



Why Is Rent So High?

The Abuja Question Everyone Is Asking

If you have searched for a house in Abuja recently, you may have experienced the same shock many other residents are talking about.

A house that used to feel reasonably priced now comes with a figure that requires serious planning. Then there are agency fees, legal fees, caution deposits, service charges and other expenses that can turn the advertised rent into a much larger financial commitment. So the question many Abuja residents are asking is simple.

Why has renting in Abuja become so expensive?

The answer is not just that landlords are increasing prices. Abuja's housing market is being affected by several things at the same time, including rising construction costs, strong demand, limited supply in some locations and the growing cost of maintaining properties.

BusinessDay reported in July 2026 that Abuja's rental crisis had deepened, with low and middle income households facing rising rents alongside additional charges from landlords and agents. The report noted that these costs were consuming an increasing share of household income. For someone looking for a home today, this is not just a statistic. It is a monthly reality.

What People Are Actually Seeing

The numbers help explain why the conversation has become so intense.

Nigeria Property Centre's Q3 2026 market report placed Abuja's median asking rent at about ₦13.5 million per year across its tracked listings. Its figures also showed a median asking price of ₦320 million for property for sale nationally across the markets covered, while Abuja recorded a gross rental yield of up to 7.5 percent for certain two bedroom properties.

Of course, these figures do not mean every Abuja resident is paying ₦13.5 million for rent. Abuja is a large market with enormous differences between districts, property types and neighbourhoods. A person looking for a home in Maitama is not facing the same market as someone searching in Lugbe. A tenant looking for a serviced apartment is not making the same decision as someone looking for a modest family house.

That difference is important because one of the biggest mistakes people make is discussing "Abuja rent" as though every part of the city operates at the same price level.

Demand Is Part of the Problem

There is another side of the equation that renters sometimes do not see.

Demand is strong in several parts of Abuja.

The latest Nigeria Property Centre demand data, covering September 17 to October 1, 2026, recorded more than 62,000 property searches in Abuja. It found that Lugbe had 11.3 rental searches for every live listing, while Kubwa recorded 10.8 and Idu Industrial recorded 10.5.

That tells us something important.

When many people are looking for homes in an area and there are fewer suitable properties available, landlords have greater pricing power.

This is one reason a tenant may call several agents, inspect multiple houses and still struggle to find something that matches their budget.

One Abuja property seeker shared a similar experience online while documenting an attempt to purchase property. The person began with a budget of ₦65 million to ₦75 million but encountered properties being presented at ₦100 million to ₦130 million and, in one case, an agent suggesting a much higher minimum budget. The buyer also described seeing properties that did not match the photographs or descriptions used to advertise them. This is an individual experience rather than a representative market survey, but it illustrates the frustration many buyers and renters can experience when advertised prices and actual options do not match.

Is Renting Still the Better Option?

This is where the conversation becomes more personal.

Renting is not automatically a bad financial decision.

For someone who is relocating, uncertain about where they want to settle, building a business or saving for a future property purchase, renting can provide flexibility.

The problem begins when rent keeps consuming a large portion of income without a longer term housing strategy.

Someone who has paid rent for several years may eventually start asking another question.

At what point does paying rent become less attractive than owning something?

There is no universal answer because property prices, income, financing costs, location and personal circumstances are different.

But the question is worth asking.

If a person is already spending a significant amount every year to remain in Abuja, they may want to examine whether part of their long term housing budget could eventually be directed toward acquiring land or property.

Buying Does Not Mean Buying a Mansion

One misconception about property ownership is that the first step must be buying a completed house.



It does not.

For some people, the more realistic starting point may be land.

Land banking allows an investor to acquire land and hold it while an area develops. The objective is generally long term appreciation rather than immediate rental income.

This can be relevant to Abuja because the city continues to expand, although investors still need to understand the location, title, development prospects and risks before committing money.

The important point is that property ownership does not have to begin with a ₦200 million house.

It can begin with understanding what you can realistically afford and choosing an asset and payment structure that fits your financial position.

What Should You Do Now?

If your rent has increased, do not make your next decision purely out of frustration.

Look at your income. Look at your current rent. Look at your other housing expenses. Look at where you expect to live over the next five or ten years.

Then ask yourself a different question.

Am I only trying to afford my next rent, or am I also building toward owning property?

That question can change the way you approach the Abuja housing market.

The market may be expensive, but the solution is not necessarily to rush into buying the first property you see. It is to understand your options, compare locations, examine payment structures and make decisions based on proper information.

How De Velli Can Help

De Velli helps buyers explore structured real estate opportunities in Abuja, including land ownership and flexible property options. Start by understanding what fits your budget and your long term plans.