



# L A K E L A W N

## R E S O R T™

### **Buyer's Wisconsin choice: Big resort, intimate spa**

RELEASE DATE: 08/21/2005

Those of us who try to get away from the congestion and work pressures of Chicago have only a few weeks left to dangle our feet in the lakes and ponds of the northern Midwest -- that is, unless we want them to turn blue.

But it's not a cold-feet time of year in the market: Interest in owning or selling a piece of a getaway paradise actually increases. (See Mary Umberger's column on the front of the section.)

A couple of developments in southern Wisconsin have been added to the selection -- one grand and glorious and another subtle and soothing. For some, a summer stay at the Lake Lawn Resort is a tradition. Now that 125-year-old getaway in Delavan, Wis., is about to take on new dimensions.

The Delavan Plan Committee has recommended City Council approval of a \$390 million expansion and remake of the resort, adding 1,200 guest rooms, a 130,000-square-foot indoor water park, a 30,000-square-foot spa with 90 luxury suites and a festival retail complex connected to its 165-slip marina.

Sales have begun on the hotel condo suites, according to Tom Quinn, president of Delavan Resort Development Inc. and board member Pat Nelson. From Oak Creek and East Troy, Wis., respectively, they point out that local business people are the lion's share of the investors who have owned the resort since September 2004.

Prices range from \$170,000 to \$700,000 for units of 400 to about 1,200 square feet. Sales are being conducted by Lake Lawn Realty. A sales center has opened with two model rooms. Sales are on target, Quinn and Nelson said in an interview.

The resort, about 100 miles from the Loop, will be managed by Gemstone Resorts International, based in Colorado. The architect is Kahler Slater of Milwaukee. All told, the project encompasses 258 acres with 1.7 miles of frontage on the 2,000-acre Lake Delavan.

The resort will remain open during construction of the first phase, whose focus is on renovation of existing buildings, including 222 condo hotel suites. Called the

Lodges, they will have a heavy timber design, Quinn said. Completion is scheduled for next spring.

Phase 2 will begin next spring with infrastructure improvements and construction of 1,000 new condos. Called Lakefront Estates, they'll have a Victorian look, Quinn said. The phase also includes construction of the water park, restaurants, a conference center and a redesign of the 18-hole golf course.

Under this hotel condo set up, Quinn said, you can buy a unit for investment and put it into the rental program, run by Gemstone. You also can buy it for your own use, but local ordinance limits your occupancy to a 30-day stretch and not more than a half year total, he said.

Renovated rooms will be priced from \$150 to \$500 a night and have flat-screen TVs, according to Sam Guedouar, the property's general manager. Many will have fireplaces.

**In the Dells**— In Wisconsin Dells, the Sundara Inn and Spa is taking on a residential aspect. Construction has begun on the Sundara Spa Lifestyle Villas on 26 acres of pine forest about 200 miles from the Loop. Eight villas will be built initially with up to 44 planned, said CEO Kelli Trumble, who founded the spa and opened it in 2003. First occupancies will be in December, she added.

The villas are built as freestanding homes, with each two connected by a bathhouse that serves as a spa treatment room for two people. Outside a glass wall in the bathhouse, the two villas share a garden meant for a bathing ritual that includes a cedar soaking bath, reflexology stone path and outdoor shower, according to Trumble. Residents also have access to the main spa and inn.

The 1,700-square-foot villas have an open area with a three-sided fireplace to separate the kitchen, dining and living areas. The master bath has a bathroom with spa shower. The guest bedroom also has a private bath, Trumble said.

Each unit also has what is called a pantry, which can be entered by staff without entering the home. It is where meals can be prepared for presentation in the resident's living space.

Prices start at \$750,000 for what Trumble termed a sustainable development built with green principals, materials and design. The villas will be part of a condominium association. Residents may live in their homes without time restrictions. But, Sundara Inn & Spa will manage a rental program for owner-investors.

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Published August 21, 2005

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