

DEL Condominium Life

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Artist's concept

CONDO "CASITAS"

A brand new concept in affordable luxury

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DESIGNED BY POPULAR DEMAND

by Sharon McHaney

A new development in the evolution of condominium living has come to Toronto. As a response to a shortage of economically viable condominiums for the first-time buyer in today's real estate market, Tridel has created the Casita. Designed for all stages of life from "single" to a young growing family to mature "empty-nester" couples, the casita provides a condominium lifestyle that features the benefits of a high-rise with the atmosphere of a townhome.

A casita is, by definition, a "small home". These innovative small homes range in height from one to three storeys and feature both two and three bedroom floorplans. They are constructed in small blocks of twelve to sixteen back-to-back homes. While each type of casita has its own distinct entrance and appearance, the overall impression of each cluster is that of a large estate home.

Representing a marriage between standard low-rise wood construction and high-rise concrete construction principles, Tridel has used its extensive experience in the condominium field to give each casita community several advantages not typically found in ground-related building. One of the most distinctive of these

advantages is an underground parking facility which runs beneath the entire community. This feature eliminates the need for a garage and driveway in front of each home, giving the community a more sophisticated appearance. The land that would normally be assigned to the vehicular space has been transformed into a private landscaped front yard and patio. The removal of individual parking at the surface level for the residents of this community also means a quieter, safer neighbourhood. All owner traffic is directed immediately into the underground facility, leaving only the visitors access to the above ground parking spaces located along the interior roadways.

In most instances the casitas will also include access from this underground parking area into each home by way of a corridor system. This corridor becomes the convenience entrance for the residents - leaving the front door as a formal receiving area for family and friends.

Another important advantage for each casita community will be the high level of security. Recognizing the importance of security to today's home buyers, Tridel has incorporated many security features typical to their



high-rise condominiums into the casitas. As well as perimeter fencing around the entire community, a manned gatehouse will be in place to monitor all access. Cameras will be installed in strategic points throughout the parking garage and the images they record will be observed by the gatehouse

security officer. The advances in security technology have given Tridel the opportunity to incorporate a new system of electrically activated alarms within the parking area in some communities. When activated, these modules will focus the nearest surveillance camera on the resident and communication is opened between the security officer and the resident. Of course, the security features don't stop there! Every casita is individually equipped with an intrusion alarm system.

The quality of all Tridel condominium communities is easily

that is over 90% energy efficient. Air-conditioning will be provided in the summer without the noise and wasted space usually associated with townhome and detached housing. These unpleasant aspects will be eliminated by placing the air-conditioning unit in the parking facility well out of the sight and hearing of the home owner. Individual utility metering will allow the residents to benefit from conscientious energy consumption.

Of course, the best advantage to these visionary homes is their designers, the people who will

their scrutiny, comments and suggestions. Tridel continued these group discussions until their original plans had evolved into the present casita designs. Things fundamental to the home owners, such as bedroom placement, closet space, bathroom design and kitchen size, were refined and redesigned to reflect how these areas would be used by a typical family.

The first casita community released to the public for sale is a testament to the expertise of these special designers. Casitas at Plaza del Sol, a community of 124 condominium homes located on Steeles Avenue just west of Bathurst Street, sold out in just over four weeks. The success of this community does not mark the end of customer involvement in design for Tridel, it marks the beginning. Tridel recognizes that each community has its own character and its own requirements, so it will continue to consult the most important experts in the field, the people who will live in the homes.

Recently, Tridel released the casitas at Discovery Place in Pickering. If you would like further information on this location, please call 420-1890. The office is open Monday to Thursday, from 12 noon to 8 p.m. and Friday through Sunday, from 12 noon to 6 p.m.

Several casita communities are planned for the Toronto area and Tridel will be looking for more input. If you would like to participate in one of their discussions groups and help plan a casita community, please contact the Tridel Hotline at 661-9394 (Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.)



recognized in the casita concept. Most casita designs feature skylights to allow natural light to spill through the entire home. On the more practical side, each home will be individually heated and air-conditioned. When the weather turns cool, the casita will be heated by a forced air gas-fired heating system

eventually live in them. Before Tridel began to sell this new innovation to condominium living, it took the initiative to present its plans to groups of consumers who are presently interested in purchasing a home. The total community plan and each individual floorplan were presented to these groups for