

FRIDAY • JULY 4 • 2008

Partners in luxury

Real estate, jewelry go hand-in-hand

By Susan Nova
Special Correspondent

In an unusual marketing alliance, Highgrove, a 92-unit high-rise condominium in Stamford designed by Robert A.M. Stern, famed international architect and dean of the School of Architecture at Yale, invited noted Paris-based jeweler Lorenz Baumer to display his fanciful bijoux, an example of co-branding of two luxury products.

Among the 60 invited guests for the evening at the sales center was Princess Hussa al-Khalid, daughter of the late King Khalid of Saudi Arabia, and Shlomi Reuveni, executive vice president and senior

managing director of Browns Harris Stevens Select/New Development Marketing, a sister company of New York-based Brown Harris Stevens Residential Sales.

Highgrove is named after the country home of Prince Charles near Tetbury in Gloucestershire, England. Built in stone in the late 1790s and restored a century later after a devastating fire, the home was purchased by the Duchy of Cornwall on behalf of Prince Charles in 1980. The 37-acre grounds are used to showcase the prince's interest in organic gardening and farming.

The Stamford Highgrove is an 18-story tower being developed by Jason Schiesinger, president of fourth-generation Cebraid-Signal Corp., with offices in Stamford, West Palm Beach, Fla., and Freeport, N.Y., and the real estate investment arm of Investcorp International, headquartered in New York. Construction is by Hunter Roberts Construction Group, with offices in New York, Bedminster, N.J., Philadelphia and Charlotte, N.C.

Lorenz Baumer, whose jewelry atelier and offices are in the Place Vendôme, recently agreed to become the jewelry designer for Louis Vuitton, one of the oldest fashion houses in the world, dating to 1854. Louis Vuitton is also renowned for handbags, other leather goods and many more luxury products, wines and champagne among them.

Baumer, trained as an engineer, spent seven years designing costume jewelry, then turned to the real thing, selling his own signature exotic jewels, whose themes include architecture, nature and poetry, while also designing for Chanel.

An example of his fauna-inspired jewels is the hedgehog ring crafted of chocolate diamonds set in 18K gold, whose body swivels to reveal a small compartment for a pill, or two, or whatever fits. His snowflake necklace of diamonds and white gold converts to a tiara, via pushbuttons and an invisible armature.

Born in Washington, D.C., Baumer has lived all over the world, spending time in Austria, Israel and Canada, among others, with his German diplomat father and French mother, an artist. Now he travels to Brazil, South Africa and Australia to find the world's finest gemstones. Last year, his creations were exhibited at the Forbes Galleries in Manhattan.

The Reserve at Ponlar Plains in Westport, a clustered 13-house development surrounded by 33 wooded acres, with fishing ponds, had the same marketing concept. ARS Partners LLC, the developer, and sales director, Mary Beth Grasso of Keller Williams Luxury Homes in Westport, brought in Nikki Bates, whose hand-crafted gold and gemstone jewelry was displayed at an afternoon-into-evening open house. Bates, a Westport resident, who also has a master's degree in clinical social work from Columbia University,



Contributed photo

Highgrove, a 92-unit high-rise condominium in downtown Stamford, will be 18 stories and feature luxuries such a swimming pool with retractable glass roof and wine cellar when it is completed in the summer of 2009.

is a classically trained jeweler who grew up in Greenwich and graduated from Skidmore College.

Using ancient techniques, she crafts her own 22K gold to make into pendants, earrings, rings, necklaces, and bracelets. Her work is shown at Saks Fifth Avenue in Greenwich and at craft shows.

Highgrove features luxuries in architectural and life-at-home modes. The building, with an expected completion date during the summer of 2009, will have private elevator access for each home, a swimming pool with retractable glass roof, a health and wellness club, with a sauna/steam room, a private yoga studio, a wine cellar,

with climate-controlled coolers with three temperature zones and tasting areas, a private screening room for two dozen, a 24-hour doorman, concierge, valet parking and three guest suites. A billiard room may be reserved for small-scale entertaining, the great room for hosting a horde.

Homes have either two, three or four bedrooms, and most range from just under 2,200 to about 3,500 square feet. A few of the smallest start around 1,400 square feet, but each unit boasts 10-foot ceilings and a balcony or one or two terraces. A number of the condos have a fireplace.

Luxury

Continued from Page B6

The kitchens have custom-designed cabinets and countertops of marble or granite, along with appliances by Wolf and SubZero. They also feature a breakfast room.

Master bedrooms boast his-and-her walk-in closets, crown moldings and, most often, ceilings that rise to 10 feet. Many also have a dressing room.

Baths have custom vanities and cabinets from Greenwich-based Christopher Peacock, Kohler fixtures and honed white Calcutta marble swathing the floor and the countertops. Master baths have a built-in dressing table between the sinks.

The model and sales office is at 992 Summer St.