

**Shangri-La's flagship  
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IT TOOK them a while to finish it, but the Shangri-La group's new flagship project is finally just weeks away from being opened.

Of course, we're talking about the Shangri-La at the Fort development, which had already become a landmark (being used for giving directions around the business district, for example) long before it even broke ground a few years ago.

Biz Buzz learned that the hotel—which will occupy the lower half of the 61-story tower (rising 250 meters or a fourth of a kilometer) will have its soft opening next month. This is a sure thing because some events have already been booked in the hotel, we're told.

The development will also have a retail component with a high-end mini mall set to be opened around the same time.

But the crown jewel of the property will be Shangri-La's ultra high-end residential condo called Horizon Homes that will occupy the top 20 floors (that is, the 41st to the 61st) of the skyscraper. Horizon Homes at The Fort (called thus because of the "Lost Horizon" and Shangri-La" references) is being marketed as a project for the country's elite, with a typical unit measuring around 250 square meters (up to 418 sqm) and costing at least P78 million, excluding taxes, of course.

At its densest, each floor will only have 5 units, so you don't have to worry about waiting 30 minutes to catch the elevator to the lobby at rush hour.

If you're in the market for something fancier, Horizon Homes has only three penthouse units on the 61st floor (one measuring almost 800 sqm, and two of almost 500 sqm). But like they say, if you have to ask how much it costs, you probably can't afford it.

Basement parking? Be prepared to shell out another P1.5-1.8 million. But you get what you pay for, and if you opt to pay for a property like this, you get the "primest" location in Metro Manila, complete with its own sport club. Oh yes, the development will have its own Kerry Sports Club, which will only be the third Kuok project to house this fancy club (the two others being in China). The Kerry Sports Club will have its own basketball and tennis courts, swimming pool, spa, and what-have-you, and a limited number of memberships are being sold at an introductory rate of P60,000 a year. But it won't stay at that price, trust us.

And if that isn't good enough, all residents of Horizon Homes 98 units will have access to the full services of the Shangri-La hotel at the lower floors. They can dine in the hotel's restaurants and use its facilities, and the bills will go straight to their accounts just as if they were hotel guests.

And if you're wondering when Horizon Homes will be ready for occupancy, well, the first buyers who plunked in their money a few years ago will have their fancy units ready by May of this year. ***Daxim L. Lucas***