

# New in Homes & Condos

»TORONTO STAR«

SECTION H  
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thestar.com

## A BREATH OF FRESH AIR

An idea imported from Montreal marks a bold departure for condo development in Toronto, **H2**

## Top 10 New Home Buying Tips



Tarion.com

### CINEMA TOWER

## Another condo blockbuster

Confident Daniels Corp. starts construction early on Festival's sister

**RYAN STARR**  
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

Festival Tower was a smash hit for its developer the Daniels Corp.

When the 42-storey glass condo — which sits atop the TIFF Bell Lightbox at King and John, home of the Toronto International Film Festival — premiered back in 2007, its suites were some of the hottest tickets in town.

Festival Tower ended up selling well, with a number of big-name Canadian celebrities reportedly snapping up suites, including Donald Sutherland, Dan Akroyd, Norman Jewison, and, of course, director-producer Ivan Reitman, the project's driving force.

Now Daniels is unveiling Festival's sister project, Cinema Tower, a 43-storey building with 444 suites to be built on the southeast corner of Adelaide St. W. and Widmer St., adjacent to the Lightbox.

The company has started construction on the development well before sales launch, certain they've got another blockbuster on their hands.

"It's about a show of huge confidence in the area," executive vice president Niall Haggart explains. "It's magical for us as a builder to be able to say to our buying public that we have so much confidence and conviction in this that we've actually started."

Occupancy of Cinema Tower will begin in spring 2013, Haggart vows.

No date has been set yet for the project's sales launch, but Haggart appears to be leaning toward waiting until festival time.

CINEMA TOWER continued on H18

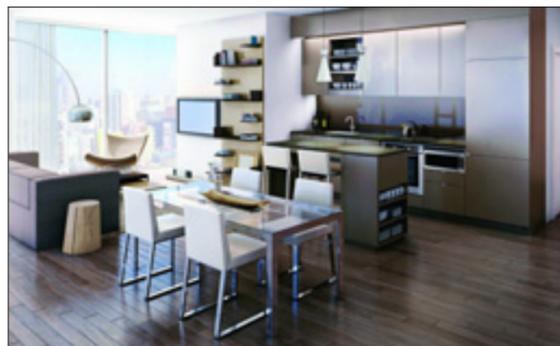
### ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT



AARON HARRIS/FOR THE TORONTO STAR

Team behind Peter Street Condos, from left, David Klugsberg, Hunter Milborne, Andrew Hoffman, Peter Clewes, Danny Roth, Elaine Cecconi.

## Industry's top talents join forces to develop on Peter Street Condominiums



The interiors of the condos are designed by Elaine Cecconi.

**RYAN STARR**  
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

Andrew Hoffman remembers the moment he knew he'd hired the right guy to design his company's new condo project.

It was early in the planning stages for Peter Street Condominiums, a 40-storey, 429-unit tower to be built at the northeast corner of Adelaide and Peter Sts.

Hoffman, president of CentreCourt Developments, was at the office of Peter Clewes, a principal at architectsAlliance, which happens to be located across the road from the development site.

"We were talking about the project and (Peter) described with such passion how he's always wanted to do a building in that area that really embraced the neighbourhood and the architecture of the neighbourhood with its historical fabric," Hoffman recalls.

PETER STREET continued on H18



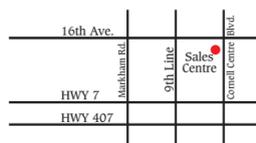
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## HOMES &amp; CONDOS

## HOT HOME PRODUCTS

## Catering to our four-legged friends

VICKY SANDERSON  
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

Early in our marriage, my husband and I were for a time plagued with calls from a telemarketing company that wanted to speak to the “head of the household.” We took profound delight in leaving the caller waiting while we argued playfully — and at length — about who took supremacy in our post-feminist home.

That was, however, before we acquired pets, and life began revolving around the grooming, feeding and toileting of our four-legged friends. Because despite the fact they never brought home a single paycheck, the animals were clearly in charge.

At least we weren't alone in being ruled by Rover. More than half of all Canadian homeowners have pets, and we collectively spend billions of dollars each year to keep them happy and healthy. It's that kind of devotion — and those kinds of dollars — that's spurring many home retailers to widen their pet sections.

