



Greata expectations

A perfect pairing—life among the vines

There is undoubtedly a certain romance involved in having a vineyard right in your backyard and tasting the first wines of the season—a dream lifestyle for many. Greata Ranch offers such a concept set amidst forty acres of vines, bordering Okanagan Lake just south of Peachland in British Columbia. The proposed 400 lakefront townhomes, villas, and residences are the result of a partnership between Concord Pacific Group Inc. (known for CityPlace in Toronto) and the Fitzpatrick family (owners of Cedar Creek Estate Winery and headed by Senator Ross Fitzpatrick).

We were invited to the preliminary unveiling of the display suite; and as we drove up to the Ranch located on the famed Highway 97 wine route, lavender dispersed alongside the picturesque lake wafted through the summer air. The beautiful setting has seduced many as Senior Vice President of Concord Pacific David Negrin remarks, “The first time I walked onto the property, I knew this is where Concord Pacific wanted to be.”

During our visit, the ground was being readied for construction set to begin in the summer of 2008. We got a sneak peak at the interior of the Infinity Villas—sleek, modern design with Mediterranean influence, wine cellar, and state-of-the-art kitchen complete with temperature-regulated wine fridge are some of the features that further enhance the food and wine marriage Greata Ranch is creating. Also planned for the area is a show-stopping infinity pool.

Vineyard living is part of a larger trend in lifestyle where food, wine, and good living mix. To inaugurate the event, Corrie Krehbiel, winemaker at Greata Ranch, offered a first tasting of Chardonnay directly from the French oak cask—powerfully fragrant with banana notes. Wine has become integral to the grand life and is a cornerstone of cultural activities. Chef Geoffery Couper of Cedar Creek says, “Our

idea is to have a culinary work centre here, so you can have lessons and tie it in amongst the vines. There’s nothing better than taking people out on a mushroom hunt and come back to teach residents to make a mushroom fettuccine.” Plans for Greata Ranch include a health club, restaurant, marina (and accompanying beach), and local corner grocery store. All will form a true sense of community.

The preview event showcased the Fitzpatrick’s commitment to family and community as the Senator’s grandchildren played on the patio and son Gordon Fitzpatrick, president of Cedar Creek Estate Winery, spoke about his family’s ties to the region. “My father remembers trucking fruit down to Oliver with his father and spending his youth in the Okanagan.”

From the lavish barbecue served to the relaxing ripples of the cool water at the beach, the vineyard harmoniously serves as a backdrop to Greata Ranch. Senator Fitzpatrick envisions, “. . . preserving the rich history and highlighting the importance of agriculture to the region. My highest priority for Greata Ranch is to balance agriculture with housing to create a community.”

—KAILASH MAHARAJ & SHIVANA MAHARAJ