

## KING EDWARD BAY



Photos courtesy, Sorensen Fine Homes

King Edward Bay is a waterfront property on Bowen Island, just outside of Vancouver.

## 'Retreat' on Bowen Island close to, yet far from, city

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CALGARY HERALD

**B**owen Island has been a retreat for Vancouverites for years.

Located at the mouth of Howe Sound near Vancouver, the island is home to many vacation properties owned by some of the city's more affluent residents.

But for the most part, the small island has been a secret to the rest of Canada, despite its mix of mild winters, extensive nature reserves, beaches and proximity to a major city.

That changed in the last couple of years, says David Sorensen, president of Sorensen Fine Homes.

Sales soared, average home prices doubled, and Sorensen is now bringing to market one of the last developable waterfront plots on the island.

King Edward Bay, located on Bowen Island's west coast, features 19 hectares of southwest-facing waterfront land that represents the best the island has to offer, says Sorensen.

"We get all the sun," he says about the property's orientation. "Buyers are mostly folks in their 50s or 60s, who are semi-retired and want a place on the water with very, very high-quality homes."

Due to the island's proximity to Vancouver, Sorensen says King Edward Bay has already attracted a number of clients in their late 50s and 60s — people who are close to or have already retired, but may still have ties to the city.

"Most of these folks want a place on the water, with very, very high quality," says Sorensen. "They may choose to live here instead of West Vancouver for half the price."

About six or seven of the original 41 lots at King Edward Bay remain available for purchase. Prices range from the \$900,000 to \$2.6 million, depending on each lot's distance to the water and other factors.

But the price will also net buyers a luxury home on the site and consultation with Sorensen's designers, who will tailor the dwelling based on the buyer's input.

Depending on the designs a purchaser wants, the final price could end up as high as \$3.5 million.

The consultation process — which sees Sorensen designers put together everything from the home's exterior and interior decors to the appropriate furniture — lasts about six to 10 months and guarantees the maximum buyers' satisfaction, says Sorensen.

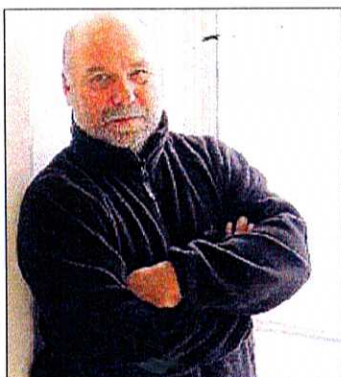
"It's quite the little journey, but in the end, everyone's happy," he says. "We have design buyers who have very sharp eyes and we choose designs that make life as simple as possible for the buyer."

Part of the reason for the builder and developer to offer this customized experience is because the company can, he says.

Sorensen Fine Homes specializes in crafting luxury houses using no vinyl in the windows and no aluminum siding.

For King Edward Bay, the builder is aiming for romantic architectural styles inspired by Europe — and to achieve that, the company uses its own internal design team.

This means that the firm doesn't have to go to a third party to design the homes it is building.



David Sorensen of Sorensen Fine Homes.

"When you hire an architect, no matter how good that relationship is, there's a disconnect," says Sorensen. "With our own design team, this way, if I need to change something, I can just talk to people from the team."

Sorensen also benefits from having built luxury homes in similar settings, with previous developments on Salt Spring Island off the coast of Vancouver Island.

But the buyers are expected to be quite different at King Edward Bay, says Sorensen.

"Bowen appeals to different people," he says.

"Here, you can straddle lifestyles. You can live in paradise and semi-work in the city. If you do that, you can be home by six o'clock in the evening."

Buyers currently include those from Alberta, B.C.'s Lower Mainland, Eastern Canada and those returning from working abroad.

Sorensen expects that profile to remain, although he says the island could attract anyone given the fact two-thirds of Bowen is covered by crown land, parks and environmental reserves.

"People call it 'Martha's Vineyard west,'" says Sorensen, referring to the posh Massachusetts getaway for many eastern U.S. elites. "This is the best-kept secret of Vancouver, but it's going to get out because of the value — and life moves at the right pace here."