Home Outfitters recently expanded its “pet pod” to create a larger

area that carries toys, treats and tools ([www.homeoutfitters.com](http://www.homeoutfitters.com)). There is, for example, a leash with a small flashlight embedded in the handle (\$9) to help with scoop and poop chores on those late-night walks.

For winter walks, you may also want to consider slipping reflective booties on your pooch, which are available from Canadian Tire for about \$15 a pair ([www.canadiantire.ca](http://www.canadiantire.ca)). If you're a hockey fan, you can go to the website for the London, Ont.-based Petacular and pick up a doggie jacket with the logo of one of the six Canadian NHL teams ([www.petacular.com](http://www.petacular.com)). Prices start at about \$105. Vancouver Canucks coats have, apparently, been selling briskly these days. Toronto Maple Leafs gear ... not so much.

Home Outfitters also has a selection of doggie treats, such as peanut butter-flavoured “lollipops” (\$3) and Kung Fu Fido fortune cookies, all-natural treats with funny sayings in them — “If you break a mirror, you will have seven years bad

luck ... the longest 12 months of your life” — designed, obviously, for exceptionally literate dogs (\$8 for a 2.5-ounce box.)

Keeping the feeding area clean and tidy is a challenge for many pet owners. At PetSmart there are all manner of feeding bowls and mats, some of which promise less mess at mealtime ([www.petsmart.com](http://www.petsmart.com)). Even a simple inexpensive mat for cat bowls from Home Outfitters (\$5) may help.

For style mavens, there's new doggie tableware from animal lover and domestic doyenne Martha Stewart. It hit PetSmart stores late last year, and includes a stainless steel bowl with a melamine holder and plastic lid to keep food fresh and easier to transport. Prices start at about \$20 and double bowl sets are available.

Larger dogs, especially as they age, may experience neck strain when bending down to feed at the bowl. Eating upright from a raised bowl will help with that and with certain gastric conditions. Raised bowls can be found at most pet stores or from an online retailer such as Pet Only ([www.petonly.ca](http://www.petonly.ca)), which sells a feeder that comes with two stainless steel bowls that sit in a stand with hollow legs that can be filled with cat litter or gravel for added stability (about \$90).

Pet Only also has a dog bed cover made from 100 per cent cotton and printed with cute designs. The idea is that you fill it with old clothes or bedding that is no longer fit for your two-legged friends. Given that it's the dog bed filling that falls apart first — mostly from repeated washings — the design makes a lot of sense. Designs include the Big City Dog Duvet with a white streetscape silk-screened onto a brown background, and a romantic floral pattern called La Vie en Rose (starting at about \$33). Many items ship for free across Canada.

Brushing your pet will do more



Dyson pet grooming attachment.

than just keep him looking sharp. It will help keep the animal dander found in fur at bay. But grooming an uncooperative animal is easier said than done. The folks at Dyson, makers of high-end vacuums, have come up with a solution to deal with this microscopic nuisance.

The Dyson Groom is a new tool that works with several models of Dyson vacuums to remove and contain loose fur and dead skin cells. When I first heard about this product, I was frankly skeptical that my 14-year-old Siberian Husky would allow anyone near her with two of the things she most hates — vacuums and brushes.

Rosie did, however, lie still to be groomed with this tool, which has two rows of short wire bristles that brush the fur, which is then sucked into the vacuum. I used it with both an upright and a handheld, the latter being infinitely easier to manipulate. You can also use the tool on its own. The Dyson Groom is available online for about \$84 at [www.dysoncanada.ca](http://www.dysoncanada.ca).

You can read Vicky's On the House blog at [www.thestar.blogs.com/onthouse](http://www.thestar.blogs.com/onthouse). Contact Vicky Sanderson at [vswriter@sympatico.ca](mailto:vswriter@sympatico.ca) and follow her on Twitter @vickysanderson.

## Spotlight on Cinema Tower

CINEMA TOWER from H1

“You've got the world on your doorstep,” he says, “you don't want to miss that.”

Suites at Cinema Tower range from 420-square-foot studios to 1,500-square-foot two-bedroom units. Prices start in the mid \$300,000s.

