

# NEW HOMES+ CONDOS

AN ARCHITECT'S VIEW  
*It's all about light, space, a feeling ...* **G2**



WALK RIGHT  
IN ...  
*A look at walk-in  
closets* **G4**

ADVERTISING SUPPLEMENT MONTREAL GAZETTE SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2017 SECTION G



A 20,000-square-foot courtyard links the two phases of Les Tours Saint-Martin. *ARTIST'S RENDERING COURTESY OF T.G. BECO*

## LES TOURS SAINT-MARTIN

14-storey towers of rental units will be outfitted with “everything from A to Z,” developer declares

JOEL CEASU

There’s a reason why Jack Arduini has decided to include a full set of appliances in each of the 292 rental units of Les Tours Saint-Martin, his new project in Laval.

The president of T.G. Beco says he’d rather “spend half a million dollars than watch the elevators and hallways and doorways of my beautiful new building get banged up by movers.”

The towers, being built in two phases and rising 14 storeys above the Daniel Johnson and St-Martin intersection in Chomedey, will be outfitted with “everything from A to Z” — appliances included. Digging began in May on the 62,000-square-foot site, just steps from the Centropolis, blocks from Carrefour Laval and minutes from Highways 15 and 440. The first eight floors of Phase 1 are scheduled for delivery by July.

Arduini and Tom Socciarelli, his partner and brother-in-law, did their homework.

“I know this market, and have built a lot of high-quality condos at good price points,” Arduini said. “That 55-and-over group? They want something nice. To live in downtown Montreal is one thing, to invest as speculation, to park money or to live, but for here, this area? It’s for local people who want to live here. They say: ‘I want to stay here but I don’t want to invest in a condominium here.’”



Jack Arduini, president of T.G. Beco, at the construction site in Laval where his company is building two 14-storey towers that will house a total of 292 rental units. *JOEL CEASU, SPECIAL TO THE MONTREAL GAZETTE*

It wasn’t so long ago that people “invested in a condo to live in, and beat the stock market with 10 per cent growth, but that’s not the case anymore.”

“Now I’m presenting an oppor-

tunity for people who want to live well, but on a budget.”

When you compare, Arduini said, “a \$300,000 condo in Montreal doesn’t get you much. Take \$1,200 mortgage plus fees plus tax-

es now you’re at \$1,500 to \$1,700 (a month) for a two-bedroom condominium. But I did the market study and the research. I know my clientele. We are targeting young professional couples, singles, 55-

plus empty nesters, and parents. We can offer something luxurious, something high-end, all-inclusive, at that level with no investment and no cash down.”

SEE LAVAL PROJECT ON **G2**

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# Les Tours apartments range from one- to three-bedroom units

LAVAL PROJECT FROM G1

It's worked, said marketing director Sarah Torres. "We pulled it off. Within days after launching we started receiving interest, and we're up to 500 VIP registrations." "And *that*," Jack Arduini said gleefully, "is for a rental!" The \$72-million project consists of the towers with a total of 292 units, 7,000 square feet of ground-floor commercial space, and a 20,000 square-foot courtyard linking the two phases. Les Tours apartments range in size from 650-square-foot one-bedroom units to 1,300-square-foot three-bedroom apartments. Rents range from \$900 to \$1,800 a month, depending on size and floor location. All units feature nine-foot ceilings, granite and quartz countertops, modern kitchens and large bathrooms, and boast oversized patio doors and windows for abundant natural light. All lighting fixtures are included, as are storage lockers and all appliances. Amenities include Wi-Fi in all common areas, an interior heated,

salt system pool, an exercise room and two saunas, while a rooftop terrace offers a modern chalet with kitchen, billiard table and large TV, as well as a barbecue area and lounge chairs. "We're also planting a ton of trees in and around our courtyard and we will have green roofs and lots of vegetation." "There's nothing like this in the area," Arduini said, touring the site. "Our tenants are going to love it." The developer will manage the property as well as build and develop it, a partnership with the Ipso Facto real-estate investment firm, which has invested in and around Montreal and Quebec in projects as diverse as Castelnau-sur-le-parc condos to Quartier Dix30 commercial spaces, participating in the development of assets with a value in excess of \$4 billion. A family business with more than six decades of experience developing a diversified portfolio — from pharma labs, schools and police operations centres to high-end condos, industrial and insti-



Les Tours Saint-Martin, a new rental project in Laval, will be built in two phases and will total 292 units when completed. ARTIST'S RENDERING COURTESY OF T.G. BECO

tutional spaces (including Montreal's Botanical Gardens) — T.G. Beco sat on the land for almost two decades with plans for commercial development, Arduini said. "But then we conducted profound market reports into residential rentals and the results were stunning. We're going to have no problem renting this." Transit availability figures heavily in the location of Les Tours Saint-Martin, adjacent to Highway 15 and a few blocks from Montmorency métro station, with the Laval transit corporation's bus service for downtown Laval stopping in front of the new building.

## AN ARCHITECT'S VIEW

Architecture 'should have more to do with the way of life of people you're designing for' than pure style

URSULA LEONOWICZ

As a child, Laurent McComber spent most of his time outdoors, in the woods. He enjoyed working on all kinds of objects, especially those made of wood, so it's not surprising that he became a carpenter, and then an architect, after graduating from the Université de Montréal. "I've always been a kind of a doer, somehow; I even built a small cabin in the woods during my childhood," he said, "so it was kind of natural for me to become a builder." Since 2005, his architecture firm, L. McComber, has taken a sustainable and creative approach to design that's inspired by nature to create tailored projects of varied scope, from integrated furniture and condominium units to transforming existing residential buildings and creating exterior spaces for public use. "I hope my style is very warm and welcoming and made for people, as opposed to pictures," McComber said. "Architecture should have more to do with the way of life of the people you're designing for, as opposed to pure style." Because outdoor living is so important to him, each project expresses a strong and related focus. "I love nature, so we work with a lot of plants and windows, which helps," he said. "Residential architecture was a lot less fancy when I started; it was more standard than it is now, but we experimented a lot during those years, and learned how to do interesting work with a limited budget. It helped me understand what building is all about."

In addition to limited budgets, McComber is also used to working with limited space. "When we began, we did a lot of small spaces, and we optimized those spaces by using built-in furniture; it was a way of making them as effective as possible," he said. "For example, if you lean a five-foot desk against a seven-foot wall, you lose two feet of wall space — but if you have an integrated desk that's built to fit the wall, you gain a few feet of working space." Integrated furniture also works well by matching the style of the space of which it's an integral part. "It can add a special element to spaces that might otherwise be a little dull," McComber said. These days, the projects he works on are



Architect Laurent McComber, seated at the table, with his team in the background. PHOTO BY CINDY BOYCE, COURTESY OF L. MCCOMBER

focused on sustainability, durability and energy efficiency, which he said has everything to do with the kinds of materials that are used for building. "It's a great opportunity for us to use the raw materials that we love working with, like wood, steel, concrete, brick and stone — not materials that are full of glue, or petroleum-based materials." "Our practice is focused on doing quality work, without fireworks or superficiality. We try to go straight to the objective, being practical and trying to find the right solutions that are durable and appreciated by the people who live in the spaces we create." SEE L. MCCOMBER ON G3



The L. McComber architecture firm created this exterior space outside the Parc métro, with tables and seating for 60 people in a shaded area near a public kitchen and barbecue. PHOTO BY RAPHAËL THIBODEAU, COURTESY OF L. MCCOMBER

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