

Raffles 150 condos in an 22-storey tower by Aurmon

one more fabulous condominium dev. in the heart of the city
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Just when we thought there was not one more square inch of space left in Yaletown to squeeze one more teeny condo -- never mind an entire condo building -- there appears Raffles, whose tag line is, "Where Robson Meets Yaletown."

Tight fit but really central, right at Cambie at Robson, next door to the library, the CBC (we're hoping the lockout will be over by 2007-2008, the projected occupancy date) and tons of every kind of hot spot you can name.

Restaurants, cafes, BC Place, the Queen Elizabeth Theatre and Playhouse, Vancouver Art Gallery, enormous amounts of shopping and much more are all within walking distance.

This is as downtown as possible in our city, yet the finishings and features of the suites are so sharp that when the lure of the bright lights wears thin (should they ever), you can imagine owners will love to hunker down at home to relax and entertain.

They've gone pretty high-end here, with a Miele cooktop in the kitchen and a very moderne (although a bit petite) European refrigerator called Liebherr with bottom-mounted freezer, panelled to look like part of the Shaker-style cabinetry. Tres chic.

In the presentation centre, polished black granite counters set off nice pale-oak panelling and wide-plank chestnut floors, while supercool teeny white subway-tile backsplash gives an extra-contemporary look. A huge deep rectangular sink -- a look that's supplanting the double-sink kitchen in many high-style condos -- adds more panache.

Details in the bathroom are just as neat. Frameless glass showers are the only way to go, of course, and the big rain showerhead is just one more luxe touch. We loved the square-but-swoopy Caroma sink with the basin curved front to back; the huge, elegant framed designer mirror and the larger, good-looking subway tiles here, not to mention the big Maax Villa tub. And nothing really compares to soft-toned white marble on bathroom countertops. Extra lighting glowing from under the suspended vanity really rocks, too.

As well, the living room in the presentation centre shows off one of the spectacular city views that Raffles will boast, southeast across the dramatic expanse of Cambie Street bridge. Amenities in the building include a lounge, multi-purpose room, multimedia theatre, fitness room and Whirlpool spa. A landscaped roof deck with space for outdoor barbecue and dining area and a children's play area completes the scenario.

The presentation centre is open for previewing, but mark your calendars. Sales don't start until Sept. 24.

QUICK FACTS

RAFFLES

What: 150 condominiums on 22 floors

Where: Robson at Cambie

Developer: Aurmon

Development

Sizes: One bedroom, one bedroom and den, two bedroom and den; 562 sq.ft. to 944 sq. ft.

Price: \$319,000 to \$459,900

Open house: Noon to 6 p.m. daily except Friday, 883 Hamilton St. at Smithe, 604-689-8058

FIVE FAB FEATURES

1 That unusual Caroma bathroom sink is like a little minimalist sculpture. What more does a bathroom need?

2 OK, the capacity of the sleek Euro-fridge is not built for a 20-lb. turkey. But hey, when was the last time you thought about cooking one? Sometimes beauty is its own reward.

3 Ooh, that view. Admittedly, not everyone will get this smashing vantage, but we're nuts about city bridges, especially at night. Granville, Burrard and now this.

4 The subtle undermount lighting under the vanity in the bathroom is one of our favourite details -- intimate, comforting and practical, for those sleepy 2 a.m. visits.

5 Location, location, location. What more is there to say?



CREDIT: Wayne Leidenfrost, The Province The living room of the presentation centre hints at the fabulous views that will be part of Raffles' charm -- dynamite, especially in the evening.



CREDIT: Wayne Leidenfrost, The Province The bathroom, right, sports soft-toned white marble countertops.



CREDIT: Wayne Leidenfrost, The Province The kitchen comes complete with high-end appliances like a Miele cooktop and Liebherr bottom-mount refrigerator panelled to look like part of the cabinetry.