There will also be “combo suites,” which combine smaller units with two-bedroom units to create a larger three-bedroom condo. “It's a very creative approach to satisfying people who may be looking for a larger family style suite,” Haggart says.

“And in the event that somebody doesn't want to spend that money, we can say, ‘No problem,’ and go and sell them as two units.”

HOK is the interior designer for Cinema Tower. Like at Festival Tower, suites will have Irpinia Kitchens with a Miele appliance package (refrigerator, cooktop, convection oven, microwave and dishwasher).

Designed by Kirkor Architects, the tower will include a six-storey podium — a “glass and steel building exploding out of a warehouse element,” is how Haggart puts it.

There will be 12,000 square feet of amenity space, including a double-height, multi-sport gymnasium — not a gym, a gymnasium — with a full basketball court, steam room, hot tub and exercise room.

“You can come in and play full-on basketball, you could play half-court, or you could play volleyball or floor hockey,” Haggart says. “You can have serious sports occur in this place.”

Other amenities include meeting spaces, large terraces facing north and south, and barbecue areas.

Cinema Tower won't be physically connected to TIFF Bell Lightbox, but each purchaser will get an “Inside Pass.”

This includes a three-year membership to TIFF with perks and privileges not available to the general public.

Owners will be able to purchase TIFF tickets in advance of the public, avoiding nightmarish lineups.

Cinema Tower buyers also get access to TIFF Bell Lightbox happenings outside of what Haggart calls “that 10-day period when everybody goes gaga.”

There will be “Director's Series” screenings hosted by TIFF in Cinema Tower's state of the art screening room, for example.

Years ago, before Daniels began construction on Festival Tower, an archaeological assessment of the property was undertaken.

The dig found “probably a half dozen pieces of museum quality,” Haggart says, including arrow heads and a broach, and perhaps the corner of the city's first-ever hospital (the team couldn't explore further to make certain, Daniels' land doesn't extend that far).

When the time came to excavate for Cinema Tower, another archaeological assessment was done.

Not as many significant objects were found this time (a bayonet was unearthed, though, possibly dating back to the city's early militia days).

But all that digging down got New Brunswick-born artist Peter Powning thinking. He began to formulate an idea for the public art installation for Cinema Tower.

The resulting sculpture, “Strata” — which will frame the entranceway — is based on the concept of a core sample of the earth that's been pulled up and exposed.

Each layer of this archaeological crust references a period of history on that property and in the surrounding neighbourhood.

Strata will include bronze casts of objects that were dug up at the Cinema site, as well as items related to businesses that once operated in the area: bookkeepers, carpenters and typesetters, for example.

“It's this notion of taking a core sample of the geology below the site and drawing it up,” Powning explains in an interview.

Haggart is hoping Strata will prove to be a focal point for the neighbourhood. “We know Widmer St. is not a really populated street in Toronto, so we wanted to give people a reason to go down the street and explore,” he says.

“That's what Peter's piece will achieve: it will give the public a reason to turn the corner.”

## ‘Peter St. is centre ice in the downtown core’

PETER STREET from H1

“It was exciting for me to know that this was something he was going to be passionate about right from the beginning.”

Hoffman wasn't surprised by this, mind you.

After all, he'd seen to it — indeed he spent big bucks to make sure that Peter Street Condos was conceived and carried out in close consultation with what could be considered Toronto's condo-development A-Team: Clewes, along with interior designer Elaine Ceconi of Ceconi Simone, David Klugsberg of ad agency L.A. Inc., and the dean of the city's brokers, Hunter Milborne, with public relations by Danny Roth of Brandon Communications.

“If you want the best in class you have to be prepared to pay higher end of the market for those services,” Hoffman explains. “Clearly you get what you pay for, and I think it's money well spent.”

On a recent rainy weekday afternoon, the group gathered for a roundtable discussion about the planning and execution of Peter Street Condos, revisiting their respective roles in the project.

The roundtable — moderated by Roth — yielded insights into the intricacies and challenges involved in bringing this highrise condo to market in the heart of North America's condo-construction capital.

## FITTING IN

Peter Clewes had two objectives when coming up with a design concept for Peter Street Condos.

