

Colonial-style Mexican villas have all the latest features

BY PAMELA IRVING, FREELANCE MAY 21, 2011

If you are tired of short summers and long winters, allow San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, a picturesque year-round destination, to warmly embrace you.

Voted one of the world's top 10 cities by Travel and Leisure magazine, San Miguel de Allende, in the central highlands 234 kilometres northeast of Mexico City, is a UNESCO heritage site because of its virtually intact colonial structures dating back to the 17th century.

At the centre of this exquisite setting are the Artesana Rosewood Residences, handcrafted colonial villas finished in the architectural elements of the era. There are 29 villas in Phase 1 available, ranging from 2,378 to 8,854 square feet, with two, three, four or five bedrooms.

The architecture is consistent with San Miguel's old world colonial style, yet the interiors have all the latest features including epicurean kitchens, Viking appliances, handcrafted artisan flooring, elevators in most homes as well as underground garages.

Residents share the private amenities of the Rosewood resort, giving them full access to the Sense Spa, fitness centre, pools, a kids club as well as dining options within the resort and two golf courses within minutes, all at a cost of living far less than in Canada.

Prices at Artesana Rosewood Residences currently start at \$599,900 (all prices US) up to more than \$2.4 million. There are no restrictions for Canadians wishing to buy property in San Miguel de Allende, as it is not in any of the restricted zones for foreigners wishing to purchase a home in Mexico.

"The title is fee simple, and the transaction very simple. Taxes on a \$1-million home are only \$600 a year," explains Richard York, director of sales at Artesana Rosewood Residences.

The Residences and the Rosewood Resort are located in the Centro area of San Miguel de Allende and within easy walking distance to restaurants, shops, parks, galleries, churches and the art schools and institutions for which San Miguel is famous.

Golf is a big draw with Malanquin golf course, a private club 10 minutes by car from Artesana Rosewood Residences. It is a pleasant walkable nine-hole golf course with plans to expand to 18. The course is more than 50 years old, and club amenities include a gym, heated lap pool and tennis courts. Las Ventanas golf resort, only 15 minutes outside of town, is a championship course designed by Nick Faldo.

Quality restaurants in San Miguel mean you can enjoy a great dinner for two at a five-star restaurant such as Sollano 16 that includes salad, appetizers, main dishes and a bottle of wine for about \$80 Cdn.