

The Creek rising on the waterfront

Occupants of Voda at The Creek will enjoy a prime Vancouver location

BY CLAUDIA KWAN, SPECIAL TO THE SUN AUGUST 13, 2015



The team at BBA Design Consultants filled Voda's show suite with soothing neutral tones.

Photograph by: Jenelle Schneider, PNG

When it came time to develop one of the last remaining parcels of waterfront land in Vancouver, Concert Properties saw opportunity where others might have seen a massive challenge.

Over the course of four years, it negotiated with both TransLink and the City of Vancouver to assemble the property now known as The Creek. Sales for the first of five buildings — Voda — began in July.

“It was a chance to accelerate the build-out of (the Olympic) Athletes Village and push through along Quebec Street, as well as create more park space, which is in high demand in Vancouver,” says Brian McCauley, president and chief operating officer of Concert. “We are also delivering 135 units of rental housing as part of the plan.”

Concert has taken on projects involving both market and rental housing across Canada. But given the location on the southeast shore of False Creek, Concert boasts on The Creek's website that the project is “quintessentially Vancouver.”

Once Voda is complete in three years, residents will be able to walk or bike along the seawall, or go sailing or kayaking at any given moment. They will also be able to picnic at the park, or engage in a

long list of recreation activities at the Creekside Community Centre.

There is a long list of restaurants and amenities available in the immediate surrounding neighbourhood, and plenty a short distance away in Yaletown, Chinatown and Mount Pleasant.

McCauley believes the area around the Olympic Village is now showing signs of maturation.

“The other day I was biking back to the office, and I saw people using the park, and dragon boaters on the water,” he says. “There was such incredible vibrancy. It’s quite different from three or four years ago.”

Voda is offering a broad range of unit sizes. Concert believes they will be attractive to first-time homebuyers, move-up buyers, families and downsizers. Later buildings in the development will involve even larger homes in a bid to appeal to those looking for some luxury.

With spectacular views of the cityscape, sea and mountains available, the team at BBA Design Consultants opted for homes that incorporated both classic and contemporary elements in neutral tones.

“We’ve been seeing increasing demand for that from consumers — they don’t want to move into a new home and then have to redo a kitchen or bathroom just a few years later,” BBA senior designer Jennifer Brown says. “We wanted decor touches that were distinctive without being too dominant.”

In the show suite kitchen, that means a wall of millwork sheathed in white acrylic. It is still shiny, but subtler and less high-maintenance than the high-gloss cabinetry commonly seen in many other developments. A decorative wooden detail around some of the cabinets is meant to feel like a picture frame; it is echoed by a chrome frame around the microwave. The wooden frame is mirrored in reverse in the bathroom vanities, with a gable limned in white over the wood-tone drawer fronts.

The hood fan cover blends in with the kitchen millwork, as it’s been installed in exactly the same colour. The large-format tiles used in both the kitchen backsplash and bathrooms continue the modular look of the cabinetry, and appear to be almost seamless. The designers opted to stay away from too many varying textures in permanent fixtures.

“A lot of texture can date a look. You can easily add it and colour through accessories that are easily changed out,” Brown says.

“It’s a much less stressful way to live.”

The design team made it a priority to make living spaces flexible. They believe residents will be able to entertain easily both inside and out, on the generously sized balconies. Since there is no obvious focal point in the show suite living room — it has not been designed around a television, for instance — the room is truly multi-purpose.

A television has instead been placed in a den, which can be closed off completely by a door, allowing a viewer to thoroughly enjoy a program without outside noise intruding. The den could also host an

overnight guest if needed.

Since it incorporates both rental and a wide range of market housing, consulting architect Richard Henry believes The Creek will be a microcosm of the city — essentially, it will be a village within a village. Young and old, renters and buyers, first-time buyers and downsizers — he says they will all come from different parts of the life cycle. Deep consideration was put into enlivening the building.

“The grade-oriented units in particular take advantage of pedestrian circulation. The proximity to various amenities is ideal. This is such a walking neighbourhood,” Henry says.

He also wanted to pay homage to the industrial history of the neighbourhood. A pedestrian walkway known as Railspur Mews connects the site to public areas, and is illuminated by lights suspended from an intricate system of steel cables.

Voda includes designated electric-vehicle charging stations, parking for three car-share vehicles, and parking for bicycles. A designated sorting lounge will make on-site composting and recycling simpler. The building has been constructed to a LEED gold standard.

“These are real homes being built for real people, as opposed to investors,” McCauley says. “We think Voda and The Creek are going to be an important piece in continuing the growth of this neighbourhood.”

Project: Voda at The Creek

Project size: 174 homes, including seven townhomes, in a 16-storey concrete building. Five buildings in total

Project location: 1661 Quebec St.

Residence size: One bedroom 446 to 667 square feet, two bedrooms 722 to 1,184 square feet, two bedrooms plus den 1,062 to 1,488 square feet, townhomes 1,006 to 1,248 square feet

Prices: One-bedrooms from \$329,900, two-bedrooms from \$539,900, two-bedrooms-plus-den from \$879,900, townhomes from \$799,900

Developer: Concert Properties

Architect: Rafii Architects Inc. in collaboration with Richard Henry Architects Inc.

Interior design: BBA Design Consultants Inc.

Sales centre: 1551 Quebec St.

Hours: Noon to 6 p.m., Saturday to Thursday

Telephone: 604-681-8282

Website: thecreekbyconcert.com

Sales began: July

Occupancy: Summer 2018

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Previous

Next



Two bed and two bath show suite at The Creek in Vancouver.

Photograph by: Jenelle Schneider, PNG

