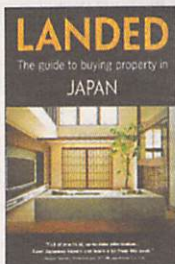


the Review

SUNDAY MORNING POST APRIL 18, 2010

NON-FICTION Charmaine Chan



Landed
by Christopher
Dillon
Dillon
Communications
HK\$659
★★★★☆

Articles about
real-estate
bargains in Japan

may have whetted your appetite. This book will weed out the hassle-averse by outlining the many hurdles in buying property there; for instance, a piece of land can have four valid prices and search costs top an average of one million yen (HK\$83,000) for a used property because the real-estate markets are so opaque. However, those who have their hearts set will appreciate the author's research, handholding and step-by-step descriptions of the process. And there are deals to be had, especially in rural areas, although as Christopher Dillon points out, many *gaijin*-friendly banks will lend on only urban property. He adds that rural economies will suffer if the Hatoyama administration goes ahead with its plan to cancel large infrastructure projects, which could lead to hospital and school closures. What (not) to buy is useful: apart from the obvious such as avoiding areas near active earthquake fault lines, he cautions against condos associated with architect Hidetsugu Aneha and homes built before construction standards were improved in 1981.