

# MATCH



SPRING 2005  
US \$4.50  
CAN \$5.50

## TOUZET, YOU SAY



*The colors, textures, and materials of Vitri's interiors continue the building's natural harmony with its environment.*



Vitri, a spectacular new building under construction at Alton Road and West Avenue at Fifth Street, is set to become the new gateway to Miami Beach. Vitri will be the landmark building as you approach South Beach on the MacArthur Causeway when it occupies its one and a half acre site where the highway from the mainland joins the barrier island.

Carlos Prio-Touzet and Jacqueline Gonzalez-Touzet, husband and wife principals of Miami based Touzet Studio

Design and Architecture, are Vitri's designers. The Touzets are both former vice presidents of prestigious design firm Arquitectonica, and are well-known for their award-winning designs.

Their innovative, fluid designs combine technical ingenuity with respect for the local environment, to produce unique and spectacular residential and commercial buildings for their global clientele. As Prio-Touzet explains, Vitri presented a unique

and challenging opportunity. "You approach Vitri in motion, so we designed it to be experienced in the round like a sculpture. Its articulated glass surfaces change with the light. In fact, the project's name, Vitri, is a riff on the Latin root for glass."

Indeed, the Touzets use an irregular grid pattern on Vitri's façade, combined with a gradual shift in the tint of its glass walls, does emphasize a sense of organic movement.

The Touzets split Vitri's 60

residential units between two distinct buildings:

• The West Avenue structure is a rounded five-story volume. Its unique curving concrete frame encloses glass-fronted facets, that afford residents both Biscayne Bay and Downtown Miami views. As Jackie Touzet explains, this was part of the Touzets design concept for "integrating the building's unique location into its form." The West Avenue portion was inspired by the natural environment of the sea, sky, and sand. The glass walls of Vitri's double height units slip outward to capture views; the concept itself relates to water and to forms shaped by wind and waves".

• The Alton Road structure is a more urban minded rectangular volume that relates intentionally to the scale of traditional

lines and smooth surfaces of Vitri's aesthetic.

Master bedrooms are set on mezzanines that overlook the 19-feet high glass-walled living areas below. Kitchens are custom designed with optional sliding glass partitions to hide the wet areas. The cabinets are by Boffi, makers of super luxurious Italian kitchens.

Master bathrooms open onto a balcony designed to serve as a meditation or lounging space. They also feature Boffi fine wood storage cabinets, glass sliding doors, marble slab vanities, Dombracht fixtures, and Duravit toilets and bidets.

However, the most unusual and striking feature of Vitri's penthouses is the enclosed "sky garden." A perfect combination of form and function, the 28-foot high glass walls extend high

on calm and relaxation.

Paths will lead residents through stands of tall bamboo to quiet retreats with hammocks. A meditation and stretching deck of Brazilian hardwood extends out into the tranquility of the garden. Bamboo enclosures will ensure privacy for the outdoor showers. Even the swimming pool hides a grotto behind its waterfall.

Vitri's ground level retail has been specifically designed to hold a "signature" restaurant and a number of service oriented boutiques, while the Touzets' extensive use of organic materials softens the approach to a hidden, four-level parking garage.

Mindful of its role within the urban fabric, the Touzets have designed Vitri to enrich a vibrant South Beach neighborhood without overwhelming it.



Miami Beach neighborhoods. It respects the existing city environment, using steel, glass, and concrete for a man-made modern aesthetic, which Priotouzet describes as "a home for people who enjoy walking to Starbucks or to the movies, who understand that urban living means being part of a neighborhood."

The Touzets use dense, quartz-hued limestone and light-colored marble with sky blue striations to balance the dean

above the roofline affording shelter for summer kitchens and wet bars.

Residents will also have the option of adding private rooftop spas, which will enjoy univalued views of Downtown Miami and all of South Beach.

With their use of bamboo, hardwoods, limestone, and river rock, the Touzets-in conjunction with landscaper Raymond Jungles-have created an most tropical resort feeling for Vitri's central garden, with an emphasis

"We think you'll agree that they have achieved their goal, and that Vitri is another stunning example of the Touzets' work."

Majestic Properties is the exclusive sales agent for Vitri. The sales office at 541 West Ave. will open this spring, with samples of the interior finishes and a model kitchen and bath. Prices for the two-story lofts will start in the \$600,000s. •

DEMOCRITUS WHITEHEAD