

Second homeowners seek all inclusive planned resorts

By Lauren Schuker Blum and Candace Jackson, Wall Street Journal

What attracts this generation of wealthy second-home buyers: ziplines, kids clubs and grilled cheese.

For decades focused on golf, skiing or hunting, today's master-planned resorts are being reimagined as fancy family camps, a trend that's helping revive a number of struggling high-end second-home communities. Developers say they're aiming to please everyone from toddlers to great-grandparents by merging luxurious trappings with amenities like bowling alleys, soda shops and video arcades. It's all designed to woo wealthy buyers on the hunt for a perfect family vacation.



Martis Camp has evolved into more than a golf course with big homes. Photo/Provided

"These days, you can't just offer a Jack Nicklaus golf course and instantly be successful," says Chris Fair, president of Resonance Consultancy, which advises developers of destination homes and resort communities.

The shift comes after several difficult years in some second-

home markets. Residential resorts made up some of the hardest hit real estate during the downturn: Some residential golf communities sold lots for \$1.

At Martis Camp – a 2,177-acre resort in Truckee that developer DMB/Highlands Group started in 2006 – amenities aimed at families have helped to ramp up sales in recent years, says Brian Hull, the club's director of sales. There is a family barn that features a bowling alley, a 44-seat movie theater, a swimming area, soda fountain, indoor basketball courts and an outdoor amphitheater. A soccer field, a softball diamond and a barbecue area are nearby. And for the artistically inclined, there's a "folk school" with classes in photography and pottery.

Last year, the club sold 117 properties for \$115 million, a step up from the 73 properties it sold in 2010 for \$72 million. So far this year, the developer has sold 103 properties for \$128 million.

Read the whole story