

Making the move a little easier

Moving house can be a stressful activity but when it also involves moving country, there are a host of other complications. TRACY ROTH-ROTSAS speaks to one woman who aims to make it easier for others

IT'S ALWAYS a daunting process moving house, let alone moving country. Apart from the basic necessities of finding the right house in the right area, getting the utilities connected and getting transport sorted, there is also the challenge of finding new friends, getting to know the way things work on a local level and, of course, unpacking. If you've got kids as well, then there are schools to worry about, bookshops to find and coping with their anxieties in addition to your own.

However, there is a company that can help with all this and more. Acklimatise is a relatively new relocation company, which started up in the summer of 2005, is based in Limassol and offers a full range of services to aid in the smooth relocation of an individual, family or even company to Limassol. It is run and directed by the articulate and softly-spoken Carine Khoury, born of a German mother

and Lebanese father, who fled from Lebanon to Greece due to the war. As a result, Carine grew up in Athens. Amazingly enough, she speaks Greek, German, English, French, Italian and Arabic... fluently! She studied hotel management in Switzerland and has under her belt 15 years' experience. Carine feels that she's an ideal person to help people with the transition of moving country as she herself has lived in nine different countries (due mostly to relocation for work purposes) and fully understands the difficulties that are posed when moving, in particular, to Cyprus where there is very little on-going assistance. Even with her own relocation here to Limassol posed "some challenges", Carine said that although there were agencies happy to help with certain areas - mostly the real estate/housing aspect - when she researched relocating, there seemed to be no-one offering help with the broader scope involved with moving. And definitely none that offered impartial advice.

She is adamant that her company remain a third par-

ty to the relocation process, offering an unbiased range of options. Carine is quick to emphasise that Acklimatise is not affiliated with any companies, so can offer neutral advice based on the best value and suitability for its clients - quite a plus in a country where "you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours" is pretty much the way of life.

She has broken down the process of moving and relocating into several different "categories" and her clients can choose which they require as and when they need. In fact, there are eight different programmes available. The "Pre-Move Orientation Program" includes briefing on rental costs, commuting, schools, banking, medical information, recreational facilities, shopping and has the option for an initial familiarisation and orientation tour around Limassol - particularly good for people who are moving for work purposes and have never been to Limassol before. The "Housing Research Program" involves the search and pre-selection of properties, scheduling of appointments, accompaniment of home viewing, advice on property choice and lease negotiations assistance. The "Welcome and Settling-In Program" covers home check-in, utility connection, assistance with purchase of key household items and car, opening of bank accounts and insurance information as well as a personalised welcome pack including aspects of daily life. The "Family Support Program" concentrates on advice on kindergarten/schooling options, offers accompanied visits and assistance with admissions as well as consultancy on leisure and entertainment activities for spouses and children. The "Administrative Formalities Program" provides assistance with resident permit, work permit and driver's licence applications as well as handling of certified translations. Particularly for busier or older

clients, the "Ongoing Follow-Through Program" offers help running errands, plant watering, grocery shopping etc... and the "RedPhone Helpline" provides access to the Acklimatise information and research desk which is available

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on a weekly or monthly basis via subscription. There's even a "Departure Assistance Program" for if your stay was temporary, involving moving out, disconnection of utilities, and mail forwarding! In addition she has recently in-

troduced a "Home Management & Concierge Program" which encompasses the day-to-day running of properties in the owners' absence as well as attention to tasks such as ensuring the car is filled with petrol or installing flyscreen doors.

For companies, there are three packages: for singles, couples and families, comprising two or more of each of these categories.

Prices vary depending on what the client wants and needs and all packages ultimately end up being tailor-made, even if they are based on the programme guidelines.

Plans to expand to other major towns such as Nicosia and Paphos are in the pipeline, though not currently established. Should you wish to find out more or obtain a quote, Carine has set up a fairly comprehensive and easily-navigated website which outlines all the services offered by her company in detail.

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Acklimatise is run and directed by Carine Khoury

