

THE GLOBE AND MAIL

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SECTION G

# Globe Real Estate

EDITOR: D'ARCY MCGOVERN

## ALL IN ON MODERN

HOME OF THE WEEK Builder Syroos Mohsenzadeh takes a boring Bedford Park home from bland to beautiful PAGE 16



'I had a feeling that people wanted something different, because most of these houses look the same,' says Mr. Mohsenzadeh. LARRY ARNAL

## The market is hungry

Listings famine has buyers on edge



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Real estate agent Ira Jelinek has what many agents and buyers are looking for: a listing for a detached house in a desirable Toronto neighbourhood.

At an open house on Saturday, he offered a plate of chocolate treats and a stack of colourful brochures as he welcomed a steady stream of potential buyers to 442 Winnett Ave. The agent with Harvey Kalles Real Estate Ltd. had already fielded two bully offers after listing the house two days earlier with an asking price of \$549,000. "We're not interested," he told the potential buyers, who didn't want to wait until Thursday night when the homeowners would be accepting offers.

His goal was to get the listing on the market while so few properties are available. "Some buyers are just waiting eagerly," he says.

Listings have been in short supply all across the city. The drought is pushing up prices in the Greater Toronto Area.

According to the Toronto Real Estate Board, the average price in the first two weeks of February jumped 7.8 per cent to \$547,107 from the same period in 2013. Market, Page 6

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### A landmark address.

Blythwood at Huntington is an exclusive Bayview address without compare in Toronto. Featuring indulgent finishes to complement a memorable lifestyle, these suites are exquisitely designed living and entertaining spaces. Situated in Lawrence Park, this boutique condominium is a natural beauty overlooking a lush ravine setting.

Arrange an appointment to tour the fully furnished, designer decorated model suites.

MOVE IN THIS YEAR.

Presentation Centre Hours:

Monday to Thursday: 11am - 7pm,  
Friday closed, Saturday, Sunday and Holidays: 12 noon - 6pm

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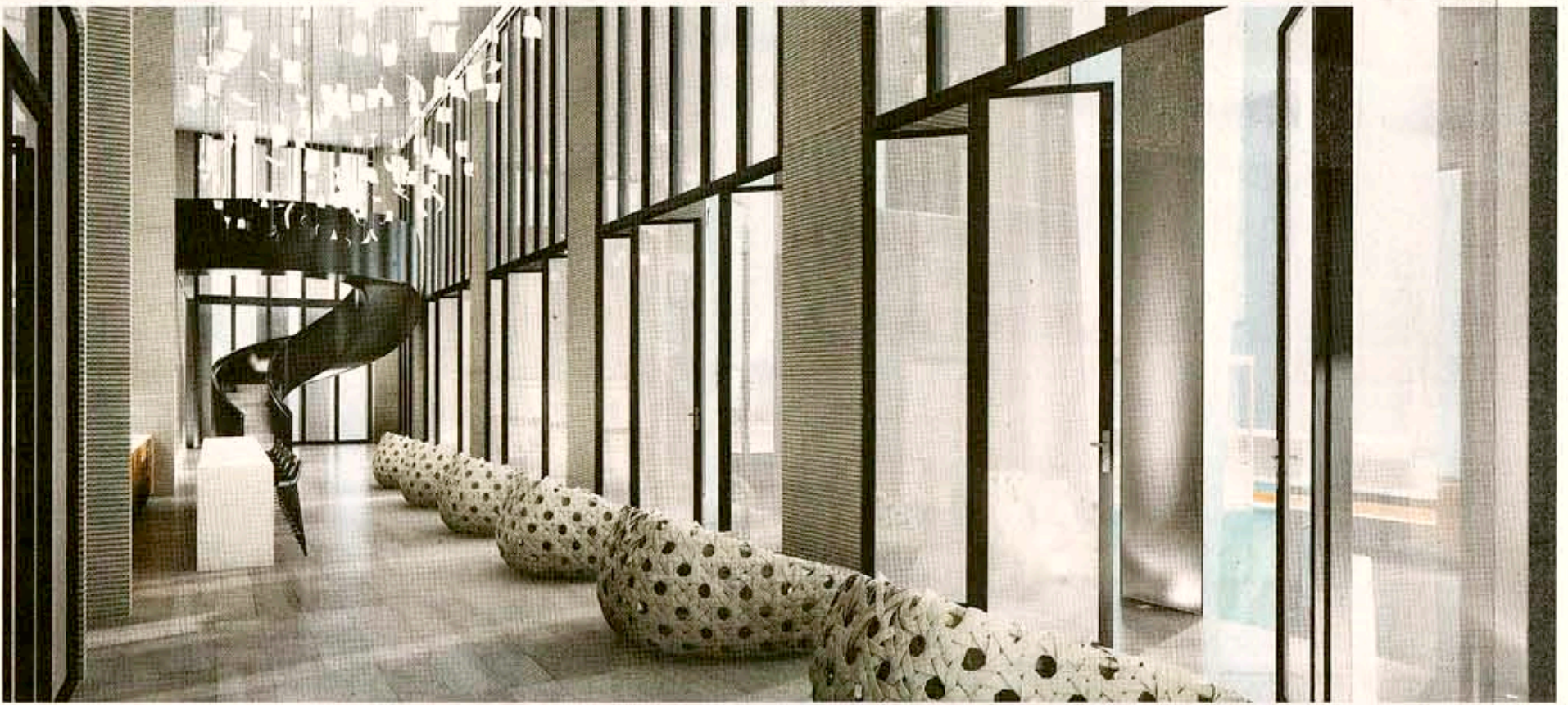


