

Ginsburg Development Companies

News

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GINSBURG DEVELOPMENT BRINGS RESORT-STYLE LIVING TO NORTHEAST'S LUXURY HOUSING MARKET

The Harbors at Haverstraw receives award for clubhouse facilities

VALHALLA, N.Y. (Nov. 21) – Luxurious, resort-style living is coming home.

Comfortable clubhouses, pool complexes, fitness centers, attentive concierges, pampering spas and calendars overflowing with social events are becoming as essential at luxury communities as stainless-steel appliances and granite counters.

“People enjoy resort services like massages and having a concierge when they’re on vacation, and they have started to ask, ‘Why can’t I have this at home?’ ” said Martin Ginsburg, principal of [Ginsburg Development Companies](#) of Valhalla, N.Y., one of the Northeast’s leading luxury home builders. “We’ve responded by saying, ‘You *can* have that at home, and we’ll create it for you.’ ”

GDC has long been known for its lavish clubhouses and common facilities, which have received a number of awards. The most recent award was for the 16,000-square-foot clubhouse and fitness center at [The Harbors at Haverstraw](#) (N.Y.), which was cited in the Best Community Recreation Building or Clubhouse category of the annual Best In American Living Award (BALA) residential design competition sponsored by Professional Builder magazine and the National Association of Home Builders.

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Clubhouses with fitness centers, social rooms and pools have long been part of GDC's communities, slowly becoming larger and better equipped and furnished over the years. Today's clubhouses typically feature hardwood floors, stately wood-paneled walls, flat-screen TVs, kitchens and exercise equipment suitable for a commercial gym. Imagine a communal family room or gym, with people coming and going all day long.

The Harbors, a luxury condo and townhouse neighborhood where prices range from the \$300,000s to more than a million takes the clubhouse a step further, adding a full-time staff that offers concierge services and organizes a busy calendar of resident events and services.

"If you want a massage, a facial or a personal trainer, we can make the appointments for you," said Joyce Braun-Kutner, The Harbors' community director. "If you need a reference for dinner or a plumber, the concierge can help you. We can show you how to use the exercise equipment. We're here seven days a week to help the residents and support the neighborhood by organizing parties, classes and special events."

The Harbors' calendar features something almost every day. Saturday has the "Breakfast Club," with bagels, pastries and coffee from The Runcible Spoon, which operates a general store and sandwich shop at The Harbors. Friday is Movie Night (complete with popcorn and soda) in The Harbors' 28-seat, stadium-style theater, which has state-of-the-art video and surround-sound systems. Other regular events include yoga classes, a book club, exercise classes and pickup basketball Sunday afternoons in the half-court gym.

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The Harbors' staff organizes other special events, with a large neighborhood party taking place almost every month. Spring and summer events included a Fourth of July barbecue hosted by a local butcher, a Father's Day party with beer tasting staged by the popular Bricktown Brewery and a Cinco de Mayo fiesta catered by Gallito's, a popular Mexican restaurant in Haverstraw.

Farah and Paul Jaquith have been to almost every party at The Harbors. "We try to go to them all," said Farah Jaquith. "We had a luau, which was a wonderful time. It was another chance to meet with our neighbors and be in this resort-like atmosphere. It was great."

Magda Truchan, another Harbors resident, said "I went to the food and beer night with Bricktown Brewery and that was terrific. I definitely plan to go to more of the parties in the future. I can't wait for foreign film night to start, which is going to be Monday nights."

Braun-Kutner said The Harbors' residents have responded well to the parties. "We had an international pot luck dinner over the summer where about 50 people came out. It was a lot of fun and the food was amazing."

Truchan said she was a regular at The Harbors' pool during the summer, though she admitted she seldom ventured into the water: "My friends loved it and my family took advantage of it on the weekends."

One of Truchan's favorite things about The Harbors is the half-mile waterfront promenade and sculpture trail. "I just love sitting outside," said Truchan. "There are these great tables and chairs and you can sit and watch the boats go by. You'll see me out there almost every evening at sunset."

