

A lofty idea

Residential project puts apartment living in a whole new light

By EMILY THOMPSON
STAFF WRITER

Once the trendy, typical dwellings of artists and bohemians, loft apartments are becoming increasingly popular with a broader segment of young, creative types, as well as just about anyone else who enjoys the freeing feeling of high ceilings and plenty of natural light. The speed at which apartments are going at the X-Loft project in Prague 8 is proof of the newfound loft appeal.

Jean-Michel Kolly, the project director with X-Loft developer Design Development, says the first phase will include 48 spacious, sun-filled apartments to be completed in August this year, of which all but a few have already been sold. A second phase to be completed in September 2012 will offer 75 additional units.

"If you live with low ceilings, you feel like you're in a box," Kolly said. "Lofts are open and have plenty of natural light provided by large windows."

The luminous layouts come in sizes between 45 and 90 square meters, and have room configurations suitable for singles, couples, roommates or even families. In addition to having sizes to fit all tastes, the apartments also come with several décor options. The Luxus lofts have an understated elegance that eludes most interior designers, and Extreme lofts are colorful, playful and even a bit daring. Design lofts explore interesting contours and shapes, and Modern lofts make use of warm, natural colors. Those in the market for a loft can even choose from several color and design combinations in the bathroom to suit any taste.

Most new residential projects like to promote themselves as "green," but X-Loft actually has energy-saving infrastructure built into the design. There are solar panels on the roofs that the developer says can provide for nearly 100 percent of residents' hot-water needs in the summer months, and in winter can significantly save on gas consumption. The developers also say they paid special attention to the insulation of the building, adding extra layers and triple-layer windows to prevent heat loss. The buildings are also equipped with a heat-recovery system, rainwater retention systems and areas for waste separation and recycling. In fact, the eco-friendly features of the project are so extensive, X-Loft can boast being the first building in the country to receive the new Czech Republic Green Building Certificate awarded by the Czech Technical University.

The X-Loft project was designed not just for the ecologically minded, but also for active residents.

"The location is very green, and it's close to the water with a lot of options for sports and cycling," Kolly said. Thomayerovy sady park is just a 5-minute walk away, as are tennis, badminton, volleyball and soccer courts and fields, as well as cycling and hiking paths.

Despite being in a quiet neighborhood within easy reach of parks, residents won't feel cut off from the action of the city center, since they'll be just a few minutes from the heart of the city by metro.

Despite all of the advantages of the project, Kolly says possibly the most attractive feature of a loft is the open space. X-Loft developers have recently opened a show flat to allow visitors to see for themselves how the space feels, since Kolly says the pictures don't really do the apartment justice, and everyone who visits is surprised by how big the apartments actually are.

"After you live in a loft," Kolly said, "you'll never want to live anywhere else."

X-LOFT

For more information or to view a show apartment, contact Design Development

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COURTESY PHOTO

The ultra hip X-Loft apartments come in several styles, but all take advantage of the extra space and light that only a loft can offer.



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