

Sitka 81 condos in an 17-storey tower by Polygon

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SITKA Project location: UBC Project size: 81 homes; 36 remaining Residence size: All 2 bedrooms, 2 baths; 825 sq. ft.-1,070 sq. ft. Prices: From \$768,000 Developer: Polygon Architect: IBI/HB Architects Interior Design: Polygon Interior Design Ltd. Sales Centre: 5802 Agronomy Road Hours: Noon-6 p.m., Sat-Thurs Telephone: 604-221-8693 Email: sitka@polyhomes.com Web: www.polyhomes.com/community/sitka Occupancy: Fall 2012 The University of British Columbia's founding architects envisioned the Point Grey campus as a "university city in an idyllic setting." Of course, the idyllic setting was a given, but the "university city" has taken a while to materialize. Now, like neighbouring Metro Vancouver, the bucolic UBC campus is becoming increasingly urban. The campus residential population is currently 16,500, with 8,000 people living in family housing and 8,500 in student beds. The residential population is projected to be 22,500 -12,500 of that family housing -by 2021, and 40,000 at build-out in 2041. One of UBC's latest residential projects is Sitka, a 14-storey tower with 81 homes being built by Polygon. Although Sitka is Polygon's seventh community at UBC, it is the first since Promontory, a tower built six or seven years ago near Thunderbird Stadium. Sitka is in the heart of the campus, in the east campus neighbourhood, formerly home to fraternity houses that were relocated farther south on Wesbrook Mall. In their place, Polygon constructed a four-storey wood-frame community interwoven with parks and pathways. "This is a great way to live on the west side of Vancouver," says Ralph Archibald, Polygon's senior vice-president of sales and marketing. "It's the only way to buy anything new west of Burrard in terms of highrise." Because Sitka will be the tallest building in the neighbourhood, homes above the fifth and sixth floor will have views of the mountains and Burrard Inlet. Starting at the eighth and ninth floor, the Strait of Georgia will be visible. Those views, and the light, will be captured by floor-to-ceiling windows - ceilings are eight-and-a-half-foot high. IBI/ HB Architects' clever deck design, placed alternately along the side of the building with decks directly above jutting out, not only adds interest to the exterior, but means every deck is both partly covered and partly open. Ground-floor homes have patios, and most enjoy individual access from the sidewalk. The exterior of the contemporary steel-and-glass tower will feature granite cladding on the lower levels and a soaring cantilevered roof with cedar soffits at the top. Sitka's small footprint emphasizes greenery and landscaping, with a bridged walkway over a water feature and a secluded courtyard. To the south, protected green space with old growth trees provides privacy and tranquillity. Inside, there are just six residences per floor, each with two bedrooms and two baths. Floors are hardwood in the main living areas with wool carpet in bedrooms and heated marble in the master ensuites. Marble also surrounds the soaker tubs, covers the walls of the walk-in showers and forms the vanity countertops. The custom vanity and matching wood-framed oversized mirror stretches from wall to wall, with its "floating" design emphasized by undermount lighting. The hotelstyle heated towel bar is a new feature from Polygon. "For us, this is an upscale offering," Archibald says. "We worked hard to provide sleek and contemporary looking kitchens." The real-world cabinetry is either quarter teak or charcoal rift-cut white oak, depending on whether buyers opt for the Daybreak or Shadow colour palette. (Most are leaning to the lighter Daybreak side.) Integrated Bosch and Liebherr appliances, undermount sinks and Caesarstone countertops with a waterfall edge are clean-lined and elegant. Most homes have full-height pantries and all include handy dual rollout recycling bins. A custom-designed wine rack beside the eating bar and optional TV built into the cabinets make these kitchens ideal spots in which to hang out alone or with friends. Many Sitka buyers are downsizing from westside homes, with a few downsizing from single-family homes in Richmond, says Archibald. A "fair percentage" are moving up from smaller, older apartments. A smaller component are parents buying an apartment for their offspring to live in while attending university, with a view to moving in themselves at a later date "The real draw here is living on a university campus," Archibald says. "One of the big draws is schools. University Hill elementary and University Hill secondary consistently rank in the very top of the Fraser Institute's ranking for public schools, so they are very much sought after." Sitka's central campus location is also attractive. Classes and transit are within an easy walk. UBC Village, with a convenience store, restaurants, coffee shops, bank, and a Staples, is nearby. The new UBC medical building is right across Wesbrook Mall, as is a new pharmacy building. To the south, Wesbrook Village offers a Save-On-Foods, plus added shops and services. For added convenience, Sitka will have a resident manager on hand to help with daily details. Construction is already underway, with first occupancy scheduled for late summer 2012. Since sales launched just over a month ago, 45 homes have sold, but every floor plan is still available with a good selection of both view homes and smaller ones left, as well as two of the four homes on the penthouse level. © Copyright (c) The Vancouver Sun



The Sitka display kitchen has full-height cabinets and high-end appliances. 'We worked hard to provide sleek and contemporary looking kitchens,' says Polygon's Ralph Archibald. Photograph by: Ian Lindsay, PNG, Special To The Sun



A circular portal in a stone wall frames a bonsai tree at the UBC show centre for the Polygon Sitka tower project.



Marble surrounds the soaker tub and covers the walls of the walk-in shower.



The 'hotel-style' heated towel bar is a new feature from Polygon.



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The alternating, offset balconies provide open and shaded areas for each unit.