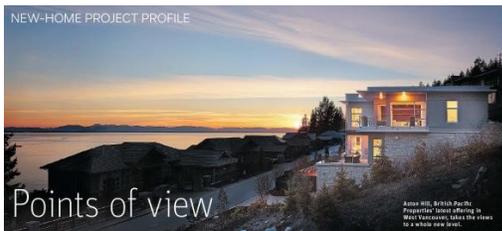


## Points of view

Occupants of Aston Hill to enjoy some spectacular new outlooks

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SPECIAL TO THE SUN

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Aston Hill, British Pacific Properties' latest offering in West Vancouver, takes the views to a whole new level.



Above: The homes in the Aston Hill project are staggered up the hillside, meaning city views are not obscured by other residences. Below: Generous outdoor spaces will allow Aston Hill homeowners to enjoy the magnificent views on offer from West Vancouver vistas.

Project: Aston Hill Project Location: 2726 Highview Place, West Vancouver Project size/scope: 20 2-bedroom-and-den/3-bedroom-and-den hillside homes arranged in 10 duplex strata concrete buildings. Extensive views of downtown Vancouver, the harbour and the city's west side Residence size: 3,065 - 3,820 sq. ft Price: \$3.1 million - \$3.5 million Developer: British Pacific Properties Arc-

hitect: Burrowes Huggins Architects Interior Design: Insight Design Sales Centre: 2726 Highview Place, West Vancouver Centre Hours: noon - 4 p.m., Sat - Thurs, or by appointment Contact: Shirley Clarke, 604-9258002 Website: www.astonhillcollection.com Project completion: Summer

British Pacific Properties, stretched out across West Vancouver's mountainside above the Upper Levels Highway, has been renowned for decades for its remarkable views of Vancouver's downtown skyline and west side.

Aston Hill, the company's latest multi-family development on its 4,000 acres of land holdings, takes those views to a whole new level, with a lot of work by the planners and architects to meet the demanding building standards set by West Vancouver council.

The 20 strata duplex homes are built into the hillside along winding switchbacks with grades up to 30 per cent, requiring the architects to abandon conventional residential construction techniques and literally invent a new style of architecture to fit the terrain.

"We think of it as the Santorini of the West," said Mike Huggins, of Burrowes Huggins Architecture. "We had to build buildings that are in effect retaining walls of the land. We really had to choose reinforced concrete because the earth pressures were too great to do in conventional construction."

The result is that the homes have low-pitched cedar-clad roofs and large overhangs don't obscure the city views from other homes staggered up the hillside behind and appear to naturally grow out of the hilly landscape, Huggins said. He said it has also led to yet another genre of local design — West Coast Modern — an evolution that builds on the work of such architects as Arthur Erickson, Fred Hollingsworth and Ron Thom and the West Coast Contemporary style that succeeded them.

The concrete exterior is finished with a special stucco and the architects have added features, including timber arbour and a granite veneer clad chimney, to break up the fronts of the duplexes.

British Pacific Properties — or BPP — has had lots of experience building on mountainous terrain. The company, owned by the Guinness family of English stout fame, first bought the land in 1930 for as little as \$20 an acre, with plans to build country estates and even polo grounds for the gentry. In order to boost

low land sales, the company got into the homebuilding business to sell lots and got government permission to build the Lions Gate Bridge, a \$6-million private construction project that opened to traffic in 1938. But demand for lots remained low through the Second World War and didn't pick up until 1950 when the Park Royal shopping centre was opened.

While designed to meet the demands of downsizers, the homes have large dimensions, ranging from more than 3,000 to 3,800 square feet on three levels. All have elevators that can take homeowners of uphill models up to the top of three levels or downhill models where a reverse model puts bedrooms on the lowest level.

BPP President Geoff Croll says 40 per cent of the homes have been sold, mainly to Metro Vancouver residents rather than offshore buyers. "We are an average of \$875 a square foot. If you are downtown, for a similar type of product it would be well over \$1,000 a square foot and even higher if you are over on the west side or Point Grey for this level of finishes and construction quality."

