

Morningside first of Pulte's Central Valley communities

By **CLAUDIA D. NEWCORN**
SPECIAL TO VALLEY HOMES

Opened in February, Morningside in Modesto is the first of three communities now available in the Central Valley by national builder Pulte Homes. Pulte's Dover Point and Providence at Mossdale Landing in Lathrop opened for sales last weekend.

At Morningside, located off Hatch Road just east of Carpenter Road, fewer than a fourth of 88 total home sites are still available. Buyers have responded well to the community's location and features.

"We chose this site because it gave Pulte Homes the opportunity to build affordable, high-quality housing for area residents," explains Tony Hallbourg, media relations coordinator for the builder. "It's in the new growth corridor of Modesto, near the Tuolumne River, with convenient access to Interstate 5 and Highway 99, and just two exits from Modesto's thriving downtown."

A Michigan-based Fortune 200 company with operations in 27 states, Pulte Homes has earned a reputation for quality over its 55 years, Hallbourg says. He credits the many upgrades offered as standard to buyers.

"From designer-selected, two-tone paint to Corian kitchen countertops to ceramic or porcelain tile in the kitchen, bathroom, laundry rooms and fireplace surrounds, we offer a plethora of amenities," Hallbourg says. "Customers don't have to pay for major upgrades because they're already in the house. We're unmatched in that regard."

In 2004, J.D. Power and Associates named Pulte Homes the inaugural recipient of its Platinum Award for Excellence in Customer Service among nationwide homebuilders.

Designed to foster a sense of community, Morningside features a walking trail that winds through the property and its two parks.

Prices start around \$370,000 for the traditionally styled homes that offer a choice of three exterior elevations.

Because first impressions are critical, Morningside puts its best foot forward with landscaped front yards, automatic frontyard sprinklers and broom-finished driveways and walkways. Exteriors are finished with 50-year-warranted James Hardie concrete siding, stucco or stone accents and Certainteed composition roof tiles. Garages are textured and painted.

Dramatic, 8-foot entry doors lead the way to interiors enhanced by vaulted ceilings and traditional spaces such as formal dining rooms. Family rooms feature large media niches and gas-burning fireplaces with tile surrounds. Upgraded carpeting in a choice of contemporary colors adds texture and comfort throughout rooms.

Dual-pane, energy-efficient windows admit plenty of natural sunlight and, in two-story homes, energy-saving, dual-zoned central heat and air conditioning systems keep interior climates cozy.

"We offer our 'Environment for Living' program, which is an energy-efficiency strategy that helps homeowners manage their heating and cooling bills," Hallbourg says. "It features seven different aspects: tight construction, fresh air ventilation, improved insulation systems, "right-sized" heating and cooling equipment, interior moisture management, combustion safety and pressure balancing. It's state-of-the-art building science that allows the home to operate more efficiently."

Pulte pre-wires all bedrooms and family rooms for televisions and telephones, and includes Category 5 wiring for multiple phone lines. Carbon monoxide and smoke detectors are installed and the homes are pre-wired for security systems.

Elegant kitchens are the hallmark of Pulte Homes. Oak cabinetry includes hidden hinges, vinyl interiors and adjustable upper shelves, as well as under-cabinet lighting. White-on-white General Electric appliances include 30-inch, free-standing gas ranges with sealed burners and extra-large, self-cleaning ovens. Built-in microwaves and dishwashers are standard, along with Corian countertops and integrated Corian sinks with waste disposals.

In master suites, walk-in closets with well-organized shelving provide ample storage space, while baths feature oval tubs with cultured marble surrounds, separate showers, elongated commodes and full-width vanity mirrors.

Three models are open for touring, each with an attached, two-car garage.

The Daybreak: At 1,795 square feet, this single-story home includes three bedrooms, two baths, a great room and dining nook next to the kitchen. Prices start in the high \$360,000s.

The Sunrise: This 2,200-square-foot plan has four bedrooms, all upstairs for privacy and reached by a stairway that takes in a view of the dining area. There are two and a half baths, formal living and dining rooms and a large family room set next to the gourmet kitchen. The kitchen boasts a walk-in pantry, island and nook. A pleasant porch offers the ideal spot for outdoor relaxation. Prices start in the low \$400,000s.

The Horizon: This is Morningside's largest plan at 2,541 square feet, with four bedrooms, three baths and an optional fifth bedroom in lieu of an upstairs loft. The entry flows into the formal dining and living room. An ample kitchen opens to the family room and features a dining nook, island and pantry. A super-family room is available as an option in place of a first-floor bedroom. Prices start in the low to mid \$400,000s.

To visit Morningside from Highway 99 in Modesto, exit westbound on Hatch Road and turn left on San Ramos Way. The model homes are at 1900 San Ramos Way, Modesto. The sales office is 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily except Monday, when it opens at 1 p.m. Contact sales associates Charlie Fairchild, Rachael Womack and Neil Jolliff at (209) 342-6991 or visit www.pulte.com/morningside.

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