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Paul Jaquith said time spent poolside, in the clubhouse and strolling along the waterfront walkway all provide opportunities to meet your neighbors. “Lots of people use the promenade. Someone else walks by and you spend a little time talking and visiting”

Ginsburg Development’s commitment to creating a vibrant lifestyle at The Harbors is reflected by the company’s decision to hire [American Leisure Corp.](#), one of the nation’s leading experts on designing and operating lifestyle centers, to manage The Harbors clubhouse and coordinate activities. ALC, which is based in Nanuet, N.Y., manages activities, clubhouses and fitness centers at more than 80 residential communities across the nation and is a pioneer in its industry. American Leisure helped Ginsburg Development design facilities at three other communities before receiving the assignment to manage The Harbors.

“American Leisure has designed and managed facilities at many of the world’s best hotels, resorts and luxury condominiums, so they bring years of experience and insights to The Harbors,” said Ginsburg. “American Leisure’s staff gives a full-time presence and energy to The Harbor’s lifestyle center that is unique in the Hudson Valley.”

Steve Kass, who founded American Leisure in 1967, drew a comparison to the computer industry, where you need software to make even the best computer work. “The clubhouse is the hardware,” said Kass. “And the people are the software. Having the right people to do the planning and organizing can make the property come alive.”

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Hotels, resorts and spas have long been the core of American Leisure's business, with Four Seasons Hotels and the Bally's and Caesar's Palace resorts in Las Vegas, Nev., being among the company's best known past clients. But Kass said interest from high-end homebuilders has soared during the past few years. The trend started in hot luxury condominium markets like Manhattan, where Kass said developers are constantly on a quest to offer the ultimate amenities package.

"The developers realized it wasn't enough just to put fitness centers or clubhouses in their buildings, they needed to do something more to make even the best facilities come alive," said Kass, whose residential projects have included many of Donald Trump's recent ventures. "The real estate industry is discovering just how important a role a lifestyle package is in people's decision whether to buy in a community. People aren't purchasing just a home; they're buying a lifestyle and a sense of community."

"More home buyers are seeking a lively resort lifestyle that keeps them busy and also lets them get to know their neighbors," said Ginsburg. "People are seeking more than just a home. They're seeking a sense of community and a chance to know their neighbors. Living in a community with a lively social calendar helps them address those desires."

"I did not expect to be living in this resort-like kind of community," said Farah Jaquith. "It's almost like being on vacation and takes the daily stresses off your life. It's great to have the pool in the summer. You go out in the morning and just don't want to come back inside."

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The Harbors, a \$500-million, master-planned riverfront redevelopment, will have 850 condominium townhouses and flats served by two clubhouse complexes when it is completed 10 years from now. The Harbors includes a mix of well-appointed two- and three-bedroom townhouses and condo flats ranging from studios up to two bedrooms. Many homes have stunning views of the Hudson River. All residents have full use of the clubhouse facilities, which are just a short walk away from every home.

The Harbors' sales office is open seven days a week from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. and can be reached at (845) 786-5600.

Current GDC communities include Riverbend in Peekskill, N.Y., The Fairways at Wallkill (N.Y.), Harbors at Haverstraw (N.Y.), Hudson Pointe in Poughkeepsie, N.Y., Ichabod's Landing in Sleepy Hollow, N.Y., Marbury Corners in Pelham, N.Y., Liberty at Newtown (Conn.), Ridgewood at Middlebury (Conn.) and The Greens at Gillette Ridge in Bloomfield, Conn. To place your name on GDC's priority list for future communities, log on to www.gdc-homes.com, click on to "future communities" and then "name of development" or call 1-866-GDC-4-HOMES.

Ginsburg Development Companies (GDC), established in 1964 and based in Valhalla, N.Y., is one of the nation's premier full-service real estate design, development and management companies. Martin Ginsburg is the president and chief executive officer. GDC has developed more than 10,000 residential units during its 40-year corporate history. GDC's residential sales Web site is www.gdc-homes.com. Information about GDC's commercial ventures, corporate activities and charitable foundation is available at www.gdcllc.com.