as an agent, went on to earn his broker’s license and became her professional partner.

CHARITY & WEISS International Realty LLC was founded in 2006, with the launch of Prime Property Management following in 2007. Both

companies are driven by their clients’ evolving wants and needs, and are established on a foundation of outstanding and comprehensive client care.

“Our way of doing business is a little different,” explains Gabi. “Many of our clients are coming into this country without a keen understanding of the language and customs. While some are looking to relocate permanently, others are purchasing vacation homes or investment properties. As such, it’s not uncommon for our clients to spend short amounts of time here, and we’re responsible for getting a lot of business accomplished during those windows.” Their mission, says Gabi, is to partner with their clients in every aspect of real estate, and beyond. “Sometimes we are helping our clients purchase cars, find a doctor, or start a business. We’ve put together a wonderful group of referral partners who are able to assist our clients in achieving many of their objectives.”

At CHARITY & WEISS and Prime Properties the emphasis, says Gabi, “is on quality rather than quantity.” She explains, “Our comprehensive services are designed to make business as easy and stress-free as possible for our clients. We continue to examine every aspect of what we do, and look for opportunities to facilitate a great experience, every time.” This is reflected

in the brokerage’s culturally-diverse population of real estate professionals, its ancillary products (including a German-language tour guide that allows non-native English speakers to enjoy the wealth of amenities that the Sarasota region affords), and the range of real estate services that the brokerage offers. “We sell across the board,” notes Gabi. “From \$100,000 condos to luxury waterfront homes to commercial properties, we are here to work with every client’s unique wants and needs.”

Their brokerage reflects Gabi and Rudi’s commitment to excellence. A boutique firm with an emphasis on personalized and attentive service, CHARITY & WEISS houses a select group of real estate professionals whose values are in alignment. “We don’t view ourselves as a group of competitors,” says Gabi. “It’s critical for our clients that we maintain a collegial and collaborative structure. Everyone here has a tremendous work ethic, a great knowledge of our market, and a desire to provide our clients with the highest level of representation and care.” Because CHARITY & WEISS works with a culturally diverse clientele, the brokerage has become home to an array of languages. “We have agents fluent in German, Swedish, French, Spanish, Czech, Slovak and English,” observes Gabi. “And we are always open to more.”

They are a highly qualified group, the agents and brokers of CHARITY & WEISS, with a list of credentials as long as the coastal region. “Rudi and I are perfectionists,” smiles Gabi as she explains her passion for ongoing education. “Whatever we do, we want to do it well.” Through classes and seminars, she says, CHARITY & WEISS’s agents are upholding their commitments to excellence, and to providing their clients with qualified and knowledgeable services. “It’s an investment,” she acknowledges. “A worthwhile investment.” With greater knowledge comes greater power; this became evident in Gabi’s public campaign to improve canal access rights in one local neighborhood. “I’m unhappy when people aren’t treated fairly,” she asserts. “When my husband and I realized that we had limited access



to a canal within our community, we decided to do something about it.” The five-year process that ensued wasn’t an easy one, but Gabi’s initiative ultimately prevailed, and community residents were granted rights to their shoreline and boat dock. “This helped increase our property values, quality of life and has contributed to the beautification of our neighborhood,” she says proudly. “It was worth the fight.”

Rudi’s passion for real estate has taken a different path; his amiable personality and professional know-how have earned him a spot as one of the featured Realtors on HGTV’s “House Hunters” show airing in Germany. Gabi, too, has appeared on the show. In December, Rudi completed the first segment of a new German TV show called “Goodbye Deutschland”.

The second segment will film this spring in Sarasota. In the summer, a new format for the German HGTV show will start filming concentrating on luxury properties. Look for Rudi there too.

Their brokerage continues to thrive, and Gabi offers an interesting perspective on her professional relationship with Rudi. “A business partnership is like a marriage,” she says. “It’s not always easy. Rudi and I come from different backgrounds and approaches, but we share a similar vision, and a commitment to conducting ourselves with the highest standards of ethics, quality and service. As we grow, we will continue to build upon what brought us together in the first place: real estate solutions for an international clientele.”



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