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RECREATION AND INVESTMENT PROPERTIES

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Rustic look a facade for upscale resort homes

Sable Ridge in Radium makes the most
 of Columbia River Valley location

ALISON APPELBE
Special to The Journal
 RADIUM, B.C.

The mineral pool at Radium Hot Springs, operated by Parks Canada, ought to be declared a National Historic Treasure.

Brought to public attention in 1841 after Hudson's Bay Company governor Sir George Simpson revelled in what must then have been a rough-hewn if steamy hole in the ground, Radium Hot Springs is today the largest of the Parks Canada hot-spring pools and picturesquely sited at the foot of a sheer rock wall in Sinclair Canyon.

"Taking its 39-degree waters" after a day of golfing, fishing, skiing, hiking or snow-mobiling—even white-water rafting—may be reason enough to consider a recreational home at Sable Ridge

in the mountain village of Radium. But there are more.

Radium sits in the Columbia River Valley, where Highways 95 (just south from Highway 1 at Golden, 557 kilometres from Edmonton) meets 93 (from Calgary). It's a region the Radium Chamber of Commerce proclaims as "the warm side of the Canadian Rockies."

It's a 20-minute drive south to the popular resort community of Invermere on Lake Windermere—not to mention a relatively easy distance to an astonishing number of recreational and wilderness destinations.

The Purcell Wilderness Conservancy, Bugaboo Provincial Park, and Glacier National Park are to the west. Directly east are the Top of the World Park and Whiteswan Lake Park. To the north sprawl Mount Assiniboine Park, and the vast Kootenay and Yoho national parks

system. Banff and Lake Louise, too, are a few hours northeast.

Nearby ski resorts include Panorama and Fairmont, and others in the Kimberley Mountains and south at Fernie. Kicking Horse ski resort is north at Golden. There are no fewer than 15 golf courses in the region, the majority considered world class. And The Springs Golf Course—an 18-hole course built on a Columbia River plateau with spectacular mountain views—is smack in Radium.

The list of recreational possibilities goes on. Hiking and cross-country skiing trails wind through and above the valley; backcountry areas are available for snowmobile and ATV enthusiasts. In town there's go-carting and mini-golf.

For wildlife enthusiasts, the region is home to bighorn sheep, several species of deer, bear and elk. An annual bird festival called Wings over the Rockies attracts avid bird-watchers every May from around the world.

Into this setting, Sable Developments—a Calgary firm that branched into Sable Resorts after doing a dozen upscale multi-family developments in that city—is well on its way to competing the three-phase Sable Ridge resort development.

Director of Marketing Lesley Baker points to the perennial popularity of the Invermere area when she says: "There's not a lot of destination property left, and we found this very desirable property down the road at Radium."

To buyers of these full-ownership properties, she says: "The investment potential of this Columbia Valley is very favourable."

Sable Ridge is a three-building complex of 128 units, in a treed valley setting surrounded by mountains. The architect-designed wood-clad buildings—phase one through three—feature peaked roofs and dormers. All units have underground parking, and ample stalls for visitors.



An artist's rendering of Sable Ridge, a three-building resort complex currently under construction.

SUPPLIED



All suites have balconies and large propane-fuelled fireplaces.

The units are one, two and three bedrooms, some with dens and multiple baths. While most of phase one is sold out, a few one-bedrooms remain. They're priced in the \$200,000 range and will be ready for occupancy by the end of the year.

Phase two, to be completed next spring, is more than 50 per cent sold. Two bedroom suites come in various floor plans, some with dens, ranging from 841 to 930 square feet. They start at \$300,000. Three-bedroom units with den are just under 1,400 square feet—and around \$400,000. Phase three units go on the market next year.

All the suites have balconies, and a large propane-fuelled fireplace with two "faces" and an alder mantle. Baker emphasizes Sable's investment in quality finishings—imbuing this property, she says, with exceptional value.

There are laminate hardwood floors, concrete countertops, and knotty alder kitchen cabinetry with oiled-bronze handles. Interior detailing includes a choice

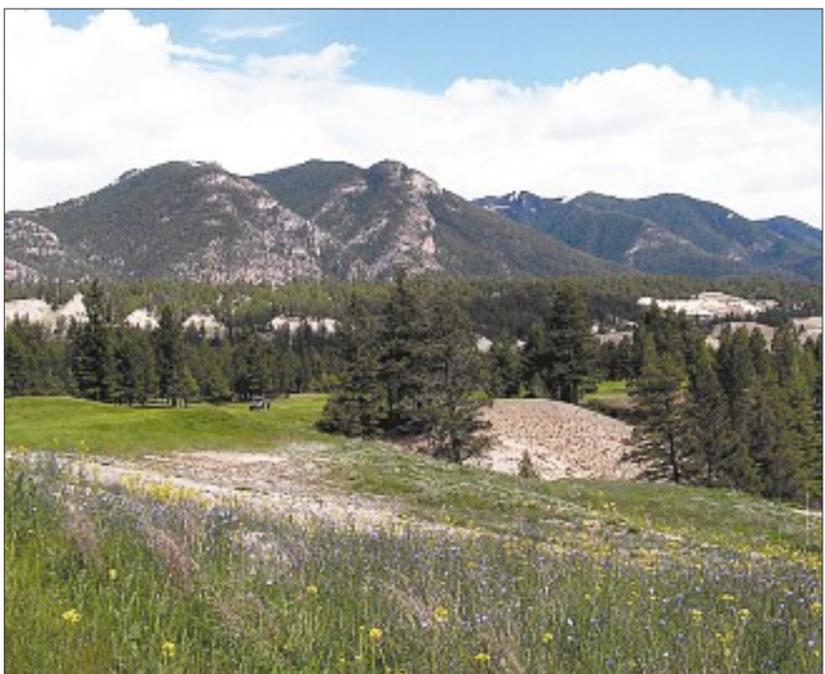
of light and dark stone.

"We like to describe it as rustic contemporary," says Baker. "Nothing's scrimped on." Kitchens include a set of black appliances and a "toffee-stained" island. An option is the purchase of tailored high-end furnishings from Calgary's Penthouse Furniture.

At the heart of the complex is a 1,600-square-foot clubhouse complex or lodge. It includes a meeting area with massive stone fireplace, kitchen and barbecue. Outside will be two year-round hot tubs and a seasonal swimming pool.

"You can choose to do nothing but hang out with the views and find serenity," says Baker of a village complex and region she sees as being not overly populated and inclusive of ages and interests.

A model two-bedroom Sable Ridge unit can be visited at Sable's Lifestyle Sales Centre, 2500 4th Street SW., Calgary. And visitors to Radium can tour the property. For more visit www.sabledevelopments.com, or call 403-228-0900.



There's no end to the recreational possibilities in the Columbia River Valley.