



The 55-plus lifestyle is a new way of living; one that celebrates camaraderie among like-minded residents in a highly social environment.

TODAY'S *55-plus Lifestyle*

WHEN ANN AND ROSS first planned their retirement, they both wanted to downsize. With just the two of them in a four-bedroom, three-bathroom house, time spent on house cleaning and maintenance no longer made sense.

After much discussion about what their ideal retirement home would look like, their realtor lined up an impressive list of condos, townhomes and smaller versions of the standard two-storey home to view. Yet after touring a variety of very acceptable layouts and desirable locations for two months, nothing stood out as “This is it! This is where we know we can happily spend the next stage of our life.”

Like many early retired couples, Ann and Ross have grown children and grandchildren with whom they love spending time. But as much as they thoroughly enjoy the company of their family and younger friends, they didn’t want to live in a neighbourhood populated by mainly young families. They wanted to retire in a place and social environment that more closely fit their demographic. Ultimately, they found their perfect retirement home in a 55-plus adult-lifestyle community.

Over the past decade, designers and builders of lifestyle developments geared to mature adults have excelled at creating aesthetically appealing communities within reasonable commuting distance of most large cities. Cleverly designed lowrise homes, set in beautifully landscaped grounds, provide a variety of size and layout choices to please the most demanding among us, while still in the proximity of shopping, financial and medical facilities, and close to major highways and public transportation.

LOOK FOR A COMMUNITY THAT SUPPORTS A FULFILLING RETIREMENT LIFESTYLE AND SUSTAINS ABOVE-MARKET REAL ESTATE VALUES.

In addition to offering some of the most desirable locations and size-right options, what really sets these communities apart from other neighbourhoods is the lifestyle. The overwhelming majority of residents who choose to live in these custom-designed developments are in the 45–75 age range and want to live among people with whom they share similar social requirements and lifestyle preferences.

Whether the preferred lifestyle choices include golf, tennis, hiking or bridge, camaraderie is *de rigueur*. These communities foster a social environment where dialogue, laughter and familiarity of purpose promote friendship and reinforce commonality among those who choose to live there.

Selecting a housing community that protects the overall look, feel and purpose of its creation not only sponsors and supports a more fulfilled way of life in retirement, but is proving to sustain above-market real estate values.

For Ann and Ross, it was still very important they heeded their realtor’s advice about location when they made their final selection. But as Ann explained, their ultimate decision “wasn’t just about where we lived...it was who we shared our neighbourhood with that was more important.” ■

This article is one of a series that will explore the many options available to you to “Right-size Your Lifestyle”®, sponsored by award-winning new home builder, Geranium Homes. For information about Geranium’s current communities, visit geraniumhomes.com