

MARK II

1 MACMURRAY ROAD

REMUERA

PONSONBY NEWS

Not just an apartment: An exclusive wellness paradise

Just as Karen Spires was looking forward to a well-deserved break after wrapping up sales of their luxury apartments at St Marks in MacMurray Road, Newmarket, her husband Dr John Harman announced he wanted to create another apartment complex next door.

“I liked the idea of the yin and the yang, contrasting the two complexes that sit side by side, offering residents even more choices. St Marks has a park-like feel with beautiful landscaped gardens at its heart. But with around a quarter of the land dedicated to landscaping, the second block at Mark II will be like a private boutique hotel resort in a lush exotic urban jungle setting where lots of water will flow throughout to create a healthy ‘biophilic’ environment.”

Forever the entrepreneur, the former surgeon was the visionary behind St Marks. He has tightly held this large piece of land for over 30 years and his breast clinic was on the site until an accident curtailed the doctor’s ability to operate. Never one to look back, Dr Harman decided to leverage his long-term connection to the historic area to indulge his passion for creating beautiful, sustainable buildings.

He and Karen, well-known in the Ponsonby area as a super salesperson, have now turned their attention to creating Mark II, which is based on a new community concept they picked up on their travels.

They are both already strong advocates for apartment living, having moved into an apartment in Herne Bay with their son Jack several years ago.

Dr Harman maintains it not only brings families closer, but it frees you up physically. “You can just lock the door and go out.”

The 69 apartments to be sold off the plans are designed for a range of different lifestyles from singles, to young families and retirees and to bring them all together in a safe, secure, supportive community with shared facilities that promote healthier lifestyles.

There are one-bedroom boltholes, ideal for students, all the way up to large four-bedroom penthouses catching beautiful views from rooftop gardens on top, perfect for locals downsizing from their big family homes with large gardens they can no longer maintain with ease.

“But Mark II will offer residents so much more than just an apartment,” says Karen.

“We’ve added the garden podium and a social wellness centre which features a large heated pool, a sauna and spa, clubroom, wine room with lock-up wine fridges, private dining and outdoor barbecue area, yoga and exercise room and a communal foyer with a barista.”

She and Dr Harman have done a lot of thinking about ways to live better lives in the city.

They love the fact both St Marks and Mark II are so handy to transport, motorway access, the train station and all the great facilities of Newmarket including Auckland’s newest biggest shopping centre at Westfield in Broadway. They’re also in the cherished Grammar Zone and close to some of Auckland’s most sought-after private schools.

However, they felt that with all the stresses inherent in urban living, it was important to give people a direct experience of nature.

“We had a vision of creating something unique, dramatic, bold and vibrant. The landscape and green spaces needed to be integrated with the architecture and the overarching principles of wellness. That’s why we started exploring biophilic design which is about increasing the connection to the natural environment through a rich diversity of things like light, planting, nature views, nature-evoking materiality, green roofs, private resting points, colours and other experiences of touch, hearing and smell.”

The design team at Mark II has created a unique nature immersive living experience where layers of biophilia have been incorporated everywhere.

“All the amenities we’ve put in place are in line with scientific and psychological theories about humans’ intrinsic need for exposure to natural environments.”

So, when people purchase a home at Mark II, they are getting so much more than just a place to lay their hat. Owning a slice of this exclusive paradise will have proven positive effects on their psychological and physiological well-being.

Mark II is a lifestyle that pushes the boundaries of traditional apartment living – one that Karen Spires and Dr John Harman will feel immensely proud to have created.