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Potential Sun City Anthem home buyers now have place to stay

Sarah J. Boggan, Tribune

When people visit Sun City Anthem at Merrill Ranch, they can now stay a few nights in the community's new vacation getaway villas.

Open this month, visitors to the master-planned community near Florence get the run of a fully furnished house, a golf cart and all of the "lifestyle amenities" Sun City Anthem at Merrill Ranch offers — at \$69 a night.

"It's helpful being way out here where there is no where else to stay," said Graham Epperson, director of sales for the south Valley. "A large portion of our buyers come from somewhere else, and this offers them a reasonably priced place to stay."

But Epperson said the four villas, which are models of homes available for sale, aren't just "a cheap hotel." The villas are intended for those interested in buying a home in Sun City Anthem.

"It's like being a resident while they're here," he said. "This is all about getting to live the lifestyle we've created here."

The villas are sharply decorated with fully furnished living spaces, including the kitchen, which has cooking utensils and dishes. The bedrooms boast four-star linens, and the yards are fully landscaped so visitors can enjoy the backyard or a common area with a barbecue grill.

Discounted spa and golf packages are available, too.

Vacation getaway villas manager Sherry Rottweiler said people booking the villas come to them in different ways — Anthem salespeople book villas for potential home buyers, and people seeing their information in advertising and online. Rottweiler said there has been an increase in the number of reservations, and the villas have been booked on the weekends.

Sun City Anthem offers the villas for a three-night stay with check-in between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. and checkout between 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. Those staying at the villas must be 19 years or older with one person at least 45 years old.

Del Webb, the developer of Sun City Anthem, has offered vacation villas at some of the company's Sun City locations for decades, Epperson said.

"Originally the Del Webb concept was loosely based on the time-share concept," he said.

"People could come here for two or three hours and have a good feeling of what it's like, but they don't really get to live it. This is all about getting to live it."

More about it

To make a reservation, call (877) 484-7829 or e-mail scanthemvacation@pulte.com. For more information, visit www.suncityanthem.com.



SAMPLE THE LIFESTYLE: Active adults can stay at Sun City Anthem at Merrill Ranch's vacation getaway villas near Florence. -- Jennifer Grimes, Tribune