

Action central

Family-friendly townhomes with chef-inspired kitchens at The Hillcrest

MICHAEL BERNARD



Award-winning chef David Robertson was asked to review kitchens in The Hillcrest development in Vancouver and recommended use of an island.

The developers of The Hillcrest knew they wanted the kitchens in their 17-unit townhouse complex in central Vancouver to be the most efficient they could build, so they called in award-winning chef David Robertson to review their initial designs.

Robertson, whose Dirty Apron restaurant has been a hit since opening in Vancouver in 2009, has learned a thing or two about what makes a kitchen work well after watching more than 10,000 students pass through his cooking schools.

"I looked at what the Hillcrest designers had there from a practicality point. At one time they had a full (peninsula), so you couldn't get in and out accessibly. Then they capped it off with a sideboard at one side and that boxed in things."

He ultimately recommended they go with an island providing easy access, in and out — a layout they adopted.

"If you have a few more people over then your whole island becomes an ultimate prep station. These are not massive kitchens but I always say less is more in the kitchen. You don't need to have things in there that don't make sense."

One of the things he particularly liked was a pullout overhead venting system.

"I don't like microwaves in plain sight in the kitchen either, so I recommended they go with one in the island."

Kitchens are equipped with a premium Bosch appliance package with a 30-inch integrated fridge, 30-inch five-burner gas cooktop, 30-inch wall oven and a 24-inch integrated dishwasher.

The cabinetry is flat panel style and countertops with undermount large single sinks are made of durable quartz lit by under-cabinet lighting.

Robertson, who has written two books on cooking, says he also came up with the concept of planting a communal herb garden in the central courtyard between the two buildings to which only resident families have access.

According to Graham Carter, principal and co-founder of Vertex Developments, bringing in Robertson was a very conscious move to target specific demographic groups in marketing The Hillcrest, the company's first project.

Young families are the company's prime target group.

"We call (Hillcrest) the Upsizer. We thought of someone with a child in a condo downtown who wants to stay within their social network in the area.

"We see it as a great opportunity to get into a three-bedroom townhouse."

That target also explains why Vertex has skewed its space allocation to larger units: of the 17 homes, 15 are three-bedroom units between 1,064 square feet and 1,284 square feet; one is a two-bedroom unit measuring 933 square feet; and one is a one-bedroom home of 579 square feet.

The stacked townhouses are located in two buildings constructed around a fully-secured courtyard with fob access for families to enjoy.

Interior flooring is a mix of hardwood oak engineered floors and wool blend carpeting.

Large windows and recessed pot lights provide both natural and warm light.

Modern bathrooms feature a full-height mirror, an elongated pendant light, wallmounted faucets and water efficient dual flush toilets.

Floating vanities have spacious oak veneer storage drawers and under-cabinet lighting and large format porcelain tiles on the floor and ceiling.

Ensuite master bathrooms come with seamless glass showers featuring mosaic tiled basins and Aquabraxs rain shower fixtures and handheld wands, heated towel racks and Nu-Heat electric heated flooring throughout.

The homes come with combination heating and air conditioning and are built to

the demanding standards of a "Low Emissions Green Building."

The underground garages

feature lockers for additional storage, storage for bikes, and roughed-in charging systems for electric vehicles.



The Hillcrest development will be located at West King Edward Avenue and Columbia Street in Vancouver. /PNG

The Hillcrest, Vancouver

Project address: West King Edward Avenue and Columbia Street

Project scale: 17 stacked one, two and three-bedroom woodframe townhomes in two buildings separated by a common courtyard. Homes range from 578 sq. ft. to 1,284 sq. ft. Ground-level homes have ample patio space while stacked townhomes have raised entries and private rooftop decks. Centrally located, close to Canada Line, Queen Elizabeth Park, and shopping on Cambie and Main streets

Prices: Three-bedroom townhomes from \$1,479,900

Developer: Vertex Developments

Architect: Formwerks

Interior Design: Area3 Design Studio

Sales centre: Suite 301 – 1508 West Broadway, Vancouver

Centre hours: By appointment only

Sales phone: 604-394-2088

Website: <https://www.thehillcrest.ca/>

Completion date: Summer 2021