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For Dream House Magazines
By Deb Podurgiel

Brentwood Bay Lodge & Spa Will Take You Away.

I've always enjoyed visiting the "Island". I enjoy how the ferry feels as it slows down and inches toward the landing dock; under the keel, churning waters slow to a barely audible "sssh" until docking with an almost imperceptible bump. We've landed, and already the aura of the island has settled upon me. I hadn't visited for a while and another handful of wineries had sprung up along with two artisan distilleries. That, together with an opportunity to spend a couple of nights at the Brentwood Bay Spa and Lodge, was all the convincing I needed.

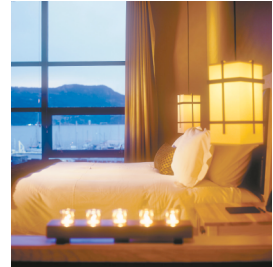
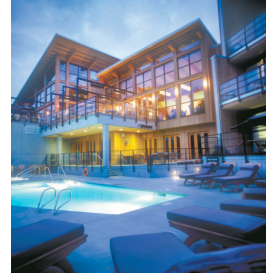
While Brentwood Bay Spa and Lodge is Victoria's only five-star oceanfront resort, it has also recently received several other commendations: the resort enjoys a Four-Diamond hotel status and has been named sixth best in Canada, 103rd in the world, in Expedia's Insiders' Select 2008 list out of 80,000 hotel/resorts offered.

But aside from the accolades, all 33 luxury suites face the ocean inlet where surrounding coastal mountains and warm, ocean currents create a Mediterranean-like microclimate all year round, as well as one of the warmest climates in Canada. The king bed is one of the most comfortable I have slept in and I'd venture an 800-thread count on the Italian linens. Jacuzzi tub, fireplace and private balcony are standard in every suite, but above all the standards is the resort's Westcoast architecture with red cedar and Douglas fir, locally-crafted wood furnishings and slate tile, floor-to-ceiling windows and sliding doors leading out to a private balcony that welcomes the outside in. An incredibly serene 180-degree view of the marina and bay is interrupted only by the occasional laughter from the resort's first-class SeaGrille Restaurant. And, if you time it right, you will experience one of the most introspective sunsets north of the Caribbean.

Perfectly Anticipated

I don't remember the last time I walked into a hotel lobby and was greeted with genuine smiles, a glass of sparkling wine, professional, knowledgeable staff, gracious service and an architectural account and history of the place I was about to stay in. Everything here is perfectly anticipated.

I indulged in a spa treatment the next morning at the Essence of Life Spa and, while waiting for my service, I couldn't resist sniffing at the six loose teas available. To ease into my morning, "Pacific Sunrise", with its delicate orange and floral scent was my favourite. The first treatment was a luxurious seaweed wrap with seaweed gathered off the Island's west coast. My skin felt as refreshing as mint.



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Next, a signature spa facial and foot massage; while my feet felt like I was walking on pillows, my face felt like one. There are all manner of spa treatments to choose from: manicures, pedicures, wraps, Vino Therapy package, Two-Hearts couples massage – the most difficult part is choosing one.

As I floated back to my room, on cue, the sun streamed through the balcony window and now, I'm thinking, "I want to live here". Well, now, you can!

OceanVillas and "LEED"

Over a simply delicious dinner of a roasted, buttery sablefish with lime beurre blanc over wild mushroom, lentils and asparagus, resort owners, Dan and Frauke Behune talked about their latest project and addition to the resort. As was the case with the resort, the focus of the six-villas project is to ensure there is a low environmental impact and footprint on the surrounding area by employing local trades and materials, recycled materials, hardwood floors certified by the Forest Stewardship Council, HVAC systems with reduced energy consumption, and more green features like Energy Star appliances. Each villa's private garage will have a drought-tolerant green garden growing on top of it, and OceanVillas will be one of the first multi-unit 'LEED for HOME' projects in Canada, committed to LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards and environmental responsibility, using the latest green building practices and energy-efficient systems.

Villas vary from 1,500 and 1,800 square feet, with two bedrooms, den, gourmet kitchen, spacious oceanfront patios with double-sided fireplaces and Lanai-style patio doors that fold open giving a seamless sense of inside/outside space. Spa, fitness club membership, as well as other services are available at the Brentwood Bay Lodge & Spa, and are included in the \$1.4 to \$1.8 million price tag, as is a 40-foot boat slip in the private resort marina. Each villa is a whole-ownership private residence – with flexible rental policies – geared to the pre-retirement market. In reality, the villa owners will have the best of both worlds – a vacation property-like setting, in wine country, with stunning views over the Saanich Inlet and Malahat, and boating, kayaking and scuba diving at your door. Victoria International Airport is 15 minutes away, and it is 20 minutes to Victoria. Pre-construction sales have just begun, and Behune anticipates project completion mid-2009.

High resolution images may be downloaded from the media image bank on our website.

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