



New Jersey • Gold Coast Properties

Special Advertising Feature



JONATHAN AYALA, VISUAL GRIP

At Journal Squared in Jersey City, special attention has been paid to the wellness amenities in all three buildings (left). Solaia, in North Bergen, features The Sanctuary, which houses three floors of spa and fitness luxuries (middle and right).

QUALLS BENSON AND VMI

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by Kelly Bryant

If society gained a new buzzword over the past two years (besides “pandemic”), it just might be “self-care.” Health and wellness are top of mind more than ever before, and with that, a desire to be better to ourselves every day. And real estate developers and businesses are doing their best to meet the needs of a renewed interest in holistic living.

“People had a wakeup call,” says Sam Boyce, founder of Boycemode Nutrition and owner of The Power Plant Cafe in Jersey City. “I am proud to be a part of a community that embraces health and holistic care. I’m witnessing an awakening in people about the power of nutrition and the direct correlation between what you consume and your overall health.”

No, New Jersey isn’t going soft. They’re just savvy to the importance of living wholefully.

“I think the lockdown that came with the pandemic gave people time to think about how their own health and wellness would affect their chances of survival,” Boyce, whose cafe focuses on organic, vegan cuisine, says. “I am no longer a diabetic, no longer suffer from high blood pressure or palpitations, and that’s all through diet and movement.”

This is why boutique condominiums, like those at Solaia in North Bergen, are gaining such attention. With The Sanctuary, a three-story wellness center dedicated to rejuvenation and active lifestyles, Solaia is raising the bar as it pertains to the ability to achieve that elusive work-life balance.

“It’s intended to be very zen-like,” says Louis Mont, founder and CEO of Skyline Development Group, developers of Solaia. “We’re offering not just a home, but also a

lifestyle. There are only 70 condominium residences in the building and just seven homes per floor. We expect there probably won’t be more than 150 people living in the building total. You basically have a quiet and tranquil experience incorporating the amenities into your daily routine.”

FINDING BALANCE

Skyline was in the middle of designing the final features of Solaia when the pandemic hit. Mont said it became obvious to the team that there was an opportunity to address the needs and concerns of future residents.

For example, the spa includes a hot tub equipped with an ozone system, which neutralizes unwelcome pollutants like bacteria and viruses quickly, as well as a steam room, sauna, experience shower and an affusion pipe delivering chilled water at a temperature believed to be therapeutic for the muscles and ligaments.

“We have an area which is purely for lounging, as well as a salt inhalation halotherapy room,” Mont says. “In that space, we also have infrared beds. The entire level is for wellness, available to every homeowner 24 hours a day.”

The second level of the facility features lockers and showers, allowing all of Solaia’s purchasers to have their own personalized locker. On the first level you’ll find the fitness center, featuring full aerobics equipment, individual weight stations, boxing equipment, a TRX system and just about everything you would find in a commercial gym.

“There’s no need for an outside gym membership when you live in Solaia,” Mont says. “In addition, we have a resident lounge with a chef kitchen and rooftop retreat, and a barbecue area with firepits. The fact that we are a smaller, more boutique building allows for residents to get to know each other a little better and build a community.”

BUILDING A HEALTHIER TOMORROW

In nearby Jersey City, The KRE Group is preparing the third tower of leasable residences at their Journal Squared apartment complex, which sits above the PATH Station in the historic neighborhood and provides dramatic views of the Hudson River, Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island and

downtown Manhattan. The developer, along with partner National Real Estate Advisors and exclusive marketing and leasing agent The Marketing Directors, recently completed the lease-up of the second tower, which also happens to be the tallest, at 68 stories with 704 apartments.

“People seem to be blown away by our fitness amenities,” says Jon Kushner, president of The KRE Group. “We went over the top with the gym we built in the second tower. But all of the tenants from all three towers have access to the nearly 100,000 square feet of amenities spread throughout the buildings, so they’re all shared.”

These include a 75-foot pool, indoor rock climbing, cycling and yoga studios, as well as a meditation deck for indoor and outdoor use.

“It’s over 15,000 square feet of just fitness level space,” Kushner says. “That’s really well received by our residents. Our mission is very strong. We’re always looking to improve the health and wellness of the people living and working here. We focus on it when it comes to planning and, ultimately, running our buildings.”

LIVING YOUR BEST LIFE

The health-minded aspects of these properties don’t end with the amenities; the calming, wellness-focused touches also feel very much a part of the individual residences.

Journal Squared delivers, with its units emanating a sleek feel with contemporary kitchens, white oak wood flooring and breathtaking skyline views.

At Solaia, double-pane, low-e windows breathe in the natural light, while gas fireplaces add a cozy warmth to the homes. Kitchens are outfitted with waterfall islands and wifi-enabled appliances. Custom closet systems lend to an organized life and en suite primary baths featuring Seedwood tile walls, step-in showers and relaxing soaking tubs.

“We are involved in all the details of the construction of the apartments,” Mont says. “Not just with the finishes you see, but lots of things you don’t see. It makes Solaia a special, upscale and quality construction of which we’re very proud.”