

# NEW HOMES & CONDOS

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A tinted panel divides the bedroom from living-room area of this model condo in the Walter sur Atwater development near the Lachine Canal, one of the participants in Open House Weekends.

## Open House Weekends

MEGAN MARTIN  
SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE

If you've been thinking about buying a property in the near future, you may want to clear your schedule this weekend and next. The Open House Weekends, an annual event in Montreal where prospective homebuyers can visit more than 100 new residential projects, is back for its 17th edition.

"There are about 800 developments under construction in Montreal this year and it can be very difficult to sort through and learn about each of them," said Jacques Beaulieu, real-estate expert and founder of the Open House Weekends. "By bringing a large number of them together like this we can offer homebuyers the opportunity to discover many of the city's projects in an organized fashion."

Last year, the event attracted 13,000 attendees and organizers are hoping for a similar turn

out this year. The projects hosting open houses have units that range widely in price. On the higher end of the spectrum, visitors will be able to admire roughly 30 units priced at more than \$750,000. But most of the participants have units selling for less than \$235,000.

"The buyers will be able to visit projects in Montreal and, for the first time, in surrounding areas such as Laval, Longueuil and St-Laurent," Beaulieu said. "The goal is to provide access to a wide range of properties in order to suit the various needs of buyers."

Montreal's heritage buildings are among the properties being highlighted this year.

"There are so many beautiful structures full of unique character that have been transformed into lofts and condos. These properties are so unique and interesting for buyers to explore."

Being able to see the units, buildings and neighbourhoods

is very helpful to prospective buyers, who aren't always sure what they want in a property until they find it, Beaulieu said.

"There are so many great developments participating and the event is such a nice way for buyers to discover what's out there. It's also not intimidating because we have so many people at the different properties ready and willing to help. We've really made this about the excitement of shopping for a home."

The open houses are also a unique way to learn about the latest trends in design and decorating. "Many of the condos are decorated by design experts, so visiting them is a great way for buyers to get ideas for their own spaces," Beaulieu said.

In addition to being able to visit developments, buyers also have access to financial counselling during the Open House Weekends. Advisors from Groupe SNCO will be available to discuss



Black-and-white decor makes for a dramatic statement in this display from Projet Saint-Bruno sur le Lac in St-Bruno, one of the participants of the 2013 Open House Weekends event.

financing and answer questions related to purchasing a property.

"It's common for people to have a lot of questions about mortgages and financing," Beaulieu said. "It's very comforting to be able to speak with an advisor; there are a lot of ways to go about buying a home and being educated on the topic is not just use-

ful, but can end up saving buyers a lot of money."

Open House Weekends is a free event open to the public from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. today and tomorrow as well as March 23 and 24. For more information call 514-255-4066 or check online at [www.monhabitationneuve.com](http://www.monhabitationneuve.com)