

Ex-Calgarians find laid-back life in Mexico

Purchase unit in 50-plus Luma complex on Pacific Ocean

BY MARTY HOPE, CALGARY HERALD MAY 15, 2010

For nearly six months per year, former Calgarians Brad and Marlene Lay live on manana time.

The couple have been spending their winters on the beach along the Bay of Banderas for a few years now, totally getting into the laid-back Mexican lifestyle.

Manana time refers to getting around to something by and by, rather than being a slave to the clock.

Just a little over two years ago, the Lays decided to upgrade their vacation home digs and put down a deposit on a 2,700-square-foot, two-bedroom condo just up the beach.

They have taken possession of a unit in a spanking-new beachfront adult development called Luma.

The one-, two-, and three-bedroom suites in the first tower feature ceilings as high as 13 feet, along with window walls and large terraces.

Kitchens have high-end appliances, granite countertops and tile floors, laundry room, large closets and storage. Prices run from \$537,000 US for a one-bedroom-plus-den unit to \$2 million for a penthouse.

Located on the Pacific Ocean coast in Nuevo Vallarta, Luma is the first American-developed beachfront community in Mexico that also offer full-ownership for active adults.

It is part of the larger Paradise Village project, a 176-hectare resort development a 15-minute drive north of the Puerto Vallarta airport.

Luma will be an enclave of 10-storey towers that have been designed and located so that each condominium has views of the ocean to the west and the mountains to the east.

The first tower has

opened for occupancies, the second will be ready later this year and there are plans for a third tower.

Back from Mexico early this year, the Lays are busy renovating the circa-1947 home they bought in Vernon, B.C., about a year ago.

They have sold their Calgary home, but maintain a condo here for their children, who are attending U of C.

"We bought in Vernon for the same reason we bought in Mexico -- the climate," says Brad, the semi-retired owner of a Medicine Hat-based gravel-crushing company.

"I'm originally a Saskatchewan boy; I know about dry and cold winters. So we go to Mexico where it's warm and humid."

Besides the climate, the Lays have found an enjoyable social life and can count other Canadians, Americans, and Mexicans as friends.

"Our social life is busier than at home," says Brad. "We have friends in, go out for dinner, and play golf and tennis."

The fact that everybody in the development is age 50 or older means they will have plenty in common.

But Luma is about more than just mai tais, margaritas and cerveza. It's also big into offering a healthy lifestyle.

The architecture, amenities and landscape are designed with a focus on well-being, says Front Porch Development Co., partner in Luma. The company aims to follow an all-encompassing approach to wellness that involves both mind and spirit as well as body.

To this end, Luma's fitness centre looks at the ocean, while garden pathways criss-cross the property.

There are also personal trainers and masseurs, as well as a varied selection of fitness activities to suit anyone.

Luma's beachfront common spaces will include a beach bar and bistro, a Pilates and yoga centre and saltwater infinity pools.

There will also be a bocce court, sports/game room, library, large meeting room and a panoramic terrace with views of the Pacific Ocean.

Local artwork will grace Luma's common spaces and complement the Pacific setting.

Emphasis will be placed on preserving the plant and animal life native to Nuevo Vallarta.

Residents also have the opportunity to join a nearby sea turtle preservation and protection effort at the site of an historic nesting area.

Luma's location within the Paradise Village resort area -- an established English-speaking enclave with restaurants, hotels, marina, sports and spa facilities -- gives residents easy access to championship golf, boating and fishing, as well as shopping.

The Paradise Village shopping mall features 100 stores ranging from supermarkets to artisan boutiques and is within walking distance from Luma.

THE BUYERS

Brad and Marlene Lay.

AGE: 50-plus. BACKGROUND: The Mays wanted to get away from winter, so they purchased a condo in the first Luma Tower a year ago and have just returned from their first winter there. It was the climate that was the big drawing card for them. As well, they enjoy the lifestyle offered to

them in the age 50-plus development. They have sold their Calgary home and now reside in Vernon, B.C.

|WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

PROJECT: Luma. The first 10-storey tower is complete, with occupancies taking place. A second will be ready for later this year and there are plans for a third. Floor plans come in one-, two-, and three-bedroom layouts with top-end finishings. DEVELOPER: Desarrollos Comerciales y Habitacionales

Vallarta, a partnership of U.S.-based Front Porch Development Co. and Mexico-based Grupo Krone.

PRICES: Full-ownership condos are priced from \$537,000 to \$2 million US. LOCATION: Luma is part of Paradise Village, which is located in Nuevo Vallarta, Mexico.

INFORMATION: Visit www.lumaliving.com,

or call 1-866-554-5862.

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