



## Aura at Camelback

“Live Life in Balance.” More than a just a bit of sound advice or a clever marketing slogan, these four words have become the clarion call for the development of an exciting new residential community in Phoenix. Named “Aura at Camelback,” this intriguing new enclave promises to change the way residents think about living, working, socializing and seeking recreation in the Southwest.

Conveniently located in Phoenix’s bustling and affluent Camelback corridor, Aura at Camelback is far more than just another residential development. In fact, the project represents a radical departure from the status quo, a new paradigm for what is being termed “sustainable luxury living” in the heart of one of Phoenix’s premier residential areas.

With 36 private residential retreats set on more than two lushly landscaped desert acres, Aura promises to blend environmental sustainability and pure luxury in a design that allows its residents to foster a deep sense of community. Additionally, Aura will offer them the opportunity to actively engage in the green standard of homebuilding that, for many, represents a necessary new mode of living in our time.

### **The ‘Green’ Standard**

It’s really only been a decade or so since the green building philosophy has become widely touted in North America. The movement has rapidly taken root, however, as increasing numbers of home builders and buyers embrace the idea of creating a lifestyle that pays renewed respect to the environment. But, as a concept, “green building” is far more than just a way of constructing environmentally-friendly homes. On a wider scale, the term addresses the way that we live our lives day-to-day. The decisions we make about water use, automobiles, energy, toxic VOCs, fossil fuels, and many more impact us and

the environment in subtle ways, every hour of every day. It isn't enough to simply *build* a home that's green; the commitment then requires us to *live* green on a daily basis.

Part of the green building movement is the result of an increasing shift in values. In his enlightening book, *The Rise of the Creative Class*, noted author and educator Richard Florida describes how millions of Americans are beginning to alter their dreams and expectations of how they see themselves living their lives. Rather than following the typical approach to living, working, socializing and seeking recreation, Florida says that Americans everywhere are starting to change in significant ways. We're modeling our lifestyles on more educated, creative people, such as artists and scientists. As a result, many of our values and tastes—our personal relationships, our choices of where we live, and even the way that we structure our time—are changing dramatically.

Chad Gifford, President and founder of Catalyst Communities and project manager for Aura at Camelback, is one of a handful of residential real-estate developers who have closely studied this dynamic shift in lifestyle fundamentals. Gifford and the Catalyst team have devoted a significant amount of time and energy to designing a community that truly offers homebuyers a unique alternative to the status quo.

Aura at Camelback is the notable result.

### **Visionary Concept & Design**

Like the new American home buyer and resident that Richard Florida describes in his book, Aura at Camelback presents an entirely new way of thinking about living, working and playing. At its core, Aura provides its residents a means of living more balanced lives—enabling them to both live *well*—in the sense of enjoying a lifestyle that is exciting, fun and luxurious—along with giving them the satisfaction of knowing that they are also living *responsibly*. As such, they can keep a conscientious eye toward lifestyle choices that address energy conservation, nature and the environment.

“It's entirely possible to live without compromise,” notes Gifford. “We've proven this with Aura. What it achieves is that it gives people a way to live with passion for their fellow

residents, their community and even their planet. It's about a fundamental change in the way we—as homeowners—approach the idea of sustainable, luxury, community living.”

### **Sustainable Community**

So what does Gifford actually mean by the term “sustainable”? He admits that it's a concept that's getting paid a lot of lip service these days. But he makes it clear that the vision for Aura is rooted in the best meaning of what sustainable living represents. “With Aura, we're striving to respect the environment and honor the health of both our planet and ourselves through energy-efficient design,” he says, with utter conviction. “Aura is proving that it's possible to be a good steward of the planet without compromising the very best lifestyle that we can imagine for ourselves.”

Gifford continues. “Aura balances sound environmental design with remarkable aesthetics and amenities,” he says.” Some of the green characteristics we offer include solar-powered electricity systems, vehicle-free streets, and, through the use of underground parking, we've managed to completely eliminate asphalt and cement at Aura. I think this is something that is truly unique in the Phoenix metro area.”

On the ‘aesthetic luxury’ side of the equation, Gifford says that Aura offers spectacular views of the surrounding mountains; expansive, open-room designs with soaring ceilings, along with elegant appointments and private elevators in every home. There are also private rooftop gardens, lush landscaping, and broad courtyards with beautiful water features.

