

The background of the page is a photograph of a golf course. In the foreground, there is a green fairway with two sand traps. In the middle ground, there are several trees. In the background, a large, multi-story clubhouse with a prominent tower and a conical roof is visible under a clear blue sky.

Miramont

Fit for a King

By Kelli Levey

The Miramont community is an example of just how grand a golf community can be when money is no object. Befitting of its namesake – an Italian word meaning “view from the grassy hill” – the course and surrounding master-planned community is nestled in the hills and oak groves of the Brazos Valley in Central Texas. The 1,000-acre development could as easily be located in the French countryside as in this community that is home to Texas A&M University, about equidistant to Dallas, Houston and San Antonio.

Miramont’s centerpiece – a luxurious country club – is furnished with gleaming surfaces and majestic marble. The 15 third-floor guest suites offer views of the meticulously manicured grounds with the Tower Suites gilded in gold and the Presidential Suite basi-

cally a power playroom including a pop-up television and burnished wood surfaces.

The man behind Miramont is 71-year-old Don Adam, a 1957 Texas A&M graduate who has quietly bolstered his community’s local economy with gifts such as a million dollar pledge in 1994 to start fundraising for the George Bush Presidential Library, a \$100,000 donation to help build the Brazos Valley Veterans Memorial and annual donations to the local arts council.

Adam’s daughter Stephanie Malechek, who serves as president of Miramont Country Club and C.O.O. of Adam Development Properties, said his selection of Bryan as Miramont’s home was intentional. Miramont is near Adam’s residential estate, set in the rear of an



adjacent subdivision. “He has felt the community has done so much for him, he wanted to give something back,” Malechek said. “One thing this community has never had is a top-notch country club with a great golf course, so he decided to provide one. It has been his dream and now it is his pet project.”

Adam drew from his world travels for ideas about decorating Miramont, and he hand-picked HKS to design the 93,000-square-foot American Classicist-styled clubhouse, Wilson & Associates for the interior architecture and Naud Burnett for the landscaping. Dallas-based HKS most recently created the Texas A&M Foundation Building, while Burnett landscaped the Botanical Gardens in Nashville and is working with the Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Society on the

new Trammell Crow Visitor’s Center. Wilson & Associates has designed the interiors of more than 1 million guest rooms in facilities ranging from resorts and spas to casino hotels to business environs. It maintains offices in Dallas, New York, Los Angeles, Singapore, Johannesburg and Shanghai.

The décor in Miramont’s clubhouse is decked out with every amenity imaginable – furnishings featuring inlaid wood, crystal chandeliers, silk paintings, Jerusalem gold marble and Pennsylvania Bluestone flooring beneath a sturdy slate roof. The guest suites are described as “Ritz Carlton-Plus,” and the men’s locker room features several 52-inch flat-screen TVs. The women’s side includes a sauna and walk-in hot tub. Outside the clubhouse proper are eight tennis



Next time I contemplate a quick trip to Scotland for a round at Gleneagles, I might just drive to Miramont instead.

- Jim Ritts, Former Commissioner LPGA

courts with a full-time pro, a swimming and lap pool with a separate spa area and practice facilities, including a room for Pilates and golf swing analysis. The locker rooms and exercise room open out to a terrace that wraps around from the tennis courts to the pool.

But the heart of the development winds its way around everything else: the Robert Trent Jones Jr. designed golf course. Adam and several members of his development team interviewed several top-notch golf course developers before selecting Jones, who basically had free reign on the project. "The golf course was the first thought, not the afterthought in this whole development," Miramont sales director Mike Harris said. "I think that shows in the commitment to quality along every step of the way."

Jones strived to accentuate the natural terrain while adding details that enhanced the prestigious golf course community. After several years of planning and building, the 7,127-yard Miramont 1 course opened in early 2005, followed by the clubhouse that July. The first 22 holes are completed and an additional five holes are planned within the next few years.

Golf pro Jeff Hunter, who graduated from Texas Christian University and joined the PGA in 1990, has played in two U.S.

Opens and was named Gateway PGA Golf Professional of the Year in 1999 and 2000. Most recently, he served as general manager at Olde Lantern Golf Club in Belleville, Ill. Rounding out Miramont's staff are tennis pro Brad Bradham, who came from River Oaks; French-trained chef Jacques Fox, who last worked at Houston's Briar Club; and food and beverage director Yon Joyoprayitno, who relocated from Horseshoe Bay.

Marketing is a recent activity for the Miramont project, a strategy decided upon early in the planning phase. "Most clubs of this stature would sell paper for years and years before it opened but we did things the other way around. We really had a different philosophy," Harris said. "We waited until every road was in, every wall was in place and every plant was in the ground because we wanted people to see what they were getting. We wanted to show the finished product, not just the plans. We wanted to let the community speak for itself, rather than have us draw the picture of what was to come."

Miramont is designed to remain exclusive and somewhat mysterious. Fewer than a dozen local organizations have been granted access to the facilities, and membership requirements are the same for the residents as for anyone else: You must be invited by two existing members and then receive approval from

a selection committee. Currently, the roster includes about 160 members. All levels of memberships – social, athletic and full – are granted dining privileges and access to the guest suites, with the higher-ranking members receiving a longer lead time for reservations.

Miramont's elite elegance extends to the master-planned neighborhood, where the developers are hoping for an "eclectic mix" of high-quality homes. "We think of places like River Oaks in Houston or Highland Park in Dallas, where you'll see a Mediterranean next to a Colonial [styled home], and yet the overall picture is of superiority and elegance," Harris said. "What they build must be of a certain quality, and over time we'll create a neighborhood where the valuations will just continue to increase."

The first 527 acres, or Phase I, are under development with about half of the inventory platted and ready for build-out. Existing homes are valued at \$300,000 to \$3 million. The 176 residential lots run the gamut from garden homes (golf and tennis villas) from 6,500 to 12,000 square feet, priced between the \$60,000's to the low \$100,000's; premier home sites of 1/3 to 3/4 of an acre, ranging from the low \$80,000's to the low \$200,000's; and estate home sites of 3/4 to 1-plus acres starting at \$200,000.

"The majority of the homes sold are garden homes, for people wanting to downsize or to have a little more flexibility to travel and not have so much upkeep at home," Harris said. "We also have some of the estate-type homes, but now we're seeing more and more families move in. Families are typically late in the ball game, they want to wait and see how the thing pans out. I anticipate by the time we have the place built out we'll have the full range of residents."

Next up is a gated garden home community adjacent to the golf course. These afford the owner the flexibility to travel for extended periods of time without having to consider home maintenance or upkeep. Applications will be accepted within the next few months, with a choice of six floor plans and a handful of elevation options. The prices will range from \$400,000 to \$800,000 and, unlike Miramont's other housing options, construction will be done in-house by Adam's own company.

Phase II, expected to break ground in a few years, will add another nine holes of golf and additional home sites.

To make families feel more welcome, plans were adjusted to add a park to the Miramont grounds. "We wanted some place for kids to play, for their parents or grandparents to take them, so they'd feel welcome here, as well," Malechek said. "We're planning on developing a park with a playscape so they can have an area where they feel comfortable and can have fun. It will just enhance the experience for everyone."

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