

Al Barari's *signature* pieces

PW takes a look at the new living spaces built in Dubai's green oasis

By Nicole Walter

Special to PW

Healthy, luxurious, stylish, peaceful — these are some of the words that spring to mind when talking about the Al Barari way of life. And, yes, exclusive, probably even more so with its most recent addition, the Signature Collection in Seventh Heaven that is due for completion in June.

The Signature Collection features two-and three-

bedroom units, ranging from 1,700-3,300 sq ft, excluding terraces.

The three-bedroom show apartment is around 5,000 sq ft, including the 1,700-sq-ft terraces. It is already open for viewing at the Seventh Heaven building. With more than 65 per cent of work completed, its interesting architectural shape can already be made out.

Strolling in past the expansive terraces, visitors will get a taste of what they can buy into: spacious and bright

apartments thanks to floor-to-high-ceiling windows.

All of the 13 Signature apartments come with some extras compared with the rest of the units, which have all been sold out.

The developer says the marble-floored Signature Collection offers the best

in kitchen appliances in an open-plan layout with a kitchen island — perfect for socialising while cooking. Storage space is as unobtrusive as it can get, incorporating cupboards level with the walls, which are included in the dining and living areas.

Even the bedrooms evoke a sense of exclusivity and luxury. Martyn Crook, CEO of Asset Management at Al Barari, says the master bedroom's bathrooms offer a fresh New Hampshire look. "Attention to detail is everywhere in this development," says Crook. "It has to be absolutely perfect. All of the 13 units on offer have amazingly large terraces and stunning views. They overlook landscaping, waterways and an eight-metre waterfall."

Easy access

Views from the lower floors reach as far as Meydan, overlooking the neighbouring nature reserve. Those in higher floors can also spot the Burj Al Arab and the sea.

Getting up and down the building is a quick exercise, thanks to 18 lift shafts and service elevators, cutting waiting time to less than half than one is accustomed to in most buildings.

"There is a maximum of three other apartments sharing the lift with you," says Crook. "We also designed lift lobbies [similar to those in]



Martyn Crook
CEO, Asset Management,
Al Barari





Pictures courtesy of Al Barari



✦ A room in one of the residences at Ashjar



✦ Residents live amid lush greens, one of the defining characteristics of Al Barari

hotels rather than corridors. Some of the bigger apartments have private lobbies.”

While a one-bedroom unit at Seventh Heaven starts at Dh3 million during its launch, the Signature units cost around Dh5 million-Dh9 million. The developer has also teamed up with First Gulf Bank to offer a 50 per cent mortgage.

“The original pricing structure had varied,” says Crook. “Today the Signature units are priced according to what they are currently worth. If there are any of the original ones on the resale

market, they would be positively affected.”

Although Al Barari operates in a niche market, the company says it also keeps a close eye on the market.

“We remain focused on our core values — to create a nice living space at a certain price, despite where the market is at,” says Crook. “If you want it, it’s there for you. Luxury is, maybe, an over-used word. This is a very well-finished, high-end environment.”

“Having said that, prices are based on the value we believe we can offer in the con-

text of Dubai. Sentiment is everywhere when it comes to the property market. And the sentiment [points to a] market bottoming out. As we’re now at an advanced stage of completion, we decided now was a good time to launch these Signature units.”

The developer has also been working on how to convey the project’s philosophy to potential buyers.

“We want them to understand what Al Barari is all about,” says Crook. “It’s not just a home, but a way of life. [We are] sharing our vision of what is already there and

what will be created, so it gets sold correctly.”

Seventh Heaven comprises a 12-floor and a 10-floor residential building, with one- to four-bedroom apartments, as well as duplexes, penthouses and garden homes. The project also has restaurants, retail outlets, a gym and indoor-and-outdoor swimming pools. All parking will be underground.

“We’re adding more amenities to Al Barari with Seventh Heaven. People love to go out and shopping is a very big thing. We expect outside visitors to come, contemplate our green surroundings and shop as well.”

Other projects

The development continues to evolve under the watchful eyes of the Zaal family. The Farm, for instance, is currently being renovated and expanded and is set to open next month.

Ashjar, Al Barari’s low-rise apartments, meanwhile, is expected to be completed alongside Seventh Heaven. Homes released at Ashjar were fully sold out, with 30 per cent held back.

Al Barari’s 55 rental villas, The Nest, should come online early next year, according to the developer.

“The rent depends on the villa location,” says Crook. “We have a row of 10 right in front of waterways, which

would attract a rent of around Dh500,000-Dh600,000.”

Al Barari itself aims to become a major destination, with a “forest” covering almost 500,000 sq ft, tree-climbing facilities for kids, a school, medical centre, floating markets and other retail offerings and a resort hotel.

“This is such a personal development for the Zaal family: they live, love and breathe it. You can feel the vibe of not just, ‘here is the key’, but ‘we are thinking about you’,” says Crook. “That’s why it takes time for the second phase to be completed. We really work out what we should put in there to have the perfect balance.”

An interesting balance will also be created by adding not only a rehabilitation centre, but also an assisted living centre, which the elderly can live in their own apartments with on-call care.

“It’s a community, not an old people’s home,” says Crook. “One can enjoy life with everything needed.”

Meanwhile, work on the second phase of Al Barari, a five-year undertaking, is expected to start late next year, according to the developer.

“There is so much to do over the next few years,” says Crook. “Our time frame fits with so much that’s going on at the same time around us. We really will be the green heart of Dubai.” ■