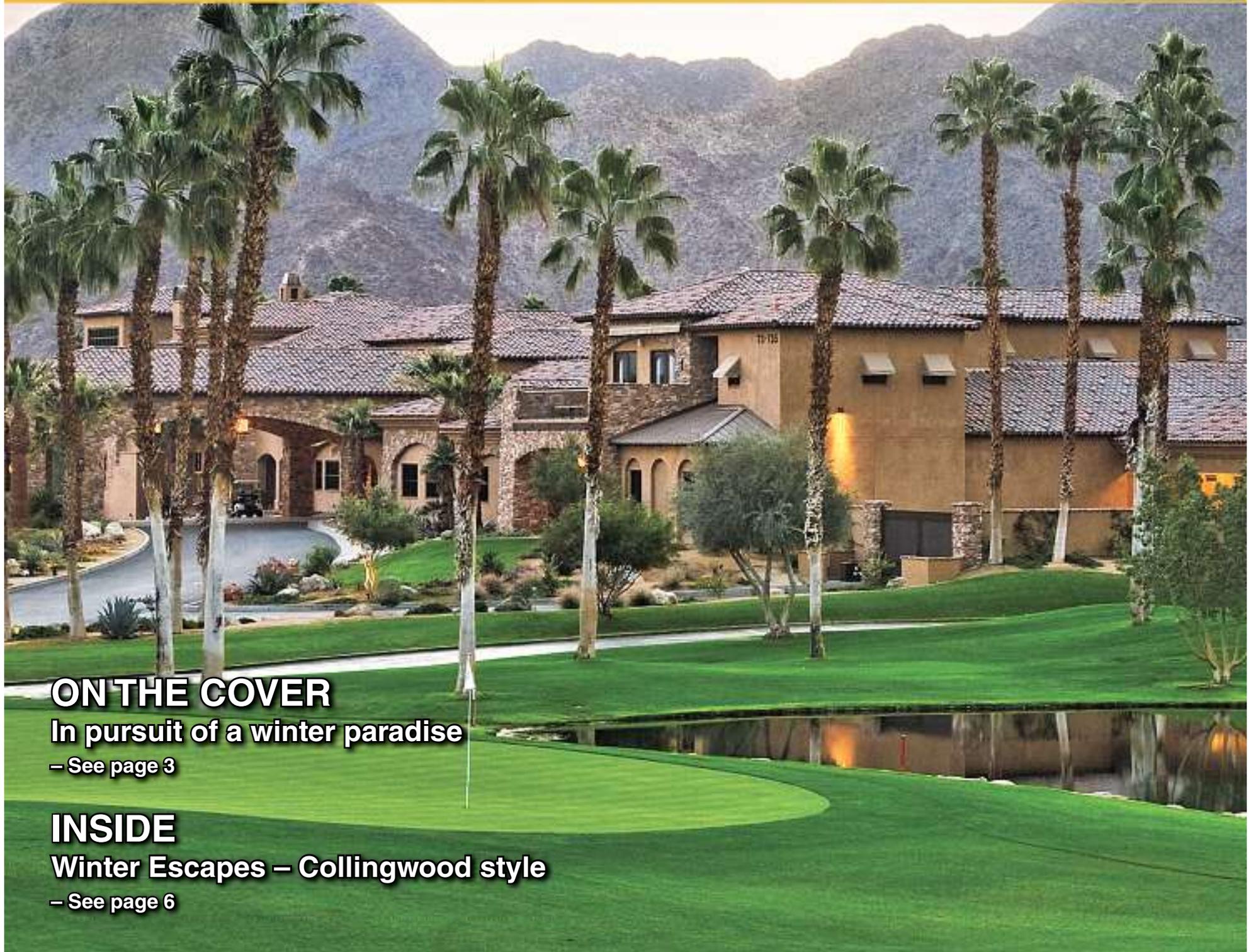


SUN  **Homes-Extra**
NEW HOMES & CONDOS

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3 TO SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2012



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In pursuit of a winter paradise