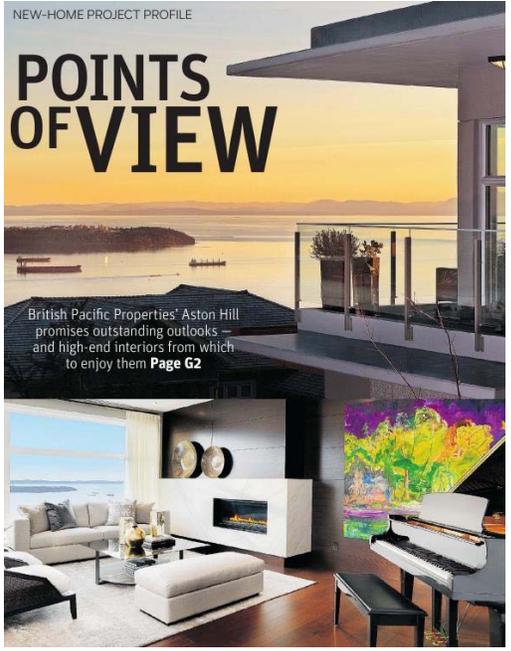
Buyers have been attracted by a number of West Vancouver features, he said, including good schools either at Collingwood or Mulgrave private schools or the West Vancouver public school system, which earns high marks in the Fraser Institute's annual schools survey; personal security evident in higher police officer-citizen ratios relative to other parts of the Lower Mainland and even "the fresh air and being just 15 minutes from downtown."

The show home's entry and reception level has an oversized two-car garage and a Japanese-inspired water feature at the front door that opens to a foyer with heated stone tile. To one side of the entrance is a large den, while straight ahead a millwork archway marks the entrance to the galleria. A bathroom and laundry room are off one side of the galleria.

Homeowners can either walk up the glass and stainless-steel staircase with dark wood treads or take the designer-wood-walled elevator, which fulfils the goal of "aging in place," Croll said.

The middle level features open-concept living with the kitchen against the back wall with an offset layout leading to a family room, a dining room and then a living room with a contemporary linear gas fireplace framed in marble and exotic wood finishings. All areas look out

to the spectacular view and a large sliding glass door opening onto a 325-squarefoot terrace. The level also has a powder room.



## Interiors just as spectacular as exterior views



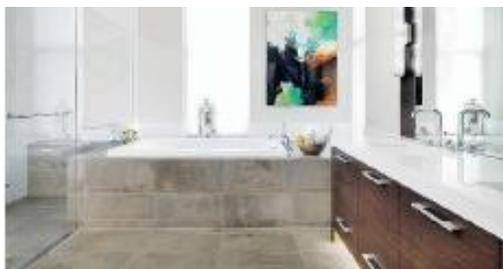
The display suite showcases a five-burner stainless steel cooktop embedded in a long, polished island.



Above: Convenient laundry machines don't detract from the decor. Below: A hardwoodpanelled wine station provides ample storage and includes an under-counter refrigerator.



A show home for Aston Hill, British Pacific Properties' latest offering in the Whitby Estates neighbourhood of West Vancouver. The project offers 20 semi-attached two- and three-storey homes, each with large open plan living space and fabulous vistas.



The master en suite is designed with an exotic wood veneer vanity.

the appliances. The level comes with a pass-through pantry that can be converted into a hardwood-panelled wine station with ample storage, including an under-counter refrigerator for white and sparkling wines.

On the top level are an expansive master bedroom and a "retreat" sitting area, walk-in closet and balcony. Lighting controls for the entire home are contained in iPads, which are fitted into wall niches for easy access both at home and from outside by the Internet. Two other bedrooms share a second bathroom. One bedroom has a walk-in closet and a smaller-sized terrace, while the second smaller bedroom has a large window view without a terrace.

The master ensuite is designed with an exotic wood veneer vanity topped with a granite countertop, in-floor heating, an obscured glass toilet room enclosure, and a lowprofile drain system leading to a frameless shower area, convenient for those in a wheelchair. The entire area is fitted in stone wall and floor tile.

Buyer Joan Porter, who lives near the University of B.C., says she and her husband "wanted a change in lifestyle."

"I like to hike, so it's nice and close to the mountains rather than having to drive over the bridge all the time. It's getting really busy over here, so we thought it would be a nice option."

They had checked out downtown Vancouver, Ambleside and Dunderave, but found all too busy and dense and then found Aston Hill online.

"I loved the view and it's quiet and really close to the trails."

She also liked plans by British Pacific Properties to develop a commercial area for residents living above the Upper Levels Highway.

netry, custom stained to match the hardwood floor. Homes come with a Sub Zero 36-inch integrated fridge and freezer with internal water and ice dispensers and a custom panel to match the hardwood cabinetry. Contrasting with the wood are glossy upper cabinets with a granite backsplash.

A 36-inch five-burner stainless steel cooktop is embedded in a long polished granite island, with room for four stools. Overhead is a 42-inch Wolf chimney-style hood fan, while on the back wall are a Wolf 30-inch wall oven and large Wolf microwave. A Miele dishwasher with a fully integrated custom panel rounds out

The kitchen is fitted in oak wood cabi-