

POST HOMES

MODEL SUITE OF THE WEEK

FINDING ITS CALIFORNIA ROOTS

Malibu's designer shows hints of humour

BY LISA VAN DE VEN

Playing on the California roots of the building's name, the model suite for Malibu at Harbourfront is designed with a soft colour palette, beachfront elements and modern furniture for a light, airy feel. The 766-square-foot, two-bedroom model was designed by Mike Niven of Mike Niven Interior Design Inc.

"It takes on more of a California type feel, as far as colour selections," says Mr. Niven. "And although they're modern, there is furniture that hints of humour, of something that might be more from the south ... and I don't mean Atlanta, I mean Florida or California."

The model's design begins with the suite layout, in which Mr. Niven also has a hand. One wall is curved and is open to the sales office in the model space, but would incorporate expansive windows in the actual suite. The suite features two bedrooms and two bathrooms, with a spacious feel that comes from having no corridors, says Mr. Niven.

"That was the big success of this particular unit," the designer says. "It was manipulated to get a maximum living area out of it."

The model itself features white walls and hardwood flooring stained in various colours, for a beachfront feel. "It's a line that actually is a little rougher in appearance. Although it's a finished product, it has a resemblance to driftwood," Mr. Niven says. "It's got that docks or wharf feel; it's got that textural reference to it."

Adding to that airy Californian feel, the kitchen combines cabinetry of maple and white, paired with a moveable kitchen island surrounded by four stools in a contemporary style. The stools complement the stainless steel



kitchen table and chairs, which feature a similar style.

"We wanted to stay modern with the furniture," says Mr. Niven. "That was sort of the balance between doing something that has a reference to what the project is named after, and doing something that's going to appeal to, I'd say, a 25 to 35 age bracket. So we basically took the background, made all the references, and put in modern furniture."

With that in mind, the living room also features contemporary pieces. To keep the model space open to the sales office beyond, Mr. Niven brought in a backless sofa in cream ultra-suede, pairing it with a soft blue ottoman and a tan-hued woven leather chair. A round area rug anchors the furniture.

"Your whole window has a curve to it ... so that was the best way to tie in everything. That circle ties it together."

Opening on to the living room is the master bedroom, where Mr. Niven has used some of the same colours as in the living area. The bed has been designed in the same wood used throughout the main living space, with the partly upholstered headboard extended to incorporate built-in night-stands. "We built the storage pieces into the end tables, rather than putting a dresser in," the designer says.



The suite offers a spacious feel that comes from having no corridors (above). The bed has been designed in the same wood used in the main living space.

In the second bedroom (converted into a den, with a built-in desk and day bed for guests), Mr. Niven uses darker woods, offering contrast to the suite. "It's just to add a different personality to the room," he says.

Malibu at Harbourfront is a project by developer Malibu investments Inc. Suites at the site range in size from 348 to 832 square feet, and in price from \$118,900 to \$328,900. The sales office is located at 600 Fleet St. and is open Monday to Thursday from noon to 7 p.m. and weekends from noon to 5 p.m. Call 416-601-1881 or visit www.malibuharbourfront.com

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