

Young People Will Love Senior Living

By Jessica Derkis

Kids these days. Young people want it all. Now. And that means all the perks that seniors often look for in a retirement community: walkability, easy access to medical care, a shared dining experience, coordinated experiences with their peers and such are becoming the new wants in much younger communities.

Thankfully, many of today's senior communities no longer sport the mile-long, dark hallways with wall-to-wall linoleum wreaking of heavy duty cleaners and call lights overhead bing-bing-binging for attention. In many communities, gone are the nurses bedecked in brightly colored scrubs with cartoon characters and cute puppies. Even the central thermostat is becoming history because designers realize 70-degrees does not feel the same for everyone.

You are now more likely to find hotel-like environments in most of the newer communities serving seniors. Ten and 11 foot ceilings with large windows make private spaces feel warm and bright no matter the actual square footage while 30-plus foot expanses invite you to enjoy larger community areas with a crowd with reduced noise and increased natural light.

And tech-savvy millennials would be surprised how much technology is employed to keep residents safe, comfortable and foster as much independence as possible.

Staffs wear comfortable uniforms signifying their department and purpose to limit confusion for residents and families alike. In some senior neighborhoods, dogs, cats, birds, fish and other creatures are welcome additions and bring comfort to the resident and joy to neighbors.

A professional chef in senior communities like Kensington Place's Chef Tony Ng offers all day dining menus and special diets even modifying recipes to include those who need vegetarian, diabetic, gluten-free, and high or low calorie options. In larger communities, you might find formal, casual café, dessert and late night snack options in separate and equally well-planned spaces.

As baby boomers' children and grandchildren visit, they regularly enjoy visits with on-demand cuisine options with no fuss or clean up. Drop-in activities like exercise programs and scheduled outings



to the theater or shopping offer a way to engage with the greater community and be part of something larger, more familial. Concierge services, too, offer assistance with everything from dry cleaning to wine recommendations to travel planning.

And youngsters are watching. Many Bay Area luxury apartment and condominium properties already offer concierge services to get new transplants up to speed and connected to necessities like doctors, pharmacies, grocery stores and conveniences like weather, traffic and food delivery.



Computer labs with business services like fax, message center and mailing help all ages get work done without leaving home. After work is done, there is plenty of fun to be had.

Pool parties, picnics on the grounds, painting classes and wine tastings are de rigueur while simple exercise classes are almost passé. Some multifamily neighborhoods offer meditation and empowerment with dance instructors, laughter yoga leaders, and drum circle gurus, often with international backgrounds. Some even have on-site amenities like sporty playgrounds for the elementary set and dog washing stations to encourage responsible pet parenting.

HGTV-worthy movie theaters, convenient gas grills, fully stocked game rooms, group discount concerts and events, and other entertainment options, inspire younger residents to get to know one another, build community and include friends and family.

Younger people can learn from oldsters. They are learning that it is good to live in a community with likeminded neighbors and balance work and home life.

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