

Willow Gardens

a Vancouver oasis
BY SUSAN M BOYCE

Okay, I admit it. I do not have a green thumb. My parents tried to educate me, my friends have tried to help me, but I just can't get green things to grow.

Which is part of the reason I go crazy over other people's gardens. And I've barely stepped out of my car before I know Willow Gardens is going to totally capture my heart.

Located in the heart of Vancouver's prestigious Oakridge neighbourhood, Willow Gardens spans more than five acres — so large that the residences here actually have three different postal codes. To say the grounds are lush would be classic understatement. There is a tranquil beauty here that somehow successfully combines the ambiance of a tropical resort with the classic elegance of Asian simplicity.

No wonder some residents have chosen to call Willow Gardens home for 20, 30, even more than 40 years.

Love Your Home "This is my favourite place — I sit out here a lot," says Linda as she reclines comfortably into a deck chair on her balcony. A child's laughter drifts up from the swimming pool across the lawn, and a spontaneous smile lights up her face. "The pool is wonderful. I was swimming today and the temperature was just right. It's my favourite way to exercise."

Linda and her husband moved from White Rock to Willow Gardens eight years ago — neither has ever regretted a day. "It's so quiet here, the neighbours are great, and it's so easy to walk to Oakridge Mall," she says. "We considered downtown, but most apartments there are like matchboxes. Here the suites are so much larger than normal — that's one of the things we really enjoy."

Linda graciously lets me peek into her kitchen where I discover an



A ZEN-LIKE POND SHIMMERS IN THE SUNLIGHT.

astonishingly efficient layout boasting tons of storage space, a stylish maple-on-white colour palette, and a translucent pocket door that reminds me of the subtle artistry of Japanese Shoji screens. No question, this is a home with style.

Above and Beyond And here's another cool bonus — Hollyburn's Value Added Partners. "We've partnered with a number of large retail and service providers so our residents have access to some very significant savings from places like Costco, Shaw, the Co-operative Auto

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Resort Lifestyle Before I leave this city oasis, I meet up with resident manager Ciprian Rat who is delighted to show me around the park-like property. We wander past sprawling lawn areas framed with rhododendrons and a white, flowering shrub that with my uneducated eye I'd describe simply as "beautiful and fragrant" rather than by its correct, botanical name.

We step onto an Asian-inspired footbridge that crosses a tranquil pond and make our way to Willow Garden's Teahouse. Here I discover a kitchen, pool table, shelves brimming with books, and a comfortable seating area. But it's the art that truly catches my eye — especially an abstract peacock in blues and pinks. "We have art classes for the kids in here several times a week," he says. Brilliant.

Network, Fluff Furniture Rental, and Tippet-Richardson Moving & Storage," explains Nadia, Willow Gardens' other resident manager. "After all, it's not just about people renting an apartment, it's about building a sense of community within each of our buildings.

The Willow Gardens office is located at 6111-5 Tisdall Street (between Cambie and Oak at 45th Avenue) in Vancouver. Easy access to the airport and UBC, plus steps from Jamison Elementary School and a new Canada Line Station.

This one-of-a-kind rental property offers one- and two-bedroom garden apartments and is proudly managed by Hollyburn Properties — nationally recognized for premiere residences. For more information and to arrange a viewing, call 604-267-1938 or visit www.rentersguide.com.