



PLYMOUTH PLACE

A rendering of the gardens at The Arboretum Villas, a new complex at Plymouth Place, a continuing care retirement community in La Grange Park, Illinois.

THE FUTURE OF SENIOR HOUSING IS HERE

by Julie Bennett

Senior housing of the future is under construction just north of Houston, Texas, with a 55-plus community rising on the rolling hills of a former cattle ranch; with luxury apartments in a life care community in suburban Chicago designed for and by Baby Boomers; and in a high-rise in San Francisco where residents enjoy all the luxuries of a five-star hotel.

Hailey Sarage, senior vice president of development for Related Companies, a global real estate and lifestyle company with a vast portfolio of luxury hotels, commercial offices, mixed-use properties and residential buildings across the country, says the idea for amenity-rich homes for seniors was organic. “We noticed some of our residents aging out of our luxury residential buildings,” she explains. “And we wanted to provide a home where they could receive the Related service they were used to, in addition to discreet, supportive care.”

Related paired with Atria Senior Living, a leading operator of independent, assisted and memory care communities, to form Coterie, and the joint venture opened its first seniors-only building, Coterie Cathedral Hill, in San Francisco last spring. The 14-story structure contains 208 studio, one- and two-bedroom apartments with monthly rents between \$8,300 and \$15,100. Residents, ages 62 and above, enjoy gourmet food at five different restaurants, swim in a heated pool, visit the top-end wellness and fitness center and bask in endless services overseen by staff members who are trained under the Mayo Clinic Healthy Living Program.

GOOD TIMES

Coterie Cathedral Hill’s first resident, James Meehan, age 73, is too busy living in his “fun and safe new community,” to think about the future. “When I retired, I moved into a condo on the 59th floor of a San Francisco high-rise,” he says, “but I really wanted a place where I’d find neighbors to do things with, and the communities I liked had long waiting lists. A friend in real estate told me about Coterie Cathedral Hill and I took a hard hat tour shortly after the sales office opened.”

He adds, “I like their rent-only financial model better than places where you pay a big upfront fee. I live in a two-bedroom unit on the top floor, and the living room is large enough for my seven-foot grand piano. The luxury decor is beautiful, the food is great and we can walk to the Civic Center for cultural events. I’m meeting interesting people from all over the country and we share meals, attend concerts and even help our neighbors register to vote.”

Future residents of Chambers Creek, a 55-plus community in Texas, are also



Among the opportunities for residents at Plymouth Place to socialize, take in good weather or spend time alone is the dining courtyard, where you can comfortably do all three.

bonding, even though their houses aren’t built yet. Bob Waldrop, age 76, and his wife Lori, age 63, are already talking to another couple about buying a pontoon boat together. “Chambers Creek is a whole different world from other active adult communities,” Bob proclaims. “It has rolling hills, a golf course and a clubhouse, all kinds of other sports activities, 20 miles of hiking trails, a marina on Lake Conroe and even its own vineyard. Driving in feels like entering a Texas resort.”

“But we are only a short drive from our doctors and medical facilities in The Woodlands, Texas, and our grandchildren,” Lori adds. “The developers, the Caldwell Companies, have done a wonderful job of introducing us to other people who have purchased houses here. It feels like home already.”

Caldwell Companies CEO Fred Caldwell says Chambers Creek will be their fourth 55-plus community in Texas, “but it will be on the most beautiful 1,000 acres we’ve ever owned. We are building 3,000

homes here, with prices from \$300,000 to \$2 million, and buyers can choose models designed for active adults from any of five industry-leading builders.”

Caldwell says his company is focused on preserving the physical and emotional health of its residents and the natural beauty of the land. “Every home will be required to have an electric vehicle charging station and we are encouraging people to get around in golf carts instead of cars,” he says.

That’s just fine with Art and Laura Morales, who will move from a condo in Houston to a three-bedroom home in Chambers Creek later this year. “Laura is 62 and I’m 77, and we both care a lot about our health. We’ll definitely be using the hiking trails and the wellness center. I’ve always wanted a golf cart,” Art laughs, “and this is a good excuse. We have two sons here and a daughter in upstate New York who has a grandchild on the way. I told her I’d choose the color of the cart according to whether she has a boy or a girl.”



The grand courtyard at Plymouth Place, where residents can customize their home down to its cabinetry and lighting system.

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PROJECT RETIREMENT

While the founding 50 couples at Chambers Creek are already engaged in community events, the first residents of The Arboretum Villas, a new complex on the campus of Plymouth Place in La Grange Park, Illinois, just west of Chicago, are helping redesign the future of retirement living.

“Plymouth Place is a continuing care retirement community that was founded 79 years ago,” says CEO Jay Biere, “and our current building is 17 years old. Back then, the average age of new residents was 85. Now, with all the Baby Boomers entering the market, that’s dropped to 75. We wanted to build something to serve them, so we asked them what they wanted.”

Using input from focus groups and conversations with prospective residents, Biere and his team designed 59 luxury villas in two-, three- and four-story buildings. “We’re excited to expand our services to cater to active adults ages 62-plus.” He also stresses that flexibility is key. “We offer a variety of villa styles, financial options and lifestyle choices — complemented by robust wellness and culinary experiences. We only have 10 villas left.”

None of the villas will look alike, reports Mike McCartney, a certified aging-in-place specialist, because Baby Boomers want customization. McCartney’s company, Silver Age Homes, partners with Plymouth Place and the residents to design their homes with custom layouts, cabinets, countertops, lighting systems and dozens of other items and finishes. “We call this customized experience ‘Tailored by Plymouth Place,’” he says.

Boomers are tech-savvy and McCartney’s company also installs devices to turn each unit into a smart home. “You can say things like, ‘Alexa, I’m home,’ and your pre-selected lights will go on, the shades will go up. Residents can use the device to call a relative or the front desk and to listen to the list of the day’s activities and menus.”

Robert Denny, 74, and his wife, Barbara, 71, will be moving “about two miles,” he laughs, into a two-bedroom plus den Arboretum Villas home at the end of the year. Although they look forward to the many dining experiences on campus, they will not be purchasing the optional meal plan. “Most of us still like to cook,” he explains.

“We hope to live in our villa for 10 to 15 years before we need the continuing care facilities,” Denny continues. “We are not your father’s set of retirees. We are giving up the burdens of a family home to have more time and energy to expand our active lifestyles.”