

ROCK-SOLID HIT

By Scott Kauffman



When real estate developer David Burden decided to expand the Timbers Company to the swanky Scottsdale desert, it was only natural that he thought about putting his private, member-owned residence club within reach of many luxury links.

“Our first idea in Scottsdale was to get on a private golf course,” recalls Burden, who helped develop the exclusive Roaring Fork Club in Basalt, Colo., and Indigo Run in Hilton Head Island, S.C., both of which have golf courses. “It was just the obvious [thing to do], and then this opportunity came along.”

“This” being 22 acres of spectacular high Sonoran Desert real estate tucked away in a private canyon, surrounded by dramatic views of Pinnacle Peak, Troon Mountain, Four Peaks and the Superstition Mountains. Burden’s company bought the land and built its latest residence club, fittingly called **THE ROCKS**.

Much like Burden’s foray into the luxury fractional ownership business—The Timbers Club at Snowmass located in Aspen—The Rocks has been an instant success. “We’ve combined the best elements of a private golf club with the amenities of an intimate luxury resort,” says Burden, who also developed the highly acclaimed The Residences at Esperanza in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico. “The result is a perfect lifestyle option for successful people who want to enjoy the best of Scottsdale without the responsibilities or cost of a traditional vacation home.”

Indeed, especially considering The Rocks’ three- and four-bedroom villas come complete with a personal concierge service and amenities that rival those of any five-star resort. Designed by celebrated architect Bing Hu in partnership with Design Workshop, the residences are decked out in Old World influences, wood and stone

accents and casually elegant furnishings. The price tag on a one-seventh share of the 2,900 to 3,500-sq.-ft. homes is \$335,000, plus \$9,450 for annual dues and maintenance.

Apparently, the conspicuous absence of an on-site golf course hasn’t deterred potential buyers one bit. For instance, less than two years after launching the unique 40-villa development in early 2004, The Rocks had just seven residences left, equal to 49 memberships. Burden believes The Rocks’ strategic partnership with Scottsdale-based Troon Golf, which gives Rocks members privileged access to six Troon courses in the Phoenix-Scottsdale area, is a strong selling point. “With the relationship with Troon Golf, we provide a wide variety of golf options as a preferred player of those courses,” Burden says. In essence, it’s the best of golf-course living without living on the course. **877.668.6068**, **WWW.THEROCKSCLUB.COM**.



DESERT JEWEL

When Mike Meldman set out to develop Kuki'o on the Big Island of Hawaii several years ago, his vision was to create the finest private resort community imaginable, even surpassing that of the adjacent Four Seasons Resort Hualalai he had long been visiting.

Meldman, who runs the San Francisco-based Discovery Land Company, accomplished that goal and then some, which was evident by the quick sellout of 375 custom estate homesites whose average cost exceeded \$5 million per acre. Now, Meldman's real estate firm is looking to duplicate that magic on the mainland with his latest project in La Quinta, Calif.: **THE MADISON CLUB.**

According to The Madison Club sales executive Alan Gambill, the exclusive club is intended to be a flagship community within the Discovery portfolio, much on the same scale as Kuki'o. (Meldman even refers to it as the "Kuki'o of the Desert.")

While the club doesn't quite have Kuki'o's dramatic Kohala Coast as a draw, there will be a number of other attractive similarities between the two communities once Meldman's masterful group completes the West Coast wonder. For example, The Madison Club will be another exclusive low-density enclave, comprising just 193 half-acre custom homesites (ranging from \$1.5 to \$5 million) and approximately 25 Villa Homes crafted by Discovery Land builders. Additionally, the club has plans for a handful of Clubhouse Member Suites that will cater to short-term visitors.

Of course, one of the focal points of development will be another fabulous private golf course (scheduled to open in March) designed by Meldman's favorite architect, Tom Fazio. In addition to towering pines and other flora not typically found in the desert, the course, according to Meldman, "will be punctuated with gorges that drop 40 to 55 feet down to the bottom of the creek bed and heavily landscaped in the Bel Air tradition."

As for the architecture, homes will reflect the distinctive style of California's old-line country clubs, establishing an ambience of quiet sophistication, intimacy and understated luxury. "The quality of architecture on the custom homes is what you'd see in Bel Air," says Gambill, who happens to be one of the limited 225 Madison members. "It could be French Provincial, Italian Provincial...trendy yet traditional." **760.777.9320, WWW.DISCOVERYLANDCO.COM.**