



photos courtesy of Ruby Suites

RUBY SUITES

Home Sweet Home has a new address

by Blythe Thimsen

Hip new condos? Exclusive boutique hotel? Just what are the Ruby Suites?

That is the question that Spokane commuters have been asking themselves each time they drive south down Division, or north up Ruby, the streets that flank the Ruby Suites, the long-under construction project in the old Burgan's Furniture buildings, on North Division.

"It's a hybrid between an apartment and a hotel, with hotel like amenities," explains Catherine Matthieu, who has been working with GVD Commercial Properties to put the finishing touches on the recent launch of Ruby Suites, answering the long simmering question.

In 2008, the former Burgan's furniture building was purchased by Gerald Vance "Jerry" Dicker, the president of GVD Commercial Properties, Inc., who also brought Hotel Ruby and Hotel Ruby2 to Spokane. According to GVD's website, "The Burgans Block originally came to life in the early 1900s with the construction of various commercial buildings on the site, which enjoyed a long tenure of warehousing and manufacturing enterprises. Most recently the Burgans Block was the home to Burgans Furniture, which was owned and

operated by the McEachran family for four generations. In the summer of 2008 GVD acquired the Burgans Block and is now redeveloping the project as a joint venture with the McEachran family.

This mixed use redevelopment project includes adding two floors to the main Burgans Furniture building and converting it into an all suites hotel. The main warehouse building will be converted into an "entertainment and events building", which will include a mix of retail and restaurants, and an event center with a rooftop garden. The adaptive reuse of the existing buildings will create an exciting new chapter in the evolution of the Burgans Block."

That exciting chapter turned a page, with the opening of Ruby Suites this spring. The suites will provide a housing concept not found elsewhere in Spokane to this level: fully furnished luxury apartments providing short-term and transitional housing options to a variety of residents. There is a one month minimum stay, but no limit to how long someone can move in to the Suites.

The target resident includes business and corporate clients on assignment for projects in Spokane, or who are moving here and want to take time to learn about the different neighborhoods in Spokane before purchasing a home. The suites are ideal for snowbirds who

enjoy Spokane's summers, but want the freedom to move south in the winter, without the expense of maintaining a second home year-round; grandparents who enjoy spending extended time in town with their children and grandchildren, yet desire to have a home providing privacy and space to settle in; those looking for housing after downsizing, and while waiting for a new home or new build to be ready to move into. Any of these and other life transitions make the service offered by Ruby Suites a perfect fit.

"We want people to treat this as a home," says Matthieu. "We're trying to educate people that this is not a regular hotel. It is an apartment building with hotel services." Those services include weekly housekeeping, occurring every week, based on your move-in day.

When residents move in, it is to a full furnished and livable unit. Matthieu preps each unit for move in, with considerate details like setting the table and staging the living area. "I always set the table. It gives them an instant visual of 'you're getting this.'"

"This" includes cable television, a landline telephone, plates, silverware and glasses, baking sheets and utensils, pots, pans and towels. There is soap for the dishwasher and washing machine, and dryer sheets for the dryers. Irons, hairdryers, vacuums and brooms, the suites have everything. The only thing you need to bring to be move-in ready is your suitcase. The Suites even have a pet friendly policy for pets 30 pounds and under, so Fido can come, too!

The Ruby Suites also offer the residents a secure entrance with a lobby that is open 24 hours a day and boasts a community gathering spot, a fitness center and mail room. A secure access rooftop patio is sure to draw out residents on warm evenings, while the Caruso's Sandwiches and Artisan Pizza, located in the original Burgans brick building, is already packed with residents and non-residents alike, who have embraced the delicious food and casual dining atmosphere.

With the question of what are the Ruby Suites answered, the only question left is, where do we sign up?

To learn more visit www.rubysuites.com



[not so good]

LILACS and LEMONS



[good]



LEMONS to those who leave their pets and children in hot cars. Every year we read about another tragedy, and every year we wonder why. We may be at the point where savvy auto manufacturers could make autos that detect when a living being is in the car on a hot day and trigger the air conditioning.



LILACS to the ice cream trucks that troll through the neighborhoods. We don't seem to get them much in the suburbs, but we love that happy sound which triggers a Pavlovian response to rush out with money and get a Drumstick or a Strawberry Creamsicle. This is one job that can't be outsourced to China!



LEMONS to the department stores that quit selling shorts, swimsuits and short-sleeved shirts in July, in favor of the new fall clothing lines. Some of us are just starting to get into the swing of things in July!



LILACS to the Spokane Symphony and to the Northwest Bach Festival for holding wonderful summer concerts in Comstock and Manito parks. It's so relaxing and transporting to close one's eyes and lose oneself as the music wafts along the tides of the breeze through the trees on sunny summer evenings.



LEMONS to out-of-shape shirtless guys who stroll along the beach and obscure of view of, um, the lake. Dad bods are supposed to be kind of "in" right now, but using that as an excuse to eat another triple-scoop ice cream cone can quickly move one from dad bod to bad bod.



LILACS to picnickers and beachgoers who pick up all their trash. We've been to other areas and have been amazed at how inconsiderate the summer revelers can be. I love our "take it in, take it out" mentality.



LEMONS to drivers who zoom around in their cars with music blasting out on weeknights through neighborhoods at two in the morning, and to hot-rodder's downtown who rev up their cars on Friday and Saturday nights. Restaurants and wine bars are having to close their doors to the outdoors in order to protect their customers from the noise.



LILACS to those who flout doctors' advice and still flaunt tans. Vitamin D is healthy and there's no denying that a nice tan, properly and safely nurtured over the summer imparts an invigorating glow.



LEMONS to pet owners who don't pick up after their dogs. We should be able to run barefoot through the park in the summer without dodging land mines.



LILACS to the city for encouraging outdoor street cafes, and making it easier for businesses to block off space to create a lively street scene. We miss the outdoor setting at Madeleine's though, and hope the new tenant is able to keep it going.



LEMONS to boat riders and bicyclists who don't use life jackets or helmets. Yes, wearing them is annoying, but so is going to a hospital emergency room.

Summer Edition