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Huntington Beach Gets a Gold Nugget Grand Award- Winning Community

The Residences at Pacific City provide award-winning architecture and community amenities

By Brianna Fries

Huntington Beach, California is a city known for its warm summertime weather, plethora of shopping and activities, and prominent surf culture. When creating a multifamily development in this part of the Golden State, the desired result is to produce a home community that stands out as unique, but also blends seamlessly with the culture of Huntington Beach.

The award-winning development of The Residences at Pacific City was able to achieve both these goals well and incorporate several aspects on sustainability into the project at the same time.

With construction starting back to 2015, the multifamily development finally finished last year, debuting a full 17-acre community that emphasizes an indoor/outdoor lifestyle that is prominent in this region.

“It is comprised of six residential buildings with a uniquely programmed courtyard space wrapping a central amenity, a large pool deck, and fronted by a public park,” detailed President and Director of Design for MVE+Partners, Inc., Matthew McLarand, AIA, NCARB. “The property was designed to allow an entrepreneurial lifestyle for those who share a passion for the beach and surfing, and desire access to a pedestrian-friendly commercial district.”

The creation of this unique community came about thanks to the collaboration between the developer, UDR, Inc., building company, Bernards, and architect MVE+Partners. As Robert McCullough, Senior Vice President of UDR, Inc. explains, when approaching the

► The Residences at Pacific City earned the Gold Nugget Grand Award for Multifamily Community of the Year.



project, the team that was brought together to build the property had to be the best of the best. In doing this, the team not only created a quality multifamily community, but they even earned a Gold Nugget award as additional recognition of a job well done.

“Winning the Golden Nugget Grand Award for Multi-Family Property of the Year is a great recognition for UDR and all of our hard work; yet, it is really just the byproduct of a great team,” McCullough said. “Unlike a building, you can’t show off a great team, yet...it was our greatest achievement. Working alongside each of you has been the greatest joy of my

professional career.”

Award-winning community design

So what exactly was it that this hard-working team built that caught the eye of the Gold Nugget judges? In short, a multitude of unique design details, high-quality architecture points, and desirable amenities that can be seen in both the amenity building and residential buildings that could draw in any potential homebuyer.

Residents can enjoy living in a development with a modern design that incorporates natural colors, textures, and forms, all of which are

reminiscent of the coastal California lifestyle. Along with the lifestyle-themed design, the units in the community were built to be wider and allow in an abundance of natural light and ocean breezes thanks to large amounts of glazing and operable windows. The units also include large semi-recessed balconies which provide a sense that the living space continues from the interior rooms right outside.

All of residential units are also courtyard-oriented, meaning they open toward any one of the six landscape courtyards featured at The Residences at Pacific City, each of which has been designed to offer a

unique neighborhood scale to residents. These courtyards create privacy for residents, and plenty of room for shared outdoor living and socialization.

“These courtyards are very large compared to most typical projects, which allows more privacy for residents and plenty of room for a shared outdoor living experience,” explains Pieter Berger, Senior Associate Partner and Project Designer for MVE+Partners. “These spaces feature a variety of interesting landscaping, seating, activity, and water features to draw residents out of their apartments.”

Each courtyard takes advantage of the sunlight offered during different times of day, and are connected by a curving pedestrian boardwalk that provides a wide walkway and gives access to the public sidewalk.

The Residences at Pacific City also make sure to include one vital aspect to the community that is rapidly becoming mandatory in California: sustainability. Certified at LEED BD+C Silver by the USGBC, this multifamily development features a host of sustainable details that will lower residents’ bills and help aide the effort to “go green.”

Along with being a walkable community, residents can enjoy the benefits of green details such as electric car charging ports, Energy Star appliances, LED lighting, NEST thermostats, solar power, and more.

In addition to the unique details that are showcased in the residential units, potential buyers are also encouraged to take in the community’s crown jewel: the amenity center.

Coastal design in amenities

The design of the Residences at Pacific City is carried throughout the entire community and culminates in its central amenity facility.

As McLarand describes, “The intent was to create an amenity building that takes on the form of a real wave, with roof panels creating texture from about and angled glass that begins to curve overhead. These details reflect the authenticity of a tube ride (AKA the green room) on a real wave.”

These ocean-themed design details have been included with a purpose of course: matching the lifestyle of Huntington Beach. “The architectural character of the amenity facility draws from the ocean and the surf culture that exists in the surrounding Huntington Beach neighborhoods,” Berger states. “In Southern California surfing has been noted as the new golf and Huntington Beach, AKA: Surf City, hosts the U.S. Open of Surfing every year.

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— President and Director of Design for MVE+Partners, Inc., Matthew McLarand, AIA, NCARB



▲ The Residences at Pacific City attract a range of buyers from empty nesters to young families.



▲ Residential units offer an abundance of natural light and floor plan width.



▲ Each unit offers indoor/outdoor living design and sustainable features.




▲ There is a total of 516 residences in the Residences at Pacific City community.



▲ The amenity center also incorporates stand-out ocean-themed design details.

What better place to have architecture that inspires and pays respect to the ocean and surfing lifestyle.”

Along with its signature “green room” style, the amenity building integrates the local public park and resident pool deck, all of which carry on the same theme. The park’s landscape mimics a swell while the amenity building features a wave-like form. All of these details integrate both the public and private spaces of the community while paying homage to the distinctive character of the waves of the nearby Pacific Ocean.

Between its green features, its coastal lifestyle-themed design, and its quality units, which emphasize indoor-outdoor living, The Residences at Pacific City easily meet the needs of their target buyers, from urban professionals to young families that enjoy a passion for the Southern California lifestyle. 

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¹ IPCC (2007). Climate Change 2007: The Physical Science Basis. Contribution of Working Group I to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

² Navigant Consulting, based on its 2018 report, “Gas Strategies for a Low-Carbon California Future.” The analysis from the original published report has been updated to reflect the 2030 60 percent RPS goal established in SB 100.

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