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Introducing The Blue Ribbon



Sales Event In Mount Pleasant North

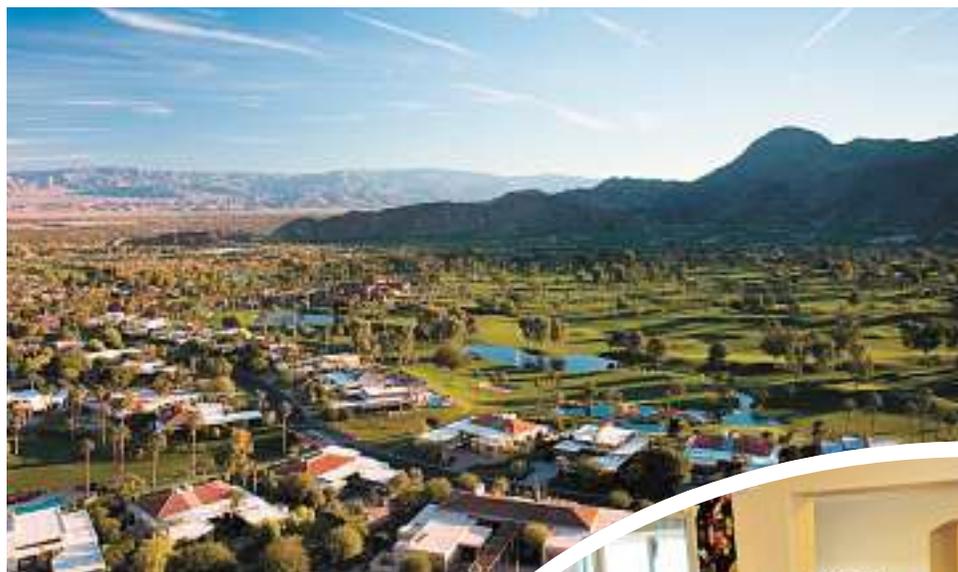
Get Connected To Huge Savings On Townhomes & Detached Homes.

See Back Cover For Details.

In pursuit of a winter paradise

COVER STORY

While Ontarians are known to snowbird to Florida, some are buying further west in California and Arizona



The gated community of Ironwood, set in the scenic Palm Desert area of California among the foothills of the Santa Rosa Mountains, features more than 1,000 homes and offers resale condos, singles and large custom homes.



Ironwood Country Club boasts two private 18-hole golf courses designed by Arnold Palmer.



Second to Alberta, Ontario homebuyers are the predominant Canadian purchasers of vacation properties in Arizona.

Seen here:
The Ashcreek model from Fulton Homes.

LISA FATTORI
Special to QMI Agency

By February, warm sunny days, a game of golf and dining el fresco are dim memories for most Canadians. Others, however, make the winter hiatus south of the border to enjoy vacation properties in resort style communities that promise balmy weather, day after day.

While Ontarians are known to snowbird to sunny Florida, more and more are buying further west, in California and Arizona, in amenity-rich neighbourhoods where home prices are just too attractive to ignore.

Founded 40 years ago, Ironwood Country Club is a premier holiday destination that is set in the scenic Palm Desert area of California, in the foothills of the Santa Rosa Mountains. The community boasts two private 18-hole golf courses designed by Arnold Palmer, Ted Robinson and Desmond Muirhead — courses that are so renowned that the South Course hosts the US Open Qualifier each year.

In addition to golf, Country Club members have access to 13 tennis courts, two pickleball courts, two bocce ball courts, a complete fitness facility, ample restaurants and spa services.

Everything from card games and art classes to bingo nights and holiday events complete a full calendar of social events. Ongoing capital improvement plans include a recent \$29 million renovation to the facility's Clubhouse and Fitness Centre.

This gated, private community of more than 1,000 homes offers mostly resale condos, singles and large custom homes, many of which have spectacular views of the Country Club and surrounding mountains. Prices start from the low \$200,000s, with some owners renting out their homes as income

properties. While club membership is not mandatory, approximately half of Ironwood residents choose to take advantage of all of the amenities offered.

Second to Alberta, Ontario homebuyers are the predominant Canadian purchasers of vacation properties in Arizona. Just 25 minutes southeast of Phoenix, Fulton Homes is a premier builder in the Southeast Valley, with several new home developments available.

"Canadians don't have a recession and have not been through the housing crisis we've had here. Whether it is a winter home, a second home or a fulltime move, Canadians are looking for an affordable, quality home, in a climate that

combats the cold weather they are used to. That makes them perfect potential homebuyers," says Douglas Fulton, Fulton Homes CEO.

The Canada-Arizona Business Council says more Canadians will visit the Grand Canyon State this year than ever before. Airlines in Canada like West Jet, are adding several more flights to Phoenix to meet demand. One real estate agent who sells to Canadians says the very affordable home prices are sparking sales. The company's signature resort-style community, Fulton Ranch, is a 520 acre master planned community that offers townhomes, single family homes and multi-million dollar custom homes. The community has three retail centres, a 28-acre lake system with streams and waterfalls, and several parks with beautifully

landscaped walking paths.

Fulton Homes has recently released its fifth and final phase at Fulton Ranch, which is a last chance opportunity to own at this prestigious address. The new Shoreline neighbourhood features two- and three-story single detached homes. Floor plans range from 2,500 sq. ft. to 4,000 sq. ft., with prices starting in the \$300s. Opulent finishes include 10 ft. ceilings, granite countertops and maple cabinetry.

Just 15 minutes east of Fulton Ranch, in Queen Creek, purchasers can also buy a home at Mendocino at Ashcreek and Victoria Estates. Ashcreek homes are situated on one-half acre lots, with prices starting in the low \$300s. Victoria Estates offers an exclusive collection of only 45 lots, with prices starting in the \$340s.

The Energy Star homes come with four-car garages, courtyards and high-end finishes. The new Queen Creek communities are quiet residential neighbourhoods, but are just 15 minutes from shopping, restaurants and a host of amenities.