

For the Golfers Who Can Swing It

By Mimi Kmet International Herald Tribune
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RANCHO PALOS VERDES, California Rancho Palos Verdes, an exclusive Pacific Coast community south of Los Angeles, is one of the most affluent areas in the United States.

That fact seems to have made it a magnet for Donald Trump, the real estate tycoon and reality TV star.

The Trump National Golf Club is scheduled to open in July, a \$100 million renovation project that is being followed by the construction of lavish estate homes around the refurbished links.

A few years ago the developer bought the golf course and surrounding property, a total of 300 acres, or 120 hectares, on a bluff overlooking the Pacific Ocean.

He now is adding The Estates at Trump National Golf Club, homes ranging in size from 6,200 to 15,000 square feet, or 575 to 1,400 square meters.

The developer says the houses will cost at least \$500 per square foot to build and will be sold at \$5.2 million to more than \$15 million.

In Rancho Palos Verdes, the average price for a single-family detached home is more than \$1.1 million, according to DataQuick, a real estate research firm based in San Diego, California.

The development, which is being built five homes at a time, may total as many as 50 homes, said Andy Lemke, vice president of the golf club's real estate sales operation. The first five are expected to be complete by year's end and four have been sold, he said.

Trump is taking a hands-on approach, Lemke said, selecting the building materials and finishes - such as imported limestone, travertine and hardwoods - unless buyers specify their own choices before construction. Other features, such as wine cellars, tasting rooms and home theaters, may be included, depending on the home.

The development also will offer services such as a private security patrol, fitness center, day spa, concierge and three restaurants.

Lemke said sales efforts are attracting entertainment industry figures, professional athletes and high-profile business people.

"We also have had tremendous interest from the Pacific Rim," he said. "These homes already have an international presence because of Mr. Trump, so I would expect that approximately 15 to 30 percent of our buyers will come from outside of the United States."

Trump also will own a home here, Lemke said, adding, "It's probably the most picturesque property in the country."