



Programs at Holland Gardens include an in-depth dive into modern art.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDREW FEARMAN

TIME TO THRIVE

Creative, vibrant living inspires vitality

Living well in your senior years isn't just a matter of being comfortable and secure, balancing proper care with independence. The best quality of life also includes a chance to discover new things, explore ideas, grow

your mind and spirit and keep your body healthy.

"Having a chance to remain creative and continue learning are just as important to seniors as having a well-balanced diet and exercise to keep the mind and

body supple," says Shelley Snoutlen.

She and Melissa McKee serve as the sales and marketing managers of Holland Gardens by Verve, Bradford's newest retirement facility. At Holland Gardens, vibrant

living isn't just a tagline. It's a methodology that's woven through everything they do.

Spirit

"We believe that part of that vibrancy comes from creating a community of sharing, where new friends can

connect over old memories," says Melissa.

Holland Gardens provides programs like The Java Music Club to help residents build those connections and recall those memories through the love of decades-old tunes.

"This is one of my favourite programs," says Marisa Jeronimo, General Manager of Holland Gardens. "Music is so powerful. It can so quickly take you back to a memory, and all the senses that surround it."

"It's all about interacting and connecting while being active together."

In The Java Music Club, each resident is invited to pick a song and play it for others before discussing the memories around it. While the music stimulates the mind, the discussion quickly creates bonds between residents.

But music isn't the only elixir for stimulating memories and building community. "Fitness can also be a powerful tool," says Shelley. "Our Go 4 Life program does just that."

This program groups residents together based on their ability. And while Shelley admits they do have some friendly competitions for goal-setting residents, there are no rules about how fast or how far residents go.

"It's all about interacting and connecting while being active together."

Mind

While Holland Gardens is focused on building healthy communities and minds, it also puts a heavy emphasis on stimulating creativity and learning.

"There's no age limit to knowledge and skill building," says Shelley. "Our Meet Me at the MoMA program is proof."

Over eight weeks, Meet Me at the MoMA residents become art students, learning to think and paint like the famous artists featured in New York City's Museum of Modern Art.

"It's like one of those painting events that are

popular right now, but better," says Shelley.

Each program presents a different artist before discussing their popular works and painting methods. During each class, residents discuss how the work relates to their lives and how it makes them feel, before receiving a brush and canvas, and the opportunity to paint in the artist's method.

"They're not replicating the painting. They're painting something of their own," says Shelley. "It's incredibly therapeutic and so much fun."

"You wouldn't believe how many residents discover talents they never knew existed," says Marisa.

Body

While Holland Gardens is filled with opportunities to challenge your mind and boost your creativity, their staff members are also tuned into each resident's physical needs.

"We offer a range of fitness programs including dance, chair yoga, line dancing, Zumba and Tai Chi, which can be modified to the abilities of each and every resident," says Shelley.

Holland Gardens also have a talented culinary team that customizes each meal to the dietary needs, tastes and preferences of our residents.

"Here, there are always multiple choices on the menu, which can be enjoyed in the restaurant or with

guests in the private dining room," says Marisa.

While it's important for each meal to be healthy and delicious, The Holland Gardens also puts a heavy emphasis on using locally sourced in-season produce.

"Verve's Living Loving Local program features local foods all year round," says Marisa. "We use peaches, cherries, squash, corn and onions, and locally farmed produce like carrots and maple syrup."

While the fitness programs and meals are designed to nourish the body, the beauty of Holland Gardens is its ability to work with each resident and evolve with them as they need more care.

"No one should have to leave their home to go to another residence, just because they need more assistance," says Melissa. "With Independent Living, Memory Care and Assisted Living all under one roof, our residents and their families don't have to worry about uprooting once they're here."

Experience vivacious living

If you or a loved one is considering senior living, the best way to know if it's right for you is to book a tour with either Shelley or Melissa.

"We're always here to show you around, answer questions, discuss your options and alleviate any concerns you may have about retirement living," says Melissa. **DS**

BY SHELANNE AUGUSTINE



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