

Pueblo PESCADERO

Just outside of Cabo, on the road to Todos Santos, this innovative & exceptional residential community offers an ideal, yet affordable beach alternative.

-by Michael Koehn | photos by Francisco Estrada & courtesy of Pueblo Pescadero-

Southern Baja has no shortage of places with magical qualities. Just a short drive north of Cabo San Lucas on Highway 19, the well-loved village of Todos Santos is a charming escape from the hustle and bustle of Los Cabos and has been declared a *Pueblo Magico* by the Mexican government. It's a place known for its charming atmosphere and arts and crafts orientation. That's a well-deserved accolade, and visitors to Todos Santos can enjoy the many fine restaurants, boutique hotels and food, wine and music festivals the town is famous for.

Just 10 minutes south of Todos Santos, also on Highway 19, is a place that's equally magical in its own way. The small town of El Pescadero is located in a *huerta*, or agricultural area, nestled between the Pacific Ocean on one side and the Sierra de la Laguna Mountains on the other. Its working

ranches and farms provide much of the organic produce to the excellent restaurants in the community and also to much of the remainder of Baja California Sur. Pescadero, as the area is known, is the kind of place that reminds us of the way southern Baja must have looked in decades past.

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(ABOVE) | *Shaded decks provide a perfect vantage point for views of the area and the always alluring Pacific Ocean.*

When you're exploring this region south of Todos Santos you may stop and visit the well-regarded popular farm to table restaurant Hierbabuena, located on the road that also leads to the upscale Rancho Pescadero boutique hotel (currently undergoing a major expansion), or sample some of the artfully prepared dishes at Carlitos's Place on the east side of the highway in El Pescadero or stop at kilometer 62 for the organically grown and locally

roasted coffee at Baja Beans. If so, you'll have a feel for the place and begin to understand why many people believe this area has such a promising future.

Now an elegant, low-impact and sustainably planned housing community called Pueblo Pescadero is in the process of being completed in the area. It's being co-developed by Mark Catania and Peter Arbuckle, two Canadian Baja enthusiasts who discovered they had co-joining



properties totaling 1.5 hectares of land located just a short drive from the main highway and a five minute walk to kilometers of virgin beach along the Pescadero coastline. What drew them to the area was the near-perfect climate, the adjacency of the Pacific ocean, the laid back atmosphere of the farming community, the non-stop flights to major cities like San Diego, Los Angeles, Portland, Seattle, Denver and Vancouver and the recent improvements in infrastructure

that includes a four-lane highway connecting the area to Los Cabos to the south (with a convenient bypass leading directly to the airport in San José del Cabo) and the commercial center of La Paz to the north.

“We spent a lot of time developing as much intelligence as we could about what people were looking for in the area and in

(ABOVE) | Two-story units offer a commanding view of the area and a rooftop deck for relaxing or entertaining. Peter Arbuckle and Mark Catania.

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their accommodations,” Catania says. “Upon discovering Pescadero almost 10 years ago I started a rental services business, Gypsy’s by the Sea. At that time there were only three rental homes available in Pescadero – now there are well over 100. Such growth is a testament to the growing popularity for a slower pace and this area’s laid back vibe; it’s what Cabo was like 20 years ago. Our extensive work with rental tenants gave us the insight to what people liked or disliked about a particular rental property and this knowledge was invaluable as we developed the masterplan for Pueblo Pescadero and the basic floor plans and layouts of the homes we’re building today.

“We see our customers as professionals whose children are edging towards independence, existing Cabo residents who are looking for a location that is *‘mas tranquilo’* and what we call ‘digital nomads’ - entrepreneurs who aren’t rooted to a job location and can effectively work over the internet,” explains Catania. Acknowledging that many of their purchasers may want to rent their homes when they’re not in-residence, Arbuckle and Catania have also set up a sister company called Colibri Rental Services and Property Management to assist owners in the “post-purchase” management of their new casas.

In keeping with the character of the

(BELOW) | With about 300 days of sun a year, a solar component is a naturally effective way to provide power to each home.





