



Interview

With Steve Kempton

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By Ed Bertha

Esplanade At Lakewood Ranch

Located on 207 acres just north of State Road 70, off Lakewood Ranch Boulevard, Esplanade is a gated community planned for 450 maintenance free villas and single family homes. What sets Esplanade apart is that it is the only lifestyle community in Lakewood Ranch which distinguishes it from all the others.

EB: Why Lakewood Ranch for an active lifestyle community?

SK: Lakewood Ranch has continued to outperform the market becoming one of the top twenty best selling master planned communities in the U.S. last year. To have the opportunity to build in a community with a live, work, play, lifestyle is something that doesn't come along often. We believe it is a wonderful opportunity to serve the people living here twenty years who want to downsize, but stay in the Ranch. It is also an excellent draw for those retirees who are looking for a full social calendar. For those moving from within the Ranch, Esplanade offers all the accustomed amenities while residents can maintain their social network.

EB: Explain the active lifestyle component of Esplanade.

SK: With Esplanade, we are filling a buyer need by offering the active lifestyle component not found in any of the other communities. Our approach to lifestyle is to extend what Lakewood Ranch already created and introduce new lifestyle activities. We have developed and designed Esplanade to be something special and our members can join the other residents and coexist. Some of their existing clubs and organizations will come and meet on our property in the clubhouse which will open in mid 2012 and visa versa. So it's not completely independent by any stretch of the imagination.

We have a saying that a community that plays together stays together. Esplanade offers an opportunity for residents to join clubs and participate in different activities that are all right there, almost from the front porch. Residents can walk to the amenity center or just drive a golf cart. We want to make it easy for the residents to get out there and meet the neighbors have fun and get involved in the community. That's why we have a full time Lifestyle Director on site.

EB: What is the role of the Lifestyle Director?

SK: We have partnered with WTS International. They are a national renowned lifestyle management company. WTS will help manage and host the structure of all activities from pickleball, to bingo night, the cooking club, special themed evenings such as Hawaiian Night and all of this will be possible through the planning by the onsite Lifestyle Director.

The idea of a Lifestyle Director is to make it easy to get involved and to encourage participation. The goal of the Lifestyle Director is to try and make that early integration fun, quick and seamless. The residents will feel like they have a concierge to meet people and make introductions to those with like interests. The Lifestyle Director will coordinate the activities, manage the dates and also try to implement the home owners requests for new activities. With Lakewood Ranch already having a full calendar of events on Main Street and throughout the community residents will soon appreciate the Lifestyle Directors ability to assist with coordination of on-site and off-site activities, including clubs.

EB: Amenities are a big part of Esplanade. Can you elaborate on them?

SK: Esplanade will feature top notch and highly popular amenities which will be totally integrated with Lakewood Ranch. In building the list we have made sure to optimize and compliment the existing amenities within Lakewood Ranch. The focus has been on including a selection of amenities specific for Esplanade residents. From the



minute someone drives up the circular drive through the gated entrance, your eye is drawn to the parks and walks leading to the clubhouse's grand entrance, residents are encouraged to immediately enter the grand foyer greeting center of the Esplanade clubhouse. Visitors and residents will be able to quickly meet existing members and be able to preview a full social calendar. Part of the active lifestyle is not just all of the activities; it's also the ability to have a cup of coffee or a glass of wine with neighbors, guests and friends and get to meet new people from all over.

The clubhouse is organized to offer optimum views overlooking a beautiful lake. Just beyond the back covered lanai is the resort style pool, with the ability to swim laps and use the resistance pool. Look further to the lake for a view of the pier and a beach area

with a launch for canoeing or outdoor water aerobics. Located close by is a cozy fire pit for socializing or lingering after a late sunset. Head down to the lake for a stroll along a hidden walkway which provides privacy from the road. The walkway circles the site and is a surreal interaction with nature as homeowners enjoy a leisurely walk.

Additional outdoor activities include an outdoor kitchen, pickleball courts, bocce ball, an oversized pet park, fitness lawn and a tot lot for kids visiting the community. Last is a formal green lawn for movies on the lawn, formal events or a picnic.

The clubhouse has an aerobics center with full equipment, a gym with free weights, TVs and everything expected in a top notch fitness facility. The grand ballroom will be a showcase room for hosting dances, poker night, formal and black tie events of all types. The billiards room will be smaller, more intimate and quaint like the library. The craft room will accommodate artists at every level interested in showcasing their talent and enjoying time with residents of similar interest.

For those wanting to golf or play tennis an exclusive preferred membership plan for Esplanade residents is available with the golf course and tennis facility. Esplanade has been planned with the most popular amenities.

EB: What is your development time table?

SK: Construction began in late August and we are on schedule to feature our grand opening of models the weekend of January 21 – 22. The infrastructure with paving and landscaping for phase one is nearing completion. Approximately 140 lots are in the pre-home construction process. The five models, including a sales center will be available for preview in January as part of our grand opening. We plan to break ground on the amenity center (clubhouse) in January and it will open in the summer. The gates, guard house, hardscape and landscaping will be complete in early winter. Our goal is to be open mid to late January so we'll be ready for seasonal buyers looking to purchase their Florida home and take advantage of everything our great state and the beautiful weather has to offer.

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