

newhomes

Building the dream

UOVO ITALIAN-INSPIRED, LOCATION PURE TORONTO

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Almost five decades of working in Toronto's Yonge and Eglinton neighbourhood has left Savvas (Sammy) Koundouros with strong ties to the local neighbourhood. Now, the owner of Sammy's Service Centre — an auto repair shop on Yonge Street at Hillsdale Avenue — wants to create a lasting impression there with a new boutique condominium project, Uovo.

A fixture in the community since the early 1970s, Koundouros is transforming the land he owns into an 11-storey condominium building. It's a path the budding developer first started on 11 years ago, when — after seeing the changes happening in the community around him, as well as the condominium growth throughout the city — he began gathering a team of experts to help him navigate the building process and site design.

"I have owned and operated a business from this location for 47 years. The area has changed dramatically since then, (with) better services and places for people to enjoy," says Koundouros, who acquired the property next door to Sammy's, as well as a laneway to the west, to amass enough land for the new building's footprint. "I knew it was time to relocate Sammy's Service Centre, and build something that I would be proud of."

Currently in pre-construction, Uovo will offer a more intimate experience amidst the tall towers more commonly found along Yonge Street. Named for the Italian word for egg — a cheeky reference to its Yonge and Eglinton location — it will include just 67 units, with one-bedroom-plus-den to three-bedroom-plus-den layouts ranging from 626- to 1,887-square

feet and starting from the mid-\$600,000s.

To help him produce a building he could be proud of, Koundouros turned to RAW Design. One of the city's busiest architectural firms when it comes to mid-rise residential projects, RAW has designed condominium buildings across Toronto and its surrounds, including Freed Developments' 346 Davenport, Skale Developments' Scarborough project The Bluffs, and Adi Development Group's LINK Condos + Lofts in Burlington. At Uovo, the firm designed a tiered building of brick and precast, integrating ceramic accents along the base that mimic the appearance of classic marble to play on the Italian inspiration of the project's name.

The same material will be carried through the lobby, designed — along with the site's amenities — by Toronto-based esQape Design. Overseeing the development process is project manager the Sher Corporation.

The whole project has been styled to accommodate the local market, while filling a niche in the city itself, says Sher Corporation partner Shakeel Walji. "Yonge and Eglinton is just a little bit off the beaten path of being right downtown," he says. "Most people who are looking in areas like Yonge and St. Clair or Yonge and Eglinton want a home. They want more space available. They don't want to live in a small box."

While smaller units servicing first-time buyers or investors are usually apt to sell more quickly, he says, the team behind Uovo instead designed the project with larger suites targeted at the city's downsizers and families.

The average suite size is just under 1,000-square feet, with two-storey penthouses available and terraces ran-



PHOTOS: PETER J THOMPSON / NATIONAL POST

Savvas Koundouros, right, owner and president of Sammy's Service Centre and the soon-to-be-built Uovo condominium at 2114 Yonge St., with Shakeel Walji, partner and developer for the Sher Corporation in Toronto.

ging up to 1,111-square feet. Meanwhile, the small nature of the building itself — with just six to nine units per floor — promises to offer a community feel. "It's a very intimate building," Walji points out. "So you get to know your neighbour. It's pretty cool in that respect."

The project will feature retail along Yonge Street, at the ground level, while amenities for residents will be housed on the second floor, including a gym, lounge and terrace. The common spaces have been designed with a "sophisticated and well-travelled buyer" in mind, says interior designer Carmen Dragomir.

"The lounge is an amazing multi-functional space with a see-through gas fireplace on a large window wall separating the amenity space and the large outdoor terrace," adds the principal designer with esQape. "The design was focused on creating a symbiosis of the interior and exterior elements so both spaces read as one."

The suites themselves will feature nine- or 10-foot ceilings, with gas cooktops, quartz countertops and backsplashes, and integrated appliances. Adding to the theme of the building, the kitchens will be decked out with Italian-made cabinetry

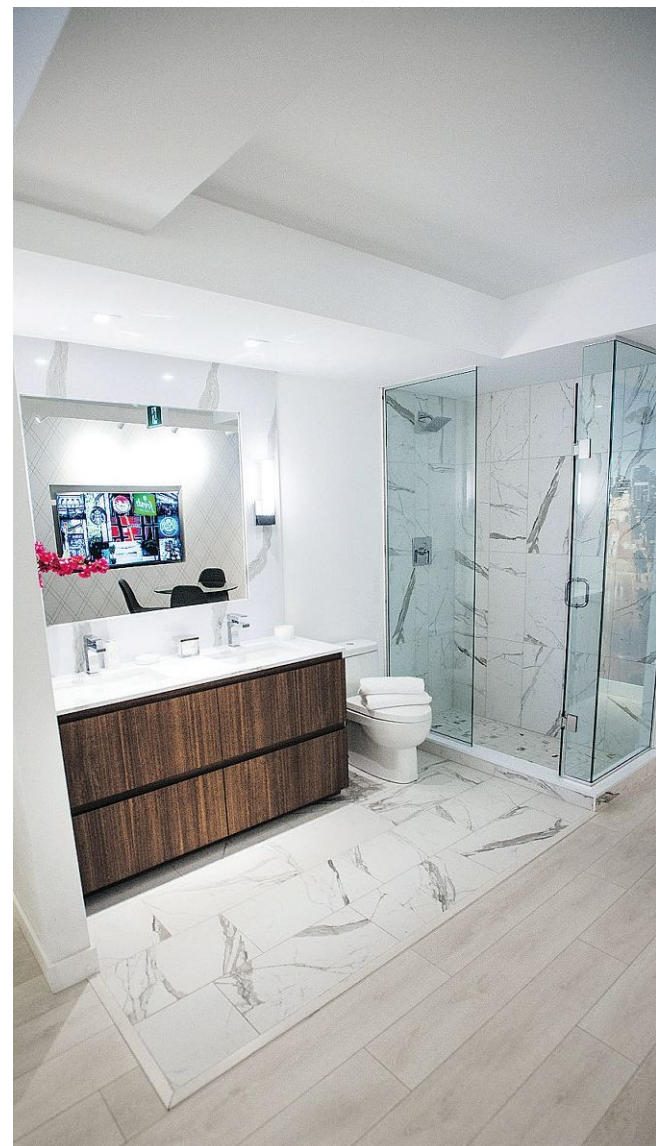
from Trevisana.

But while the inspiration for Uovo might be Italian, the location is pure Toronto, with the Eglinton subway station a three-minute walk away and restaurants like Five Doors North, Little Sister Indonesian Food Bar, Zucca Trattoria and Coquine Restaurant surrounding the site. The SilverCity Yonge-Eglinton movie theatre and Alexander Muir Memorial Gardens are also close by.

And Sammy's Service Centre (which Koundouros plans to move to a new location in East Toronto) has long been part of that local fabric, making him well known in the surrounding area.

Now, the business owner wants to create something that will allow him to leave his mark on the community he loves and offer his family something to remember him by. "He wants to create a legacy to say to his family, look, I developed and built this building," Walji says. "He's surrounded himself with a lot of good people to do so."

Occupancy for Uovo is slated for Fall 2020. The sales centre is located at 2112 Yonge St., Toronto and open Monday to Thursday from noon to 6 p.m. and weekends from noon to 5 p.m. Call 416-306-8444 or visit uovoresidences.com.



The bathroom at the showroom for the soon-to-be-built Uovo condominium, a 67-unit project at 2114 Yonge St.