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'We started out with two floors of amenities, then we expanded to three,' says designer Allen Chan. Above, the fourth-floor lounge.

## 'A monstrous amount of amenity space'

Developers are heeding the common axiom: It's what's inside that counts



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The law says that every new residential tower in Toronto has to include a certain amount of space dedicated to "amenities," though developers are free to interpret that stipulation as they will. For some, especially those operating in the lower end of the condo market, it can mean little more than throwing in an empty, lonesome party room. For landlords angling for an up-scale clientele, however, the provision of amenities can be a much bigger deal, involving sizable investments in design talent and physical execution.

Take, for example, 1 Yorkville. A couple of weeks ago, I wrote here about the architectural styling of this 58-storey, 622-unit building. But there's more to the \$450-million project than just architecture. If put up as proposed, the tower will be what Allen Chan, its interior designer, calls "a lifestyle condo, to borrow a term from the hotel industry. This will not be the Bentley of condos. But luxury doesn't have to be grand. It can have a certain richness and texture, it can be more about mood. The purchasers of units here will probably be industrious young professionals who like fine things in life, but aren't looking to make a big, splashy impression by driving a Rolls or a Lamborghini. Who lives here will want to be in the heart of the action."

To attract customers in this demographic, the developers of 1 Yorkville (Basis Inc. and PlazaCorp Communities) asked Mr. Chan, a partner in Toronto's DesignAgency, to come up with "something different, something that pushes the envelope in terms of design and programming." They wanted a scheme that would fit smoothly into the culture of the Yonge-Bloor neighbourhood, which contains some of the highest-end retail shops in Canada. They wanted, not swank, but chic. "They were really open," Mr. Chan told me. "We started out with two floors of amenities, then we expanded to three, which adds up to quite a monstrous amount of amenity space."

The most out-of-the-ordinary place in the building will be the



A view of the rooftop theatre. 'We're trying for restrained luxury, not a super-opulent, over the top, uber-Yorkville experience,' Mr. Chan says.



14,000-square-foot expanse, close to the ground, devoted to the spa and open-air pool and hot tub. "It is really the only hot and cold plunge pool area in the city that is unisex," Mr. Chan said. "You have Body Blitz for women, but there's really nothing out there for men. So we decided to develop this wellness centre focused on water treatment. It has water massage tables, as well as a sauna, steam room and an indoor-outdoor relaxation space. ... That floor is really about relaxing and wellness and water."

One storey up, on the 5,000-square-foot "physical activity level," will be a spacious, fully equipped gym and a studio set aside for the high-intensity workout regime known as

CrossFit. Finally, on the tower's roof, is a 7,800-square-foot facility that Mr. Chan is particularly proud of. "What's unique about this rooftop," he said, "is the number of small niches that allow for intimate conversations as well as larger gatherings. It's a diversely programmed area. We're trying to create a connection to the city. You open the sliding doors of the party room and you get a city view, a city breeze — one of the best views in the city."

The most novel item in the rooftop ensemble, however, is the outdoor screening facility, which has its own bank of tiered seating. Residents will be able to book the screen, which will give them a key to the inputs. But they may not be the



only users of the outdoor theatre: Tout Hogtown may find itself invited to the high roof of 1 Yorkville some day. Mr. Chan: "My guess is that, Toronto being a film-centric town, the screen will probably be booked up for festivals as well as for private parties and such — for city-wide public events such as the Toronto International Film Festival. There are not a ton of screening rooms in this city, and we'll be offering an outdoor location — a benefit to the city."

Of the total design for 1 Yorkville (which includes kitchens and the lobby in addition to the amenity areas), Mr. Chan said: "We're trying for restrained luxury, not a super-opulent, over the top, uber-Yorkville experience. ... But this building has a large footprint that can accommodate large amenity areas. Any developer would love to have as much amenity space in his building as possible. It only adds to the value of the property. Amenities sell."

