

Northern Palm Beaches **GROWTH EXPLOSION**



BY RACHEL GALVIN | The future of South Florida is in the northern Palm Beaches. With the population migrating from all over South Florida, developers are scrambling to accommodate their needs and wishes, offering unprecedented luxury, convenience and elegant living.



The Landmark at the Gardens by HomeDevco

The Channing Corporation has transformed 30 acres nestled amid the golf environs into PGA Commons, 135,000 square feet of mixed-use space along PGA Boulevard, just west of I-95. This European-inspired project includes restaurants, retail, town houses and apartments. Serving as a billboard announcing the lure of the urban-chic lifestyle, PGA Commons already is 80-percent leased. Its enviable mix of tenants includes Anushka Spa & Sanctuary, Paradise Punch, Baby Alexandra, Onesimo Fine Art, Mayor's, Spoto's Oyster Bar, Panera Bread, Le Petit Musée d' Art, Van Dell Jewelers and more.

Menin Development Companies Inc. was just one developer thrilled when land held by the late John D. McArthur, the self-made billionaire from Chicago, was finally released. Menin developer Rob Jacoby said, "McArthur had 15,000 to 17,000 acres held off the market, creating a huge pent-up demand in a highly desirable location."

Menin's new 60 acres of land near The Gardens mall will become

Downtown at the Gardens, including 338,100 square feet for new retail. The impressive list of restaurants includes local favorites like Max's Grille and The Big Time Restaurant Group's City Kitchen. The Strip House is coming from New York, the Yard House from Los Angeles, and Original Bookbinders from Philadelphia. The Grape is two stores in one — a restaurant and a wine shop/cellar.

Jacoby said, "We have chosen the best of the regional market with new entrants to the Florida market." Menin's unique tenants include Sur La

Table, Couture Optique, Lulus, Frontgate, Origami, Addison Gallery, Whole Foods and others. Another, Cobb Theaters, will be the only stadium-seating movie theater complex in the area with 16 screens.

International artists will design the statues and fountains for Downtown at the Gardens. Visitors will have access to the concierge, a service that will hold packages while they eat or will ship packages to family back home.

Bordering this magnificent complex will be a lake, a park, and a fanciful children's garden complete with mazes. The project will eventually include 166,000 square feet of office space across Kyoto Parkway and a 10-story hotel.

On the other side of the Menin-development lake, HomeDevco will build The Landmark at the Gardens, the first high-rises in Palm Beach Gardens history with 166 units within two Mediterranean-styled condominiums, one 17 stories and the other 14 stories. Residents will receive, besides top-notch amenities, a membership in PGA National Golf Course. Units in this luxurious habitat range in price from \$450,000 to \$900,000, with pent-houses as much as \$3 million. The world will be at their fingertips, or at



PGA Commons

least across the footbridge that leads to Downtown at the Gardens.

Melissa Mundhenk, director of sales with Home Devco, said, "This offers the same upscale life with less hassle and maintenance and without country club fees." She added, "There is new development all over here. They even opened a new flyover [PGA overpass] to control the traffic with nice lights and landscaping, in keeping with the look of Palm Beach Gardens."

In response to the development, The Gardens mall is expanding. To meet demand, the mall's owner, the Forbes Company, is adding more high-class retailers, including Louis Vuitton, Tiffany & Co., Tommy Bahama, Hollister Co., Tumi, Movado, L'Occitane, Abercrombie Kids, Ecco and Lucky Brand Jeans. Macy's and Saks Fifth Avenue are adding square-footage, and Nordstrom has signed on as a luxury anchor. Fred Wilson, chairman and chief executive officer of Saks Fifth Avenue Enterprises, commented, "Palm Beach Gardens is a growing, exciting market, and we look forward to expanding our luxury merchandise and personalized service offerings in this great community."

With the new retailers come new housing developments. Frenchman's



Tiffany & Co. at The Gardens mall

Reserve, by Toll Brothers, is another that's made an impact in Palm Beach Gardens, with homes ranging from \$700,000 to more than \$1.3 million. Complete with the 18-hole Arnold Palmer Signature Golf Course, spa, clubhouse and more, it will be ready this fall. Nearby WCI's Old Palm Golf Club contains 294 residences, a 43,000-square-foot clubhouse, and a 19-hole golf course. WCI also is opening a new 15-story luxury condominium on Singer Island, which includes membership to Old Palm Golf Club.

Jupiter also is growing beyond

expectations. Rob Flaherty, director of marketing at The Ritz-Carlton Golf Club & Spa, Jupiter, remarked, "We could have built anywhere in the world but we chose Jupiter." Within a week of the development's model home opening, all but three of its estates and all of the residences had sold out. DiVosta's Abacoa has a similar issue — 600 buyers for only 28 homes, according to Mike Brown, director of marketing and advertising. Of course, Jupiter has become home to The Bear's Club, Jack Nicklaus' 18-hole golf course with its 35,000-square-foot clubhouse, 14 club villas, 17 golf villas and 61 estate home sites. In the works along Indiantown Road is new office space, including Connor Lighting's Jupiter Design Center. And farther north, in Port St. Lucie, Kolter already has sold more than 1,400 single-family residences at PGA Village, next to the PGA Golf Club.

The rapid development shows no sign of stopping. According to Peggy Blackwood, director of research for the Business Development Board of the Palm Beaches, the growth won't slow for years. It appears that all eyes are on the northern Palm Beaches and the outlook seems bright.



Menin Development's Downtown at The Gardens