



LakeStone golf course will be 'green'; Course will have native grasses and be designed to cause little disruption to the topography

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Byline: Steve MacNaull

All golf courses, of course, have green grass, but are they truly "green" in the environmentally friendly sense of the word?

"What we're trying to achieve at LakeStone (a mega resort at Okanagan Centre) with the golf course is to be as green as possible," said course designer Michael Hurdzan.

"The course will be on the mountain top and we'll minimally disturb the geography. We'll select native fescue and blue-stem grasses that need less water and chemicals."

LakeStone is a \$1.5-billion development that's just getting started along Okanagan Lake off Okanagan Centre Road West in Lake Country.

When completed in a decade, the 550-acre neighbourhood is expected to have 1,400 luxury homes, a boutique hotel, meeting facilities, marina, restaurants, spa, fitness centre and a boardwalk.

Construction on the 18-hole golf course is to start next spring for summer 2009 completion.

Eighty per cent of waterfront and view lots priced from \$775,000 to \$2.3 million that came on stream this year have been sold and villas priced from \$1.1 to \$1.9 million will go on sale shortly.

Golf course designer Hurdzan is from the Columbus, Ohio, design firm Hurdzan Fry.

Just because he's based half a continent away doesn't mean he's unfamiliar with British Columbia.

He worked on Westwood Plateau Golf and Country Club in Coquitlam, helped with a course re-design in Kamloops and is consulting on a proposed Revelstoke ski village and golf resort.

In the 1960s, Hurdzan was ahead of his time. He earned a turf management degree at Ohio State University and a masters in landscape architecture and a doctorate in environmental plant physiology from the University of Vermont.

"When I started designing courses in the 1970s, people resisted being environmentally conscious because chemicals were the norm in keeping courses beautiful," he said.

"People started to care more in the '80s, the buzz built in the '90s and now almost everyone is embracing green."

Hurdzan says he wants to raise the bar even higher with LakeStone.

"By using native grasses, the right drainage and creating a pond for irrigation water, we can have a luxuriant course without a lot of (chemical) inputs," he said.

LakeStone is part of the Okanagan's mega building boom that includes The Rise Golf Resort near Vernon, Summerland Golf Community, and Wilden, Tower Ranch Golf Resort and Black Mountain Golf Community, all in Kelowna.

Illustration:

- Colour Photo: Gary Nylander, The Okanagan Saturday / Golf course designer Michael Hurdzan, left, of Columbus, Ohio, and Darryl Inglis of Vancouver's 20/20 development group were in the Okanagan this week to inspect the site of an 18-hole course that will be built in Okanagan Centre.

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