



Current Issue| **Volume 25, Issue 2**

From CREN's Archives:

Distinctive Le Germain Calgary to break ground in March

by [Angela Anderson](#)

[Cover Story](#) | [Vol. 25 No. 1](#) | January 04, 2007



Innovative architecture, luxurious design and energy efficiency encompass the recently announced Le Germain Calgary, a mixed-use upscale development that blends hotel, office space and condominium living.

Le Groupe Germain, a family-owned luxury hotel group from Calgary's sister city, Quebec City, traveled west Tuesday to the Art Gallery of Calgary to unveil plans for the unique building to be constructed adjacent to the Calgary Tower by the spring of 2009.

The project will be Le Germain's sixth boutique hotel across Canada, and this one will be the first of its kind for Le Group Germain.

"We believe Calgary to be the ideal place to make a bold and exciting move to expand our luxury boutique hotels with a new concept," said Christiane Germain, CEO and co-president of the company. "Calgary is known for its entrepreneurial spirit and its robust economy—two very attractive characteristics for businesses looking to expand."

The development will be located on the northwest corner of 9th Avenue SE and Centre Street South.

It will feature two separate buildings; a 150-room boutique hotel and an office tower that bridge together at the top to form the 42 luxury condominiums, creating an open breezeway in the centre.

Two years ago, Le Group Germain, Grenville Properties Ltd. and LeMay Michaud Architecture Design began the process of how they can make the project a reality.

Now that the vision is finally a reality—the project was approved by Calgary city council last week—all partners involved, including the city, say they're ecstatic.

"We are already recognized as the western Canadian business centre, but this is a big step in moving to Calgary being Western Canada's cultural centre as well," said Calgary Economic Development president and CEO Bruce Graham at the unveiling.

Graham praised the company for putting such an emphasis on Canadian art, which Germain said they had \$500,000 set aside to invest in to showcase throughout the building.

He also recognized the innovative architecture that Calgary, and any Canadian city can benefit from.

Not only is the design unique for Calgary, and appreciated for the cultural benefit, but Graham said the additional 85,000 sq. ft. of office space focused on small to medium-sized enterprises to become available in the core is greatly anticipated.

“This product is going to be in the market for spring of 2009, and as quickly as you can build it, I’m confident we’re going to fill that space,” Graham said.

He also welcomed the additional condominium space, as that component of the real estate industry is also extremely tight.

The condos available for sale will range from 1000 sq. ft. to 3850 sq. ft. in size, and the project will include many energy-saving features.

“We believe strongly in protecting our environment, and we’re proud that Le Germain Calgary will be a fine example of that. The green roof is one of my favourite parts of this project,” Germain said.

The green roof will consist of gardens on the rooftops of the multiple leveled terraces, and will utilize rainwater recovery for watering.

The facade itself, will feature “welcoming” wood paneling on the exterior of the hotel side, and low emission glass with high transparency on the office side, to maximize the use of sunlight.

In addition to the use of recycled materials for construction, there will be a geothermal heating and cooling system, radiant hot water heating in the condos and public floors of the hotel, and high-performance air-conditioning using CFC-free coolant.

All the lighting will be indirect, LED lighting and high-efficiency lighting, and managed according to exterior light.

Construction is expected to commence on the site in March 2007, and condo sales are expected to begin late March or early April 2007.

In addition to LeMay Michaud Architecture from Montreal leading the project, Calgary’s Peter Burgener from BDKI Architects will co-lead the project.

Geniplus Inc. and Genecor Inc. from Montreal, and Mechwave Engineering Ltd. from Calgary are the engineering partners.

“Our partners in engineering and design, both in Montreal and in Calgary, are leaders in their fields,” Germain said. “They have researched, assessed and will implement the latest developments in energy efficient design and development to ensure Le Germain Calgary is a benchmark for our industry.”

The Germain family started out in the restaurant business many years ago in Quebec City.

In 1988, sister-brother team Christiane Germain and Jean-Yves Germain with their brother Richard, formed Le Groupe Germain by embarking on a \$4.5 million renovation of an old office building in Sainte-Foy, Quebec, turning it into the 126-room Hotel Germain-des-Pres, complete with its famous restaurant, Le Bistango.

The hotel won top honours in the Quebec Grand Prix of Tourism in

both 1992 and 1996.

The family's second hotel project, opened in 1997, was the 40-room Hotel Dominion 1912, a \$2.3 million renovation of the former Dominion Fish and Fruit Limited office building built in 1912 in Quebec City's Petit-Charlaine quarter.

Then the third project followed, Hotel Le Germain, opened up in Montreal in 1999, and in 2003, Hotel Le Germain Toronto opened its doors in the city's entertainment district.

All of the Le Group Germain projects have been well-received and many aspects of the design have been praised by architecture magazines, travel magazines and style critics.

—*Angela Anderson is a Calgary Real Estate News reporter.*

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