

## **Buyers seek Island lifestyle**

**Kathy McCormick, Calgary Herald**  
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Piece of Paradise : Victoria Area

Some of the Victoria area's newest developments have everything a recreation or investment buyer could want, and then some.

And it's all centred around lifestyle, says Dale Sproule, director of real estate for Bear Mountain Victoria, one of the largest resort communities in the area.

"All clients continue to look towards golf, hiking, biking, the athletic club and spa experiences as a motivating factor," he says. "Another factor, of course, is that as we build out our retail village, we become more and more like Whistler -- and this small-town atmosphere is very attractive."

Bear Mountain will have nearly 3,350 residences by completion, including everything from large estate lots of \$1.2 to \$1.7 million to homesites, townhomes and condominiums, as well as executive fractional ownership in the \$189,000 to \$299,000 range for one-quarter shares.

"Our most popular product is condominiums in the \$500,000 to \$600,000 range and homes over \$1 million," says Sproule.

The development contains Canada's first and only 36-hole, Jack Nicklaus-designed golf course and academy. Minutes from downtown Victoria, the community sits on a 526-hectare mountainside with both ocean and mountain views.

The village has specialty shops, coffee houses, art galleries, boutiques, and bistros. It is also near The Westin Bear Mountain Victoria Golf Resort and Spa on site. Check the website at [www.bearmountain.ca](http://www.bearmountain.ca).

Other projects in and around Victoria include:

### **Juliet**

Located near Victoria's downtown on the corner of Johnson and Blanshard streets, the 15-storey concrete building has a mix of 96 condo units with ground-level retail.

Just 12 suites are left, with one-bedroom models from \$299,900 and two-bedroom units from \$429,900.

The building features a rooftop patio with views of the inner harbour, a view telescope, zen garden and private outdoor movie theatre.

Construction is underway, with scheduled completion by November.

The developer is Chard Development Ltd. Visit [www.julietliving.com](http://www.julietliving.com) for further information.

## **Dockside Green**

Developed by Windmill West -- a partnership with Joe Van Belleghem and Three Point Properties -- with partner Vancity Credit Union, Dockside Green is aiming to become the first LEED platinum community in the world. LEED stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design.

It's an international program that aims to create sustainable, energy efficient buildings.

Dockside Green has been designed with many eco-friendly materials, designs and techniques that have already captured the attention of buyers and has won many awards.

The development has features that include onsite sewage treatment, rooftop gardens, and car sharing for residents.

Located on a six-hectare reclamation site in Victoria's harbour, it will have about 2,500 people by completion. The first condominium building, Synergy, is now open and the next phase, Balance, is set to open in February. It has one- and two-bedroom condos, townhomes and garden flats with features such as natural bamboo flooring, Energy Star appliances, and motion-sensing light switches.

Units in Balance are priced from \$389,900 to \$1.23 million, while the remaining units in Synergy are priced from \$574,900 to \$829,000. Visit [www.docksidegreen.com](http://www.docksidegreen.com).

### **Oak Bay Beach Hotel and Discovery Club**

Developed by Walker Hospitality, the old hotel was a landmark in the area.

The new site has been rebuilt along the same lines, with some of the treasured memorabilia from the old site preserved for the new.

Scheduled to open in 2010, it will be Victoria's only luxury hotel and private residence. It will have 100 hotel suites and 20 full-ownership residences.

Prices in the vacation hotel suites are \$385,000 to \$1.2 million, while private residences start at \$1 million. Discovery Club membership starts at \$175,000.

The Discovery Club will allow members to purchase strata ownership in the form of room nights at Oak Bay Beach Hotel, or more than 16,000 affiliated hotels and travel spots around the world.

Amenities include 24-hour butler and room service, a full-service spa, theatre space, pub, cafe, fine dining, and hot mineral pools.

Visit [www.oakbaybeachhotel.com](http://www.oakbaybeachhotel.com).

### **Chelsea**

Minutes from the Cook Street Village and close to Beacon Hill Park in the Fairfield neighbourhood, Chelsea is the third condo project by Concert Properties.

The development is a six-storey, luxury concrete building containing units of 1,046 square feet and up. Amenities include a private residents club, fitness studio, and gated underground parking.

Prices are from \$595,000 to \$1.5 million and 15 suites are still available.

Seventy per cent of the homes were purchased by Albertans who bought with the intention to use the units as a pied-a-terre for the time being -- and as a future home for retirement.

Of these buyers, 80 per cent were Calgarians.

The fourth residential condominium development by Concert is 365 Waterfront in the Selkirk community on the upper inner harbour.

One-quarter of the units have sold and once the construction is complete in June, the remaining units will be back on the market. For information on Chelsea, visit [www.ChelseaVictoria.com](http://www.ChelseaVictoria.com).

### **Bishops Walk and Bishops Green**

Located near Vancouver Island on coveted Saltspring Island, Bishops Walk is an enclave of 29 Gulf island estates of 0.3 hectares each.

It's just minutes from Ganges Village and its open air market, artisan shops, and services and conveniences. Lots are priced from \$275,000 to \$500,000.

Bishops Green is adjacent to Ganges Village, and is a collection of two- and three-bedroom townhomes of more than 2,000 square feet containing high-end finishes.

Only three homes remain for sale at prices from \$599,000 to \$699,000.

Developed by Three Point Properties, the development is on 11.33 hectares of land on the slopes of Mount Belcher. Visit [www.bishopswalksaltspringisland.com](http://www.bishopswalksaltspringisland.com) and [www.bishopsgreensaltspringisland.com](http://www.bishopsgreensaltspringisland.com).