

CALGARY HERALD

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ALL YEAR ROUND Located near the Gorge waterway, the address of a new project in Victoria, B.C., says it all — 365 Waterfront Cr. [See page J15.](#)

RECREATION & INVESTMENT PROPERTIES

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Courtesy, Bellstar Hotels and Resorts

The 4.5-star Spirit Ridge Vineyard Resort and Spa in Osoyoos, B.C., is built on a hill overlooking the Okanagan valley and Osoyoos Lake near the U.S. border.

Couple finds desert dream ... in Canada?

Phase III of Spirit Ridge resort offers luxury living in Osoyoos

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CALGARY HERALD
OSOYOOS, B.C.

When Stan and Val Sampson feel like a little desert time, the retired Calgary couple does not book a flight to Arizona.

Instead, the Sampsons hop into their car with their 10-month-old dog, Kino, for what Stan describes as an “easy” drive to their condo in the 4.5-star Spirit Ridge Vineyard Resort and Spa in Osoyoos, B.C.

After going to a place on the Shuswap for 30 years, and now in their senior years, the retired police officer (Stan) and retired medical services employee (Val), decided they wanted a place

where it was warmer all year round.

They picked Osoyoos because, as Stan points out, it is one of the true deserts in this country and, with the cost of health care coverage and travelling, “we wanted to stay in Canada.”

The couple generally rents out its pet-friendly, one-bedroom condo in the big tourism summer months, using most of their desert time in the spring and fall.

The pair actually has one-quarter fractional ownership of a condo in the first phase of Spirit Ridge and one-half of another condo in the second phase.

“It’s year-round use and the whole area is on a warm lake,” says Stan.

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COUPLE: Desert golf

"We're golfers and there is also quick and easy access to the border if we want to go into the U.S., even for dinner."

Spirit Ridge is part of the overall NK'MIP (pronounced ein-ka-meepl) resort. It is a partnership between Calgary's Bellstar Hotels and Resorts, and the Osoyoos Indian Band.

In addition to the Spirit Ridge recreation real estate, the NK'MIP resort includes the Sonora Dunes desert golf course and the award-winning NK'MIP Cellars winery — complete with a spectacular outdoor restaurant overlooking the Okanagan valley.

For the first two phases of the Spirit Ridge real estate complex — with its villas and apartment condos sitting amid vineyards and the rolling hills overlooking Osoyoos Lake — Calgary was the number two purchasing market behind the Vancouver/B.C. lower mainland area. The Edmonton area was the third largest market.

Now, with the launch of phase three, Spirit Ridge is betting that Albertans will also be interested in its new

product.

Because now, with the Spirit Ridge Residence Club, you can not only get luxury real estate and private club facilities in Canada's only desert, but also access to other properties around the world.

To be built perched in the hills above the golf course — the 7th hole fairway to be specific — the one, two and three bedroom residences are available for one-eighth to full title ownership.

Prices start at \$81,000 for a 1/8th share to just under \$500,000 for full ownership.

A purchase in the adobe-influenced bungalow villas includes the ability to exchange weeks through the residence club's affiliation with preferred hotels and resorts around the world.

For example, a 1/8th purchase gives you six weeks in your Osoyoos home or you can exchange them (go to www.preferredhotels.com to see partner locations).

"One of the negatives of a vacation home is the feeling that you always have to go there," says Curt Jansen, director, resort real estate for



Colleen De Neve, Calgary Herald

Stan and Val Sampson — with their dog Kino — bought a unit in the Spirit Ridge resort.

Bellstar. "This new program gives you the value and title of ownership, but does not bind you to be there every year."

The purchase in the residence club means you can use the property yourself, or place it in a rental pool and

earn income.

You can also exchange it and stay in participating resorts around the world through Preferred Residences, a membership program for luxurious shared resort ownership (again, go to the website at www.preferredhotels.com).

[preferredhotels.com](http://www.preferredhotels.com)).

This third phase is to be built above the 7th fairway of the Sonora Dunes golf course into the side of a hill that looks out onto the valley.

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CURT JANSEN, BELLSTAR HOTELS AND RESORTS