Sustainability happens to be part of a larger, growing mandate in this country. Locally, Arizona State University has created the International Institute for Sustainability, which is chartered to deal with global and regional ecological, economic and societal issues that relate to maintaining a sustainable quality of life on earth. ASU President Michael Crow has pledged his advocacy for this effort, citing pioneering work from an elite league of educational institutions that includes Harvard, Columbia, Stanford and others that are tackling the issue of sustainability head-on.

One exciting, environmentally conscious outcome of Aura at Camelback will be to leverage solar technology in ways that the Valley has never before experienced. Mike Eisele, President and CEO of Agenera, Arizona's first solar-based service provider, has partnered with Catalyst Communities to help establish Aura as a benchmark for solar residential power projects in Arizona. "What makes the Aura at Camelback project so unique," Eisele says, "is the fact that every single home will have immense solar capacity, with the potential of saving 80 to 100 percent on utility costs. In fact, residents will probably have all the power they need—and it will be power from the sun. Everything has aligned perfectly for this project."

As is true of any innovative movement that promotes sweeping change, sustainability has its detractors. Many developers have expressed a fear that a green building agenda will delay projects and raise costs. In a recent study conducted by analysts at the Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI), however, the data clearly indicate that well-executed green development projects can be cost-effective. Project costs can even be reduced, and buyers may spend less to heat, cool and generally operate their homes.

### **Balanced Luxury**

Can residents practice a philosophy of sustainable living and still live luxuriously? Aura's developers answer this important question with their emphasis on creating a sense of "balanced luxury" for their residents. Notably, the idea requires them to give up nothing of *true* value in the process. A glance at plans for Aura's retreat-residences illustrates that they are luxurious by any measure. They feature innovative design and upgraded building materials, along with high-end appliances and amenities. Importantly, however, Aura will also bring to their residents other aspects of condominium living that most developments fail to offer—spaciousness, privacy, security and a healthy, vibrant living environment, to name just a few. What's more, Aura is consciously designed to become a "connected" community, planned in such a way that its residents can foster a true sense of community and neighborliness that sadly seems to have diminished over the past several decades.

From a construction standpoint, Aura's 36 residences will be available in six distinct floor plans that range from a spacious 2,469 to 3,147 square feet. With a groundbreaking scheduled for March of '08, the project is expected to be fully completed in mid-2009.

Prices for an Aura residential retreat will range from \$800,000 to more than \$1.2 million, comparable to other luxury residences in the market but incomparable in terms of what buyers will get for their money.

Energy efficiency will be an abiding hallmark of Aura's design. Gifford makes a particular point that Aura will deliver it in several ways. "In addition to its solar electrical systems, Aura homes will qualify as 'Zero Energy Homes,' a designation that's handed out by the U.S. Department of Energy." He goes on to describe Aura's design for water-saving features and numerous other eco-centered design methods that will have a real impact on the consumption of natural resources.

Gifford says that the homes will also be LEED-certified. In fact, the community is planned to be the largest LEED Silver for Homes-certified project in the country. "LEED stand for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design," he notes. "It's an important, nationally accepted benchmark for the design of high-performance, environmentally-friendly real estate projects. What it means is that Aura will be capable of providing a healthier living environment through better, more efficient use of key resources, such as energy, water, building materials and land."

As the first project of its kind, Aura's design and construction will be challenging. Senior Rae Kristoff Architecture was selected as the architect of record from a wide field of contenders. With 30 years of solid architectural excellence to its credit, the firm is highly regarded for its contributions to the urban revitalization of Phoenix.

Actual construction of Aura will be in the hands of Urban Edge Builders. As Gifford notes, "The team is so important to me that I've made sure to surround myself with others whose passion for this project is equal to my own, and whose mission is the same: to do something that has never been done before in ways that are truly pioneering."

### **Authentic Community**

A deep commitment to the notion of community is the third component for successful living at Aura, and one to which the design team has devoted considerable thought and planning. The Camelback corridor, with its abundance of high-end retail, restaurants,

nightlife and entertainment venues, is a perfect setting for the vibrant community living planned for Aura. In fact, the Urban Land Institute recently tagged the intersection of 24<sup>th</sup> Street and Camelback as “the Valley’s hottest intersection.”