He wanted to pay homage to the historical architecture of the formerly industrial neighbourhood. He also wanted to have a modern tower that fit within the modern aesthetic of the Entertainment District. He achieved this with a tower base that “recalls the idea of those masonry industrial buildings,” he told the roundtable, noting that ar-

chitectsAlliance's Peter St. office, built in 1910, served as a muse

The glass and aluminum tower will be “metaphorically inserted into the base tower,” Clewes said.

Many highrise condos have the tower step back above the podium; this ensures the tall building doesn't impose itself on the street.

Not Peter Street Condos. Clewes emphasized that his tower will “engage the base building in a very deliberate way. We're not pretending that there's a kind of deferential setback of the tower to the base so when you walk down the street you can pretend there isn't a tower there. We're saying there is a tower there, this is a big deal: this is a 40-storey tower.”

An amenity space on the fourth and fifth floor will include weight rooms, yoga area, massage room, theatre room, billiard room, lounge, kitchen and dining room.

## INSIDE COUNTS

A nicely designed building with ample amenities won't count for much if the interiors of the condos are poorly conceived, the roundtable concurred.

“I think the market is very sophisticated now and knows how to read plans, whereas five years ago that wasn't the case,” Ceconi said. “People understand what they're looking at when they look at a floor plan.”

Suites at the Peter Street Condos will have nine-foot ceilings, floor to ceiling windows and engineered wood flooring in the main rooms.

Kitchens will have cabinetry custom-designed by Ceconi Simone, composite quartz countertops and an Energy Star appliance package.

These days, with developers shrinking condo suite sizes in an effort to keep costs down, it's become a greater challenge for designers to create functional, livable spaces.

How fortunate, then, that Ceconi Simone is on the case.



## THE PETER PRINCIPLES

**Location:** Adelaide St. West and Peter Street (northeast corner)

**Developer:** CentreCourt Developments Inc., [www.centrecourtdevelopments.com](http://www.centrecourtdevelopments.com)

**Architect:** architectsAlliance, [www.architectsalliance.com](http://www.architectsalliance.com)

**Interior designer:** Ceconi Simone, [www.ceconisimone.com](http://www.ceconisimone.com)

**Size:** 429 suites, 40 storeys  
**Suites:** 303- to 772-square-foot: Studio, 1-bedroom; 1-bedroom-plus-study; 2-bedroom; 3-bedroom.

**Price:** From low \$200,000s to \$500,000s

**Sales centre:** 338 Adelaide St. West (opening June 2011)  
**Information:** 416-987-8765, [www.peterstreet.ca](http://www.peterstreet.ca)

The key, she told the roundtable, is to “manipulate the space within those four walls.” Maximize access to daylight, provide lots of storage, and create flexible living areas through the use of movable walls.

It's also not a bad idea to coordinate with the people designing the actual building, Ceconi noted. “We have a very healthy respect for architects. We believe the interior of a building should mesh at some level with the exterior style, either in materials or palette.

“You shouldn't walk into a building and feel like you've walked into a split personality.”

## STANDING OUT

Only a decade ago, brokers had a tough time selling homebuyers on the virtues of living in a condo, Hunter Milborne noted.

How times have changed. “2007 was the first year there was more highrise than lowrise construction in the GTA,” he told the roundtable. “Now people want a condo. It's just a question of what one appeals.”

Which raised a good question for the group: How do you make Peter Street Condos stand out in the so-

phisticated and crowded condo market that Toronto has become?

“It's a challenge and it's an opportunity,” Klugsberg said. “Consumers are looking at a dozen different sites,” so it's about showing them something that “differentiates the product.”

This is where Klugsberg enters the equation: marketing and advertising are critical in shaping how the public perceives the development.

When it came to the branding of Peter Street Condos, Klugsberg explained, location was the primary driver. “We named it Peter Street Condos because we wanted it to be a building that had a personality in a location. Peter St. is centre ice in the downtown core, with all the districts around it.”

Klugsberg also wanted the name to underscore the condo's connection to the street. The building does have frontage on Adelaide, but its residential entrance is off Peter. To underscore the affection for its namesake, Klugsberg coined a cute tagline for the project: “PS: I Love You.”

For more on the roundtable discussion, go to [www.yourhome.ca](http://www.yourhome.ca)