

Fontem by Project Friday

Disrupting aged care with future-proof living



Greg Frid and Jordan Siegel, Co-Directors of Fontem believe that downsizing is a misnomer in the property industry, and the opportunity to enhance the lifestyle of future downsizers is not being fully realised.

By 2057, it is projected 22% of the population will be 65 years and older*. With this in mind, Greg Frid and Jordan Siegel created Fontem, a Melbourne based property development company that is intent on the disruption of the existing aged care models.

Fontem develops individualised residences to 'age in place' and cater for this next generation of pre-retirees and retirees. Designing spaces from the inside out, Fontem homes are designed with a range of 'future-proofing' features across access, amenities and living spaces.

Fontem homes are 'rightsized' and individually designed to allow residents to stay in their homes forever, rather than eventually face a need to relocate to aged care/retirement facilities. Fontem designs emphasise the importance of socialisation, access to nature, beautiful design, community interaction and longevity.

"We realised that existing care models were juxtaposed to the needs and aspirations of the baby boomer generation. No one was really thinking about how people wanted to live, and the term 'downsize' had little meaning beyond reducing the size of one's home. There was a real disconnect between what was being offered on market and what would drive this generation to move on from the quarter acre," comments Greg Frid.

Acknowledging that age is subjective, and there are the young-old, old-old and really-old, Demographer Bernard Salt is also passionate on the topic and says, "There are a lot of baby boomers moving into old age. They will live longer and healthier lives. We believe baby boomers will rail against the concept of an old folks' home."

Talk to anyone over 50 and you will most likely get a litany of health niggles, as aging is a very personal process with everyone aging differently and at different speeds. Fontem believes that current aged care solutions are generic, and therefore Fontem residences are future-proofed for whatever an individuals' needs may become.

Furthermore, and also importantly, Fontem homes are beautifully designed.

Luxury design elements of Fontem homes include true flat transitions with no steps or stairs; wider doorways and corridors that can not only accommodate a walker when required, but add a sense of space to any apartment, ducted heating and cooling, and fully fitted joinery; timber noggins and support beams built into the walls that can be utilised if and when support aids are required, but until such time are invisible; swept paths for easy mobility access throughout apartments, amongst many other features.

Hidden functionality through timber noggins and support beams built into the walls enables residents to easily retrofit built apartments to suit any requirements such as handrails, grabrails, or a bed trapeze, which can be costly and cumbersome, and often impossible to add to existing homes.

Unlike existing mobility features, all Fontem mobility aids will be aspirational, and designed in-house in collaboration with some of Australia's most coveted designers. Mobility features will also be available for retail purchase.

Fontem is a beautiful and aspirational design model: Greg Frid and Jordan Siegel have employed interior design firm, Hecker Guthrie to design apartments from the inside out. Hecker Guthrie will also oversee the design of stand-alone mobility aid fixtures and products, such as railings that look like works of sculpture - certainly not institutional and utilitarian looking, as many mobility aid products are.

As 25% of the population hold 50% of the wealth, Fontem believe that these luxury living solutions will resonate with the needs of the baby boomer generation. Fontem can reflect the needs of the individuals as they age in place, as aging is very individual. Everyone has different needs and requirements and Fontem sets a new standard for aging by providing beautiful homes that address aging in place with dignity.

"What we found is that people who were buying these homes complained that there was never a thought process as to what people need. There is currently a one size fits all approach - which does not resonate with the next generation of people moving towards retirement," says Jordan Siegel.

Collaborator Hamish Guthrie of Hecker Guthrie says, "Working collaboratively with Fontem, we see this as an exciting opportunity to create truly crafted interior environments which, at their very essence, evoke a sense 'home' whilst inherently catering for its residents' wellbeing. An opportunity to bring a considered design approach with specification that responds to the needs of its residents, but also explores how these can seamlessly adapt and become responsive to these residents needs over time. A Bespoke response."

*Australian institute of health and welfare

Media Release: September 2019

About Project Friday

Project Friday is a local, bespoke property development company based in Melbourne.

Directors Greg Frid and Jordan Siegel wish there was another way to describe what they do, as their ethos is to focus on the human scale, the end users, the people who will occupy the spaces.

Project Friday works exclusively with Australia's leading designers and has completed projects alongside collaborators including Mim Design, Tecture, Inarc Architects, Jack Merlo, Paul Bangay and others.

Fontem is a subsidiary of Project Friday, and addresses the baby boomer generation that will be retiring in the coming years. All future Project Friday development projects will be fitted with Fontem aging in place features, so that all projects are truly future-proofed for the residents.

Project Friday's most recent project is Briq, 13 residences in Caulfield with high ceilings, fine joinery, wide balconies, and an emphasis on bespoke elements and a sense of fluidity between inside and outside with landscaping by Jack Merlo.

Other projects include TGIP Townhouses, which has been shortlisted for the Idea Design Awards in the multi-residential category; and 1046 Glenhuntly Road, which is a collection of only six oversized, luxurious residences in Caulfield South.

Project Friday and Fontem are financed by TIC Group Pty Ltd, who share a vision for the baby boomer generation to redefine aging.

Greg Frid, director

- Strategic Vision – overarching
- Business Strategy – execution of
- Financial modelling
- Creative oversight

Jordan Siegel, director

- Construction/Build Management
- Build compliance
- Development & Project Management

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