Gifford echoes the sentiment. “Of course, the area is one of the most sought-after in Valley, but, beyond that, Aura is the kind of residential enclave that promotes a friendly, easy-going environment. I hope that it plants the seeds of what I consider to be a truly authentic community.” In fact, Gifford says that he plans to become an Aura at Camelback resident himself. “I take a great deal of pride in what this community stands for, and I intend to live here,” he notes.

“A life in balance is a life worth living.” Such is the maxim that Chad Gifford has chosen to live by, a point perfectly illustrated in his design for this remarkable new residential project. “With Aura, I’ve made a commitment to develop a community that reduces our ecological footprint on the planet,” he says. “Our research shows that there are very few communities that embrace the particular combination of ideals we’ve set for it. When you consider that we offer environmental sustainability, balanced luxury and a strong sense of community, you begin to understand that Aura is something truly unique. In fact, it promises to set a new living standard for the Southwest and perhaps even the entire country.”



## **Aura at Camelback Development Team Profiles**

### ***Catalyst Communities, Phoenix***

Chadwic Gifford formed Catalyst Communities in 2006 with the vision of creating a new model for “sustainable luxury” residential living in Phoenix’s Camelback Corridor. The result of his innovative approach to urban living is Aura at Camelback, a 36-unit residential community located near 25<sup>th</sup> Street and Campbell. Based in Phoenix, Arizona, Catalyst Communities is creating Aura at Camelback as its flagship property, which will embody an innovative urban townhouse community concept that advances “green” residential building to new levels, yet fits well into the fabric of the surrounding neighborhood. Aura at Camelback will be an energy efficient property certified as a silver LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) residential community as determined by the U. S. Green Building Council. For more information, please visit [www.catalyst-communities.com](http://www.catalyst-communities.com) or [www.usgbc.org](http://www.usgbc.org).

### ***Senior Rae Kristoff Architecture, Phoenix***

Devoted to the urban and aesthetic revitalization of Phoenix, Senior Rae Kristoff Architecture is responsible for the design of Aura at Camelback. Founded in 1968, Senior Rae Kristoff Architecture approaches a diverse array of projects with creativity and ingenuity, utilizing innovation and sustainability as guiding principals. The architecture, planning and design firm is contributing to the creative collaboration occurring in Phoenix through such projects as Amelia Condos, H2ology office/warehouse, Cerreus residential, Black Canyon medical office and Geordies at Wrigley Mansion Club. Senior Rae Kristoff Architecture’s design philosophy boasts that architecture can be utilized as an instrument of change, helping to sustain the environment and regenerate the urban fabric, while recycling the urban infrastructure. For more information, visit [www.srkarchitecture.com](http://www.srkarchitecture.com).

### ***Urban Edge Builders, Scottsdale***

Based in Scottsdale, Urban Edge Builders has been selected to build Aura at Camelback. With more than 50 years of combined experience, founders Mike Hurst and Tom Keilty have gained a deep understanding and expertise in green building construction. The company is dedicated to making a long lasting contribution to the community, while balancing sustainable practices with economic sensibility. For information, visit [www.urbanedgebuilders.com](http://www.urbanedgebuilders.com).

### ***Prudential Arizona Properties, Scottsdale***

An independently owned and operated member of Prudential Real Estate Affiliates, Inc., Prudential Arizona Properties is responsible for the sales and marketing of residences at Aura at Camelback. The Scottsdale headquartered company’s mission is to be a dynamic, innovative real estate company empowered by positive people who create an environment of excellence and superior service thereby becoming the market leader in Arizona and creating value as an organization. For more information, visit [www.pruaz.com](http://www.pruaz.com).

## ***Creative Branding***

### ***Brand Identity: Kitchen Sink Studios, Phoenix***

As an innovative, full service visualization studio, Kitchen Sink Studios Inc. brings to life the visions of our clients through the wonders of sophisticated technology and design. We believe that truly great marketing materials are created by bright, enthusiastic, talented individuals working together efficiently and seamlessly. Our many services allow us the ability to be involved in virtually every stage of the project by providing 3-D renderings and animation, branding and identity, multimedia presentations, interactive displays, web site design and hosting, technology consulting, brochure and ad design, public relations, event planning and, of course... the kitchen sink! In 1999, partners Nick Hower and Kory Kapfer formed the business with the idea of using computer animation to create dynamic presentations. Over the years, the Studio has since expanded to service various industries, both locally and nationally, including: architecture, real estate/investment, hospitality, legal, medical, broadcast and manufacturing, to name a few.

