

Calgarians keep Island escape

BY KATHY MCCORMICK, CALGARY HERALD JUNE 3, 2011



The Shore in Tofino on Vancouver Island is being undertaken by a group of Calgarians in Moss Development Inc.

Photograph by: Courtesy, Moss Development Inc.

It wasn't supposed to end up this way.

After visiting Vancouver Island and falling in love with the area, Jo Brar and Harpreet Virdee of Calgary decided to buy a penthouse in The Shore in Tofino, B.C., as an investment.

"When we took possession of our place, we had it in mind to sell it," says Brar, an entrepreneur who owns a film-production company.

"But as soon as we landed in the water in front of our building and parked the plane and walked into the condo, it took our breath away.

"Now, we're keeping it as an escape as long as possible, if not forever."

The 31-unit luxury resort condo is in Tofino, Canada's favourite pristine oceanfront location on Vancouver Island's northwestern edge.

It is being developed by Moss Development Inc., a partnership of Calgarians who fell in love with the area.

They include Mark Burkart, who grew up on Vancouver Island, and Walker McKinley (who, together with Burkart, are Calgary-based architects with McKinley Burkart), Tom Olsen and Rene Rutz.

The company saw an opportunity to create a luxury resort on the site of a derelict fish-packing plant that had been sitting idle for more than two decades.

They decided to take the perfect location — facing Clayoquot Sound and Meares Island — to create

waterfront condos.

The units have wall-to-wall, floor-to-ceiling windows and luxury features that set them apart.

Just eight units are left at prices ranging from \$549,500 to \$1,579,500. The homes are anywhere from 862 to 2,227 square feet.

"This is choice real estate," says Olsen.

The site is the "gem of Tofino, which is the gem of Western Canada," says McKinley. "The view is unbelievable and the harbour is deep enough for a marina."

The Shore has 30 slips, which are now being finalized, and the harbour is being dredged to make it even larger.

A public garden and oceanfront promenade are at street level, where seven commercial retail spaces will add to the urban streetscape.

Three of these have already been sold, adding more ambience to life at The Shore.

The building has been constructed to commercial grade — the first in the area to be built to seismic standards, says McKinley.

The outside is contemporary and urban, with a bend toward the surrounding West Coast style. It has ample rock detail and heavy timber accents.

Inside, the generously-sized suites are modern and clean, with upscale finishing detail at every turn.

"With the lives we have now, it's very stressful and busy," says Brar. "This is an escape to a serene, naturalistic setting where the homes are luxurious with a contemporary urban style."

kmccormick@calgaryherald.com

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Project: The Shore, a luxury waterfront condo development of 27 units with seven commercial retail spaces at ground level.

Builder/developer: Moss Development.

Area: Tofino, on Vancouver Island's northwestern edge.

Prices: The units, which range from 862 square feet to 2,227 square feet, are priced from \$549,500 to \$1,579,500.

Information: Visit www.theshoretofino.com or call Christina Hagerty of Re-Max Realty Professionals in Calgary at 403-264-8086.

THE BUYERS

Jo Brar and Harpreet Virdee.

Background: The Calgary couple was looking at buying a penthouse condominium in The Shore for investment after visiting the area and seeing the development.

But flying into the area, landing in front of the oceanfront contemporary apartment building, and going

inside their unit, where the whole waterfront scene was laid out through the wall-to-wall floor-to-ceiling windows, changed their minds quickly.

“The view was breathtaking,” says Brar. “The place was unpretentious and beautiful. We’re keeping it now as an escape.”

Project: The Shore in Tofino, B.C.

Developer: Moss Development Inc.

Possession date: Last year.

OCEAN PLAYGROUND

Tofino is Canada’s ocean playground, offering a serene, pristine setting on the northwestern edge of Vancouver Island.

The community of less than 2,000 people is tranquil and quiet, not to mention beautiful. It’s often talked about in connection with Ucluelet, another coastal community age just down the windy, country road.

World-famous Long Beach, where the white sand and surf attracts as many as one million visitors each year, lies between the two.

The Broken Group of Islands is also nearby — an archipelago of more than 100 islets in Barclay Sound — and it’s often a spot where wildlife abounds, including seals and whales.

The rugged 77-kilometre West Coast Trail is a popular, if challenging, trek for the adventuresome.

In the heart of Clayoquot Sound is the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve — an internationally recognized area that includes terrestrial and marine environments bordering the Pacific Rim National Park Reserve.

It’s a large area of close to 50,000 hectares of land and sea.

© Copyright (c) The Calgary Herald

[Previous](#)

[Next](#)



The Shore in Tofino on Vancouver Island is being undertaken by a group of Calgarians in Moss Development Inc.

Photograph by: Courtesy, Moss Development Inc.
