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# NATIONAL POST

## Game on at 5959 Yonge St. condos, where high-tech sports amenities will play a big part

[Iris Benaroya, Special to National Post](#) | February 16, 2015 | Last Updated: Feb 26 4:42 PM ET



Peter J. Thompson / National Post Honey Ghods, vice-president of business development, in the living room of the model suite at 5959 Yonge St.

The builder, Ghasem Ghods, doesn't want you to go to a café to grab a coffee. Or play squash at some sub-par court up the street.

When he finishes building 5959 Yonge St., just north of Cummer, its residents won't ever have to venture outside. A defining feature of the condo, which will be walking distance to Finch subway station and a quick drive to Mel Lastman Square, is an aggressive amenity program that encompasses 50,000 square feet of space dedicated to leisure.

This will include: a bowling alley, a Zen river garden, two pools, four party rooms, a yoga and Pilates studio, a sports bar, a chai (read: tea) room and two of the most modern sports courts to ever be installed in a condominium.

These athletic rooms will have glass LED-lit floors and walls that, with the push of a button, change their court configurations from volleyball to basketball to badminton. This kind of technology will cost the builder tens of thousands of dollars to install by a crew from Germany.

"We wanted a sense of liveliness and to offer excellent amenities as an extension of your condo," says Mr. Ghods of Ghods Builders ([ghodsbuilders.com](http://ghodsbuilders.com)), who has been building both low- and high-rise homes since 1979. "I want people who buy here to tour their friends and say, 'Take a look at my pool, my theatre, my chai room, my juice bar, my atrium.' You own it. I want to create something owners will be proud of."



Peter J. Thompson / National Post Ghasem Ghods: I want people to buy here to tour their friends and say, "Take a look at MY pool, MY theatre, MY chai room, MY juice bar, MY atrium."

Mr. Ghods's passion is palpable as he rifles through the condo drawings fanned out before him on the boardroom table in his North York office. Beside him sits his daughter, Honey Ghods, the family's vice-president of business (his sons also work here). She has two PhDs. She's tall with dark, flowing Pantene-perfect hair and looks like she could whup your butt in volleyball on those new courts. Adding to her charm is the hint of a Texan accent, picked up when the family lived in the Lone Star State.

Ms. Ghods gestures to a drawing on the table that shows a spiral staircase with architectural railings made of wood, which is planned for the atrium. Situated on the 32nd floor, the cantilevered space will be a voluminous two-storey green zone where residents can sip tea, relax and drink in the spectacular views.



Ghods Builders 5959 Yonge St. will have 50,000 square feet dedicated to leisure, including two sport courts whose court configurations change with LED lighting.

Another drawing depicts the lobby, where a flood of white marble in chain-link motif cascades over the floors and walls, recalling luxury fashion houses Hermès and Fendi.

“The chain link theme appears throughout the entire project,” Ms. Ghods says. “We’re carrying that to the pool, the party room, the sports bar and the lounge,” she says. “The whole scheme is about sharp lines for a very slick look.”

Dreary Yonge and Cummer has sadly never been synonymous with cutting-edge design — until now. “North Yonge is probably the worst-planned neighbourhood,” says Clifford Korman of Kiror Architects, the architect behind 5959 Yonge. “There’s nothing but strip plazas and greyness — fields of cars and asphalt with buildings set behind them. It’s the same old story: under-utilized land.”

Mr. Korman is enthusiastic that his design — four “clean, elegant and contemporary” point towers, set in two podiums — will uplift the area and create a sense of community.

Occupancy is set for July 2018; prices start at \$288,900 for 507 square feet.

“We’re taking a vacant neighbourhood and making it into a pedestrian area with street-level retail and artistic canopies [these are really cool, sporting punchy, streaked wood] to create life on the street. It will totally change the urban landscape.”

Mr. Korman notes the buildings, which will comprise 555 units, will not be bulky or overwhelming. “They will be made up of a series of solids and voids and black and white components that will [lighten] the mass of the project.” He likens it to a mosaic or a Mondrian painting.

“The other thing that’s spectacular about this project is that we’ve designed it from the inside out and that is a compliment to Mr. Ghods,” he says. “His emphasis is on great suites — not just a good-looking building, but great floor plans.”

Mr. Ghods is passionate about this last point. “If somebody is buying 500 square feet, they are going to get 500 square feet of useable space.”

He notes his goal has always been to see the building populated with real people who enjoy their units, and their building — hence the abundance of amenities.

You’ll really never have to leave home again.