

Family bonding at Spirit Ridge Resort

Vast Osoyoos complex retains feeling of intimate community

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Special to *The Journal*
OSOYOOS, B.C.

Edmonton's Rick Mickleson is so enthusiastic about Spirit Ridge Resort and Spa in Osoyoos, you will want to jump on a plane and see what all the excitement is about. Spirit Ridge was recently named one of the biggest resorts in B.C. in *Business in Vancouver Magazine*, and Rick says while it is lively enough for his tastes, it's still quiet enough for his wife Barbara.

The Micklesons were so happy with their purchase at \$170,000 for half-ownership of a two-bedroom vineyard villa in 2007, they sprung for half-ownership in a Phase II two-bedroom vineyard villa for \$270,000 in 2009.

The first villa is now revenue neutral, due to the property and rental management program operated through Bellstar Hotels and Resorts. During the summer season, monthly rentals of the villas cost up to \$6,675 to rent by non-owners.

Though half-ownership means that the Micklesons get full use of the villa every second month, they were finding that the schedule for the first villa did not always coincide with when they could get away.

"That's why we bought a second one. Besides, we just love the place so much, we wanted to have more options," says Mickleson, 61, owner of Aletech Engineering in Edmonton, who does much of his work from his laptop wherever he is in the world.

The Micklesons had been vacationing in Osoyoos for 10 years, but discovered Spirit Ridge through friends from Edmonton who had bought there several years ago.

"My wife likes the first villa, because it is more secluded and quiet, I like the new villa because it is close to the action. It's close to the conference centre, has a bigger pool and there is more going on," says Mickleson.

Mickleson loves to be in the middle of things, including the lake, where he spends several hours per day on his Malibu boat with their teenage son and daughter.

"Osoyoos lake is the warmest fresh-



PHOTOS: BELLSTAR

The enormous and picturesque Spirit Ridge Resort and Spa in the Okanagan community of Osoyoos has amenities to satisfy just about every lifestyle and desire.



The resort features a nine-hole golf course in the Sonora Dunes, and the Osoyoos Golf and Country Club, with a 36-hole course, is nearby.

water lake in Canada for swimming, and the kids love wakeboarding and water-skiing," says Mickleson.

True to her quieter nature, Barbara wakes up at 5 a.m. to hike on one of the many nature trails, gets Rick out of bed for a game of tennis, and

later visits the Sonora Desert Spa for a treatment. Rick often plays golf in his free time.

"I prefer the nine-hole golf course right behind the resort at Sonora Dunes, but the Osoyoos Golf and Country Club is nearby with a more

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Amenities in Phase II include:

- ▶ Year-round swimming pool and stream pool, poolside cabanas and outdoor hot tub
- ▶ Conference facilities for up to 300 people
- ▶ Equipment rental: canoes, kayaks and bicycles

How to find out more:

- ▶ Go to www.spiritridge.ca
- ▶ Contact real estate sales director

Curt Jensen at 250-808-2878

▶ Indoor/outdoor living and value-based luxury in both amenities and finishing, all positioned above the seventh fairway of the Sonora Dunes Golf Course. Villas will be sold in eighth, quarter, half and full shares.

Getting there:

▶ The closest major airport is located in Kelowna, about 125 kilometres north.

challenging 36-hole course," says Mickleson.

On-site Nk'Mip Cellars winery with award-winning wines from the first aboriginal-owned and operated winery in North America is one of over 60 wineries in the Okanagan. Programs at the Nk'Mip Desert Cultural Centre promote better understanding of First Nations people.

The Passo Tempo restaurant, with expansive views of the lake and vineyards, rounds out the day with owner and sommelier Paul LaGrange overseeing the restaurant's extensive wine list featuring Okanagan wines by the glass or bottle. Executive chef

Jonathan Thauberger, formerly of Delilah's in Vancouver, features regional cuisine, including artisan cheeses and fruit.

While the Micklesons own a cottage at Pigeon Lake and a new house in Phoenix, Spirit Ridge is their destination of choice. Barbara loves the condo's southwest design, architecture and artwork, nine-foot ceilings, and spa-like bathrooms, while Rick likes the large patios with electric barbecues and balcony with views of the lake.

"We just love it. It's like a community. We feel relaxed and our kids never want to leave," says Rick.