

VERTICAL UPDATE

High-Rise News & Updates for Las Vegas

by: Brenda Calvin, The Calvin Group, LLC

At the western rim of the Grand Canyon (the side closest to Las Vegas), the Native American Hualapai Tribe hosts the Grand Canyon Skywalk. Opened in 2007, this cantilevered glass bridge is suspended 4,000 feet above the Colorado River and the magnificent Grand Canyon below. It is truly breathtaking and inspires one to know how an eagle must feel soaring freely in and around this incredible ancient landmark. Ancient indeed—the National Park Service's Web site notes that the rocks exposed by the canyon are up to two billion years old, and then adds: "The Canyon itself—an 'erosional' feature—has formed only in the past five or six million years."

This experience, both energetically and visually, lifts one from the mundane thoughts of day-to-day routines, to thoughts of grandeur and possibilities. Ironically, this experience brought me back to one of the reasons residents love living in high-rises; the outdoor experience of the vertical lifestyle. For those truly lucky residents who have oversized balconies or terraces, they enjoy an even more spectacular al fresco experience.



High-rise terraces—as opposed to their smaller cousins, balconies—are usually the domain of penthouses, but not always. Depending on the configuration of a high-rise building, a terrace may not necessarily be on the very top of a building. One such case is the home of Lisa Evans and Shawn Love. Their home, located on the 14th floor of the Metropolis building, is on the roof of one section of the building. Their lovely 2,600-square-foot abode boasts an additional 1,600-square-foot terrace with an almost 360-degree view of the Las Vegas Strip, mountains and city lights.

Lisa and Shawn, consummate perfectionists for beautiful interiors (and I guess I should say exteriors, as well), decided to create a literal outdoor contemporary haven. "It is really such a large open area that it took

some thought to make it feel intimate," says Lisa. "We started by staining the concrete deck a beautiful shade of blue, and built our furnishings around that. It is a work in progress; we are still waiting for the outdoor rugs to arrive! We entertain quite often and wanted the space to be inviting and comfortable, so we added cushy outdoor lounge chairs and tables. When we have guests over, they tell us that they have never seen anything like this. They remark about how unique and open the terrace feels. Looking out from our terrace over the green golf course [at the Wynn Hotel] and its lush trees is gorgeous; it reminds me of Central Park."



Shawn, being an audio/visual enthusiast, created a magnificent outdoor sound system with the flexibility to be linked to the indoor system, capturing the perfect ambiance for any gathering. “As you know, music sets the tone of a party,” says Shawn. “We wanted to extend the sound throughout our residence, including the terrace, which is one of my favorite aspects of our home.” I can see why!



To enhance these lovely outdoor areas, all sorts of unique things can be added for one to luxuriate: complete outdoor kitchens, fireplaces, water features, pools and hot tubs, audio/visual technology (which can tuck away for protection when not in use), rugs designed for outdoor use, sofas, gas fireplaces, bars—all of this is then landscaped to exquisite perfection. However, one consideration is the wind that we have in Las Vegas,

especially at height. The owner must carefully secure their furnishings so that they don't fly off of the building with the all-too-frequent wind gusts we experience.



Many terraces are true extensions or additions of living areas. In fact, in some cases, the expansive windows looking out on a terrace fold away like pocket doors. The outdoor space literally becomes adjoined with the indoor space, which is drama at its best. An example of such an accoutrement is a dramatic 17th floor Upper Terrace home at One Queensridge Place. Slide open the curved glass Panda doors and enter an expansive 2,100-square-foot outdoor living room in the sky. The beautiful reclaimed stone flooring—a combination of granite and limestone—sets the mood of old-world sophistication and elegance. There are a number of seating vignettes, an outdoor kitchen with granite countertops, ornate ironwork railing, and a vista to survey both nearby Red Rock Canyon on one side and the entire Las Vegas Valley and Strip in the distance. Even a glance across to the nearby second Queensridge tower is a treat, with all of its exterior ornamentation on display.



Frank Pankratz, president of Executive Home Builders, says, “Yohan (Yohan Lowie, one of the principles of Executive Home Builders), sought to offer maximum enjoyment in outdoor living with such things as stackable ‘curvated’ sliding glass doors, covered trellises, large planter boxes, and trees and outdoor barbeque entertainment areas. He envisioned the terraces to be structurally functional as well as beautiful. They are an integral part of the overall architectural design, wherein the building starts to step inward, like a layer cake.”

In my own high-rise home, I do not have a terrace, but I do have a balcony. I find that my conversations are different when I am with someone on the balcony, gazing out at the twinkling lights of the city. There must be some correlation about being elevated and thinking higher thoughts, intuitive thoughts, thoughts about travel, thoughts about the future and possibilities—and of course, contented thoughts about special friends and family.

Thank you to Lisa Evans and Shawn Love for their genuine hospitality. Also, thanks to One Queensridge Place sales office and Executive Home Builders for accommodating us.

Until next time, here’s wishing you “elevated” thoughts!