

LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL IN SUMMERLIN
*Executive who oversees the Wolfgang Puck empire makes
Las Vegas community of Summerlin his home*

Las Vegas is a city built on connections. In the early 1900s, the rail line that connected Los Angeles to Salt Lake City ran through Southern Nevada, attracting farmers and ranchers to the area. Fast forward to the 1940s when connected mob figures like Bugsy Siegel and Meyer Lansky built The Flamingo, proving a luxury hotel with gambling as the headliner could be big business in the godforsaken Mojave Desert. From the city's all-powerful founding families and notorious but oft beloved organized crime figures to powerhouses like Howard Robard Hughes, Jr. who forever changed the city's landscape by legitimizing gaming properties via corporate ownership, the city's history is indeed one of connections.

So where do all the beautiful, powerful, smart, successful and connected people of Las Vegas live today? The answer is still inextricably linked to the city's history: primarily in the award-winning master-planned community of Summerlin®, developed by none other than The Howard Hughes Corporation®, the company named for the man whose imprint on the city is even more evident today than it was decades ago.

Tom Kaplan, Senior Managing Partner, Wolfgang Puck Fine Dining Group, is one of the city's influencers who chose to live in Summerlin. He oversees the global Wolfgang Puck fine dining empire that includes 25 domestic and international restaurants, including five on the Las Vegas Strip and the Wolfgang Puck Bar & Grill at Downtown Summerlin, a dining, fashion, entertainment and sports destination that distinguishes Summerlin from all other communities in Southern Nevada. From the new Spago at the Bellagio to CUT at the Palazzo, Wolfgang Puck Cucina at Crystals, the Wolfgang Puck Bar & Grill at MGM Grand and Lupo at Mandalay Bay, Kaplan makes regular rounds to his restaurants on the Strip when he is not traveling. But he prefers the casual vibe of the Wolfgang Puck Bar & Grill at Downtown Summerlin, where he and his family dine every few weeks with friends and neighbors or for business.

Kaplan moved to Las Vegas in 1992 to open the original Spago at Forum Shops at Caesars. Initially not thrilled with the idea of leaving Southern California for Southern Nevada, Kaplan now couldn't imagine living anywhere else. He and wife, Liz, along with six-year-old son, Austin, live in The Ridges at Summerlin, a luxury hillside enclave overlooking the valley where many of the city's influencers put down roots.

Kaplan, who purchased his homesite just three months before the economic collapse of 2008, held onto his land, citing faith in The Howard Hughes Corporation to weather the storm and trust that Summerlin would retain its value. And he was not disappointed. He and Liz spent more than four years designing and building the home of their dreams with a backyard literally abuts to the Conservation Area where no future development will occur. "Our backyard is a place of serenity and peace and a great escape from the city's hustle and bustle," he said.

A perfect Summerlin weekend for the Kaplans might include a hike at nearby Red Rock Canyon or Mt. Charleston, watching the Vegas Golden Knights practice at City National Arena, shopping at the toy store at Downtown Summerlin, or participating in Austin's school activities at Alexander Dawson, one of many private schools in the community. "Like the whole city, we've become big hockey fans; we've enjoyed a few WNBA Aces games and since Austin is a big music fan and a promising pianist, we regularly take advantage of the city's robust concert and show scenes – from Indie rock to School of Rock, classic rock and classical music."

Liz, who is active in philanthropic organizations like Nevada Women's Philanthropy and Keep Memory Alive, is originally from Austin. Like her husband, she was initially reluctant to move to Las Vegas. But she's become a fan thanks to Summerlin. "Everything is here," said Liz. "The community is brimming with both manmade and natural beauty, and it offers access to great medical facilities, schools, neighborhood services, shopping and more. I don't ever feel like I need to leave."

Spanning 22,500 acres along the western edge of the Las Vegas valley and framed by Red Rock Canyon National Conservation, the region's most stunning natural landmark, Summerlin is credited with making Las Vegas known as a great place to live, not just visit. Now in its 28th year, the community is home to more than 100,000 Southern Nevadans drawn to its superior quality of life. With more than 150 miles of walking trails, 250-plus parks of all sizes, ten golf courses, 25 public, private and charter schools and its own downtown, Summerlin is in a league of its own in Southern Nevada when it comes to amenities.

It's no wonder the city's captains of industry, entrepreneurs, celebrities, professionals, influencers and yes, even its foodies - often choose to put down roots in Summerlin, easily considered the best place to live in Las Vegas.