

HOMEFRONT



Nova Stella in Shakas Rock on the KwaZulu-Natal North Coast

RETIREMENT FOCUS

Where the 60+ crowd wants to retire

When comfort, aesthetics, technology, design and health precautions come together smartly in a retirement estate, you're all set

WORDS: KIM MAXWELL - PHOTOS: SUPPLIED

Ease into retirement gradually by finding a home that provides for your current and future lifestyle needs. The rest will then fall into place. This is the advice future retirees are given. We deciding on a place to settle can be stressful, with concerns about hidden costs or feeling isolated from friends and family. Affordability, quality of life and safety concerns are often top of mind too. Some downsize to a smaller home or townhouse, then find they have to move again as their mobility or health needs change.

Residential estates are a one-size-fits-all option for retirees who want community living in a secure environment. Some cater for multiple family and retirement phases. According to Denmark Property Group national sales manager Bruwer de Jager, the success of its Retirement Collection lies in offering everything. "Location is of paramount importance.

Our developments The Pleinberg Manor and Langebaan Manor are close to beaches, shops and restaurants," he says. "Amenities usually include a clubhouse, a hair and beauty salon, a coffee shop, a gym, assisted living suites and 24-hour care – all in landscaped gardens." He adds that garden and cleaning services make a lock-up-and-go lifestyle achievable.

SAFETY FIRST Retirement villages limiting visitor access and insisting on gate deliveries for groceries during the pandemic, also highlighted the importance of top-notch health security. It's why Evergreen has undergone a redesign of safe spaces for its seniors. The developer looked at how higher-risk groups of retirees interact in communal areas and explored aspects such as physical security, financial peace of mind, hospitality and continuous care.

Evergreen Lifestyle Villages MD Garry Reed says they learnt from being forced to shift to virtual interactions. "During the toughest lockdown period, we had to relook onsite logistical procedures such as residents' health monitoring and moving nurses to live inside villages," he says. "We had to reconsider how we operate daily, with clear definitions of shifts, roles and responsibilities. The way we approach design and layout now takes safety into account even more." Touchless access control was also implemented. "Evergreen is continuously looking to improve the lifestyle and welfare of its residents through a combination of design development, innovation, technology and operations," says head of developments Julie Morelle. "Units have been redesigned to be more compact yet still offer comfort and quality. All homes have a private balcony or garden – in addition to communal recreational areas such as walkways, bowling

greens, boules and tennis courts and vegetable gardens.

"At Evergreen we embrace flexibility, designing more yet smaller amenities for socialising. We are fast-tracking the integration of technology, access control and communication with the outside world," says Morelle. "We have since incorporated 'hotelification' as a diversified standard, as well as on-demand services adapted to our residents' needs and requirements."

VOLUME AND VALUE

A recent Lightstone Property survey investigated trends in the retirement property industry. It found that, of the total volume of retirement properties transacted across SA in the past decade (2009-2020), the majority of transfers (2,883) were conducted in 2013 in Gauteng, with the Western Cape peaking slightly in 2017. This might explain why Evergreen's Broadacres Lifestyle Village in Johannesburg is described as a firm favourite by sales

director Phil Wilson. It comprises 144 houses, all sold out. Another 48 one- and two-bedroom apartments were recently launched.

Lightstone head of real estate Estiaan Marx says it's not surprising that Gauteng has had the most transfers in volume terms but notes that, when looking at the value bands in the retirement category, "the view is rather different". From 2015 until late 2019, transactions in higher value bands began to climb in the Western Cape. The variance in value between this province and its closest competitor, Gauteng, was more than R1m during 2018. Compared with KwaZulu-Natal sales, the difference was more than R2m.

Rubic Property Group has had much demand for its upmarket retirement estate homes situated near family homes within Clara Anna Fontein Lifestyle Estate in Durbanville. Launched in 2018, Phase 1 of the Oasis Life development is nearing completion and includes 58 houses and a R25m clubhouse that is scheduled



The rooftop herb garden at Quadrant Gardens in Claremont, Cape Town

to open in December. A restaurant, healthcare suites, a library and an event space will complete the offering at Clara Anna Fontein and set in motion its hospitality-based lifestyle, according to Rubie director Miguel Rodrigues. Geographic appeal is a no-brainer, says De Jager. "The Western Cape offers some of the most beautiful scenery in the world. Furthermore, it is run effectively, which makes it more attractive."

Bev Bloch, manager of the Pam Golding Properties specialised Southern Suburbs retirement sales team, says there is considerable interest in Quadrant Gardens, a lifestyle retirement development in Claremont, Cape Town. She describes it as "hotel-style luxury with all the comforts of home". Facilities include three-course lunches, a concierge service and communal spaces such as a rooftop garden and a croquet lawn.

A few of the 74 apartments are still available, priced from R3m to R6.4m for one- to three-bedroom units. Quadrant Gardens is

a joint venture with private developer Carevest. All apartments are sold on a life rights basis through the Cape Peninsula Organisation for the Aged, which is responsible for rates, security, maintenance and building insurance," says Bloch.

This year, Lightstone singled out Burgundy Estate as one of SA's top 10 retirement estates for the 60-plus market. Oasis Life Burgundy Estate is in its first phase of construction with 24 houses and 33 apartments to be completed by mid-2021.

De Jager believes value for money makes all the difference, even at the more exclusive end of the market. "I think freehold villages such as Langebaan Manor will outperform life rights schemes," he says. "The development offers authentic West Coast architecture with 10 house types."

These range from R187m to R3.45m, including VAT and transfer duties. "Location is key," De Jager says. "But it's our price point that sets us apart."

The demand for North Coast property is robust, he reports. "And it will continue to grow as development moves northwards and more retirement-focused estates emerge."

Nova Stella in Shakas Rock, for instance, is a luxury estate for over-50s with 53 modern pet-friendly apartments. Two-bedroom, two-bathroom options start from R2.195m.

Marx says estate living is the most popular option in the Western Cape, whereas sectional title is the most sought after in Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal.

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Evergreen Broadacres Lifestyle Village in Johannesburg