

We serve warning on timeshare rat

Penman & Sommerlad 11/10/2007

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Timeshare rodent Mark Walker was planning to eat two holidaymakers for breakfast.

But after we turned up, he was left with egg all over his face.

Londoners Demetri and Pat Demetriou fell into Walker's clutches after paying the European Timeshare Owners Organisation £530 to sell their Canary Islands timeshare.

"A couple of weeks later, the firm phoned to say it had a definite buyer," said Demetri. "As things appeared to be going well, I let them try to sell my other timeshare in Cyprus."

That meant another £530.

Then everything went quiet until earlier this year, when ETOO rang with more exciting news of a "definite buyer".

Another £850 was needed - apparently to guarantee that the couple would surrender their ownership certificates. But this would be refunded on completion.

Demetri succumbed when ETOO promised that a corporate buyer was waiting to meet him in Portugal. So he paid and booked flights for himself and Pat.

But shortly before he was due to fly, it turned out that he'd be expected to attend a presentation. Far from meeting a buyer, it looked like he'd wasted more money to endure a hard sell.

So he contacted us - and our colleague Ryan Parry tagged along, posing as a friend of Demetri and Pat.

In the resort of Albufeira the three were met by pinstriped Walker, a man with a fondness for bracelets and chunky signet rings.

Over a full English, he dropped a bombshell... Walker wasn't from ETOO at all but from another outfit that Demetri had never heard of called Club Class Concierge.

"You know, like business class on the plane," he said, adding that it was a subsidiary of British Airways (which is rot).

So what about the promised buyer for Demetri's timeshare?

"Your timeshare is worthless, you won't be able to sell it and you'll just be lumbered with the maintenance payments," said Walker. "But I can help you..."

This "help" turned out to be an offer to take the timeshares - bought for £32,000 - off their hands for nothing.

At this point, Ryan revealed that he was from the Mirror and asked whether ETOO and Club Class Concierge really were separate businesses.

After all, how did a rep for Club Class know that Demetri and Pat were clients of ETOO unless the two were linked?

Walker, who suddenly seemed to go off his food, stormed: "You can p*** off!"

Ryan: "You're ripping these people off, have you got anything to say?"

Walker: "No." As he stalked away, the restaurant's clientele burst into applause.

Demetri said: "We have resigned ourselves to the fact that we are unlikely to get our money back but justice has been done by the Mirror exposing this."

Later, spokesman Peter Baker confirmed that ETOO and Club Class were part of the same outfit. He admitted that there was no buyer waiting and instead the couple had flown to a holiday club presentation.

He said Walker worked for a sub-contracted marketing firm, adding: "We've had a few rogue telemarketers. About 80 people, we believe, have been totally misrepresented and we've taken action to give refunds."

In the case of Demetri and Pat there had been "some sort of system failure" and they'll get the last payment of £850 returned.

He tried to rip off couple as he scoffed breakfast

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