

## Travel

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### Love The Dove

The Residences at The Ritz-Carlton, Dove Mountain, where luxurious living comes with all the amenities of a world-class resort



The World Golf Championships may have moved away from The Golf Club at Dove Mountain, but an increasing number of people are moving in along the three Jack Nicklaus-designed nines. They're finding that the luxurious homes that bestride the six-year Accenture Match Play venue—The Residences at the Ritz-Carlton, Dove Mountain—perfectly match the resort lifestyle they want to lead.

“We currently have 40 homes complete or under contract,” Director of Sales and Marketing Rich Oosterhuis reported in late August. “We have another seven homes breaking ground in the next 90 days to go with the six that are already under construction.”



#### Why the appeal?

First, The Residences at the Ritz-Carlton, Dove Mountain, is not a fractional-ownership or condo-in-a-hotel deal. It consists of full-ownership custom homes ranging in size from 1,650 to 5,400 square feet on lots between one and seven acres.

Set amid saguaro-studded high desert in the Tortolita foothills 25 minutes north of downtown Tucson, the Residences occupy only 14 percent of the development’s 6,200 acres.

The Residences follow eight highly flexible floor plans with eminently customizable elevations featuring distinctive Southwestern architectural styles (such as Contemporary Pueblo, Arizona Ranch), materials (like clay tile, wood, natural adobe) and colors (tan, ochre, rose). To erase the distinction between indoor and outdoor living, all homes feature fold-away windows and telescoping doors. “It makes our house feel 100 times bigger than it is,” enthuses one homeowner.



Second, ownership comes with membership to the golf club and its magnificently appointed clubhouse. The 45,000-square-foot structure houses elaborate private dining and event spaces (*Today Show* host Savannah Guthrie got married there), sumptuous locker rooms, a fitness facility, steam room and members’ grill. It also boasts Cayton’s, a gourmet burger bistro named for homesteader Cush Cayton, whose erstwhile ranch comprises much of the development’s acreage.

Third, and most persuasively, what distinguishes the Residences from all other upscale golf communities is the five-star Ritz-Carlton, Dove Mountain Hotel that anchors the property. It affords Residents priority access to all the hotel’s spectacular amenities: the transformative indoor and outdoor treatment rooms of the blissful spa and fitness center; three separate pool areas; four tennis courts and four restaurants— including the fabulous Core and Ignite, the lobby lounge that converts into a full-on sushi and sake bar every Thursday, Friday and Saturday night.

“The hotel’s our own personal recreation facility,” says Boston-based executive Leslie Medalie, who last winter moved into the modern adobe ranch home she and her husband, Seth, a wealth manager, built on the Wild Burro nine. “It’s like having a complete resort as part of your home.” A complete resort, Seth emphasizes, that includes the kind of 24/7 concierge service for which the Ritz is famous. “I email the concierge and he’ll send down the same fresh steak, haddock, tomatoes and arugula that the hotel restaurant orders,” he says. “You can’t underestimate what it’s like to have the Ritz and the golf club.”



Living half the time on the East Coast, the Medalies also appreciate the diligence with which the Ritz staff checks on their home, not only for security but also for burned-out bulbs and other inconveniences. They always arrive to a house stocked with groceries. The concierge can also arrange reduced-rate and upgraded stays at all Ritz and Marriott properties.

“Every real estate developer claims quality concierge service,” says Dove Mountain developer David Mehl of Cottonwood Properties, which also developed La Paloma in Tucson. “But developers are lousy at it.” So, he says, from the time he started buying the land in 1984, he envisioned having a five-star hotel in the development, and that the Ritz beat out other “flags” for the privilege.

Mehl also recognized that developers and hoteliers aren’t experts at running a golf club, so in 2012 Cottonwood sold the operation and management to what was then known as The Ritz-Carlton Golf Club, Dove Mountain to Texas-based Escalante Golf.



Cottonwood no longer has a stake in the golf club, but it has partnered with The Ritz on the hotel, and with Ray Sidney, one of Google’s original engineers and a sustainable real-estate developer, on The Residences. Sidney’s investment has eliminated all debt on the property, making The Residences an appealing anomaly in the luxury real-estate world.

That distinction wasn’t lost on Residents Jeff and Laura Goodrich, 50-something retirees who summer at Montrêux Golf and Country Club in Reno—the same driving distance as Denver to Tucson. But more critical to their decision to buy at Dove Mountain was “the association with the hotel,” Jeff says. “We loved the privacy plus access to all the amenities. At other developments you were either stuck in some remote house in a canyon or living on top of someone else.”



The proximity of their Residence to restaurants in nearby Tucson and Oro Valley factored in. The Goodriches also love the endless hiking trails complete with centuries-old Hohokam petroglyphs. “I can go straight from the back of my house eight miles up into the Tortolitas,” says Jeff, who also plays three to four rounds of golf a week.

The active community at The Residences has attracted mainly buyers in their early- to mid-50s. Some live there year-round, while others, like the Medallies, go for weeks at a time throughout the year. “We looked at a lot of places,” says Leslie Medallie, “and we felt really good when we found this. We wanted a place where people are normal, not buying their fifth home, and where we’d have friends.”

“For years, our dream was a place in Arizona,” says Seth. “And when expectations build, you’re inevitably let down. Well, we are so blown away by this place. It’s so much better than we could ever imagine.”



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