### ***Brand Strategy: Satow Strategies, LLC, Scottsdale***

Satow Strategies, LLC, is a leading Arizona brand marketing company that enhances business value through market-leading branding, positioning, naming and marketing communications strategies and programs. Scottsdale based since 2003, Satow Strategies and its principal, Paula Satow ([www.satowstrategies.com](http://www.satowstrategies.com)) have been helping companies and organizations across Arizona and the country to build company valuation faster and more efficiently through the development and execution of strategic brand strategy methods.

### ***Solar Electricity Interior Creations Unlimited doing interior design...***

Solar electricity service for each home at Aura at Camelback is being provided by Agenera. Solar electricity provides the bulk of the daytime and summer electricity requirements for each home, while the utility, SRP, provides backup and nighttime electricity. Agenera service will reduce homeowners' utility bills at Aura at Camelback by up to 75 percent. Agenera is Arizona's first and only company that enables businesses and builders to plug into the power of the sun. It's easy and often more affordable than depending just on utility electricity. Agenera eliminates upfront capital investment costs of solar and is responsible for all maintenance of the equipment. With a simple monthly bill — renewable, solar electricity is available at your fingertips and as a dependable and powerful hedge against rising energy costs. To tap into Agenera's 'creative energy', please visit [www.agenera.com](http://www.agenera.com).

### ***Interior Creations Unlimited***

Interior design services at Aura at Camelback will be provided by Interior Creations Unlimited.



## Aura at Camelback Fact Sheet

### *Property Facts*

**Property Name:** Aura at Camelback  
**Address:** Southwest Corner of 25<sup>th</sup> Street and Campbell  
**Web site:** [www.AuraatCamelback.com](http://www.AuraatCamelback.com)  
**Owner/Developer:** Catalyst Communities, Phoenix, Ariz.  
**Architect:** Senior Rae Kristoff Architecture, Phoenix, Ariz.  
**Builder:** Urban Edge Builders, Scottsdale, Ariz.  
**Broker:** Prudential Arizona, Scottsdale, Ariz.  
**Residential Units:** 36 townhouses  
**Residential Unit Sizes:** Ranging from 2,469 to 3,147 square feet  
**Price Range:** \$800,000's to \$1.2 million  
**Size:** 2.2 acres

### *Development Overview*

#### **The Aura Experience**

- Aura at Camelback is a model for “sustainable luxury” residential living located at 25<sup>th</sup> Street and Campbell Avenue in Phoenix.
- Aura at Camelback is designed to be Phoenix’s first sustainable residential project that achieves a genuine balance between luxury living, lifestyle, sense of community and environmental responsibility.
- Located in the popular Camelback Corridor, Aura at Camelback is designed as a pedestrian-friendly community, providing residents close proximity to premier retail centers, fine dining establishments, an excellent school district and easy access to local parks.
- Introduction of Aura at Camelback is slated to occur in January 2008, when the first units will be released for sale.
- Aura at Camelback will be the first property the market designed to meet the City of Phoenix’s new stringent fair housing requirements.
- A planned groundbreaking for Aura at Camelback is set for March 2008; the first residents are expected to begin occupying Aura at Camelback in mid 2009.

#### **The Residence**

- Aura at Camelback will consist of 36 luxury townhouses, available in six distinct custom floor plans, ranging from 2,469 to 3,147 square feet and including up to five levels of living space. Aura at Camelback is being designed in a modern architectural style that offers a diverse mix of exterior elevations including up to 40-foot spans of glass in places, which will provide impressive views of the Camelback Corridor neighborhood and the nearby mountain vistas.
- Each residence features a private underground two-car garage, private entries, private elevators to all levels of living space including rooftop gardens, private backyards reaching almost 1,000 square feet, ‘adventure’ bonus room adjacent to the private garage that can

be used as an office, hobby room or storage area. Upgraded Wolf and Subzero appliance packages with ASKO dishwashers, wine refrigerators, additional prep sink, Hansgrohe fixtures, solid surface countertops, two-storey height ceilings and multiple patios/balconies.

- Each residence also has a 4 Kilowatt solar electricity system to power 80-100 percent of the homes' annual electricity needs.
- The property features a gated entry, abundant "green" water features, lush landscaping, extensive courtyards with water features throughout, open plaza green space and a swimming pool.

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