Pescadero area, Pueblo Pescadero is a low density, low profile project where La Paz-based architect Hiram Arce has developed a theme based on traditional Mexican architecture that incorporates a contemporary palette to provide a more modern presentation. From the beginning sustainability was an important consideration for the project. Each home has a 'grid-tie' solar system integrated with the traditional electrical service to ensure a seamless supply of electricity at significantly lower cost to the

homeowner, all waste water is being captured and treated on site and then repurposed to irrigate the project's landscaping. All native trees, shrubs and cacti that were removed to make way for the on-site circulation were rescued and re-planted in the common areas. "We suspect that provision of adequate water may become a growing concern over time," says Arbuckle. "So we took the

(ABOVE) | *Baja Beans is a popular spot for great coffee and is also home to the Pueblo Pescadero sales office. Every Sunday an organic farmer's market is held at Baja Beans, offering local produce, jewelry, arts and crafts.*

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(ABOVE) | Spacious, open interiors combine neutral colors and natural materials in comfortable living areas. Traditional materials, neutral colors and modern appliances allow for easy meal prep and entertaining along with classic southern Baja views.

time to petition the federal government for a concession for our own well and were fortunate that our application was successful. This will ensure that the project's water needs will be met for the foreseeable future. There really isn't any magic in our sustainable agenda. In this day and age we believe it's not only the right thing to do, but also what our clientele is looking for."

The design concept for Pueblo Pescadero is based on a community plan that incorporates expansive outdoor terraces and an organic flow between indoor and outdoor living areas

in its 31 planned residences. The project was originally planned in three phases but strong demand from the outset caused the developers to hasten the completion of the infrastructure and now the entire project is available, with 50% of homes currently sold. All homes are freestanding, and designs range from a simple 650 sq. ft one-bedroom home to an expansive 3-bedroom, 2-story family design. The legal structure is a "horizontal" condominium, so every residence has its own individual title, with owners having an undivided

interest in all the common property as well.

“As these were designed to be recreational homes, we felt it was important to include as many lifestyle features as possible, optimizing views and creating patios off all the living areas,” Arbuckle explains. “On the 2-story designs we decided to put the bedrooms on the ground floor and the living areas on the second floor to take advantage of the views of the Pacific Ocean to the west and the Sierra de la Laguna Mountains to the east. We also placed all electrical, water and utility lines underground to present a cleaner, uncluttered environment for the development and installed an underground fiber optic loop to distribute

more efficient and reliable wi-fi connectivity.”

The layout of each home site is considerate of the topography of the community and the relationship to neighboring lots, and residence heights have been limited to protect the natural beauty of the views. The master plan also provides covered parking for at least one vehicle within the boundaries of each lot and a number of parking stalls for visitors have been included near the community’s common area. “The common area is designed to be a place for families and neighbors to gather,” Arbuckle says. “Our pool ‘system’

(BELOW) | Open patios extend the living area outdoors to take advantage of the near-perfect weather. Traditional materials, clean, understated designs and open patios allow for a casual and comfortable southern Baja lifestyle.

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utilizes heat pump technology that can both heat the water in the chilly months (yes, there are a few chilly months in winter) as well as chill the water in the hotter summer months. The system will have its own solar component that will keep operating costs to a minimum. In addition, we're planning to add a multi-purpose building that will include secure storage units for our residents as well as other amenities that will benefit the overall community."

"We believe this region has the potential to provide a terrific alternative to the high speed, high density, high priced precinct that Los Cabos has become," Arbuckle continues. "Fostering this belief was at the foundation

of our overall strategy for Pueblo Pescadero. It drove the decisions we made on our design guidelines for both the masterplan and the home designs and, perhaps most importantly, our price points." (currently in the range of \$250-\$300,000).

Pueblo Pescadero is designed to be a compact community, and while they don't intend to "gate" the entry there is a single point of access and egress to the project and the perimeter is being "robustly planted" to ensure privacy and security.

As things develop along the coastline around Todos Santos, as they inevitably will, Pueblo Pescadero will serve as an example of what conscientious planning and a respect

(BELOW) | Rooftop terraces optimize the scenic views and allow for convenient relaxing and entertaining.





for the local environment can mean to a community that relies so much on its charm and natural beauty.

“This has really been a labor of love for Mark and I, a way to become part of the community in a caring, responsible way,” Arbuckle says. “I’ve been in the property development business for many years and I know that developments have to respond to market demands to be financially successful, but I also believe that they can do so in a manner that is conscientious of the broader needs of the community. I’d like to think we’ve managed, in some small way, to achieve this at Pueblo Pescadero. With several homes now finished we’re finding that people who live in the area seem to be

comfortable in telling their friends, if they’re looking for real estate, to check us out. We take this as a statement of trust, and that’s the highest compliment we can get.”

If you’re interested in a tour of the property, stop in and visit the Pueblo Pescadero office and presentation center conveniently located inside the same compound as Baja Beans at kilometer 62 on Highway 19.

Pueblo Pescadero
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(ABOVE) | One of the surfing beaches in the area. Floor plans have been optimized for a casual, comfortable lifestyle.



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