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James Packer’s investment firm backs new Melbourne unit development

By LISA ALLEN



Maleela Rise development in Balwyn, in Melbourne’s east.

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James Packer’s investment firm is backing a new development in the wealthy Melbourne suburb of Balwyn.

The \$100m Maleela Rise, a new ultra-boutique development launching in the suburb 10km east of the Melbourne CBD, hails from Chapter Group in collaboration with senior gaming industry executive Todd Nisbet’s NPACT group. Nisbet was previously with Crown Resorts, with the project also backed by Packer’s investment firm as well as Gersh Investment Partners.

Maleela Rise has 31 large apartments, and includes a concierge, wellness retreat with infra-red saunas, wine cellar, and a luxurious club lounge.

Two and three-bedroom apartments start from \$1.7m, while the soon-to-be-launched penthouses are priced from \$5.6m.



Maleela Rise, Melbourne, Victoria.

Nisbet, previously vice-president of strategy at Crown, helped deliver Barangaroo in Sydney and, according to a press statement, brings a hospitality-first lens to residential living.

The interiors are by Studio Tate, architecture by Cera Stribley, and landscape by Jack Merlo, all designed to deliver a calm, lifestyle tailored to local downsizers who are seeking luxury without compromise.

Nisbet says if you have a truly great site, you can deliver a special project, and one that will stand the test of time. “Looking at things through the customer’s eyes is part of my DNA,” Nisbet says.

“Drawing from my hospitality lens, from developments like One Barangaroo, you look at the journey, where the friction points are and ultimately, where you can make life better. What we have created with Maleela Rise is a timeless design inspired by global hospitality but rooted in local understanding.”

Upon entry, residents will be welcomed into a lobby with a concierge, curated library, and elegant lounge, offering the kind of seamless arrival experience usually reserved for luxury hotels.



An interior at Maleela Rise.

At the heart of the building lies the Club Lounge, a communal space designed for connection and celebration. A dedicated catering kitchen and a feature bar with striking stone detailing anchors the space.

The wellness retreat takes cues from luxury environments such as Hotel Chadstone, also designed by Studio Tate, and is designed to rejuvenate the mind and body with a gym, both traditional and infra-red saunas, and a rain shower. It features warm, earthy textures, marble accents, along with soft, moody lighting.

“We have looked at global research into longevity and wellbeing, and all of the private facilities at Maleela Rise are designed to enhance both personal wellbeing and community connection,” says Dean Lefkos from Chapter Group.



A Club Lounge and wellness retreat is included at Maleela Rise.

“We had been wanting to bring that elevated luxury experience to the eastern suburbs, and when we found this site, in such a quiet and leafy street, and in the Reid Estate, we knew this was our chance. We then assembled a world-class team to help design the project.”

The exterior is crafted with Australian modernism in mind, integrating subtle references to Balwyn’s Georgian and Tudor heritage with cream brickwork that creates an elegant facade.

Apartments feature generous ceiling heights, a butler’s pantry that acts as a second kitchen, and the majority of apartments offer a designated study or separate living space that can be closed off.

Many residences feature expansive terraces that bridge the gap between traditional housing and apartment living, with one exclusive apartment sporting a private rooftop retreat with a pool.

Maleela Rise has two-bedroom apartments priced from \$1.7m, three-bedroom apartments priced from \$2.6m and five penthouses starting from \$5.6m apiece.

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