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CHELSEA BARRACKS OPENS TO THE PUBLIC FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 150 YEARS

Victoria Purcell on 22nd May 2019

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Chelsea Barracks will open to the public for the first time in over 150 years as it unveils its first two garden squares during Chelsea Flower Show

Chelsea Barracks, the highly anticipated new development by real estate developers Qatari Diar, will open to the public for the first time in over 150 years in late May.

Two of the development's seven garden squares – Mulberry Square and Bourne Walk – will be revealed during Chelsea Flower Show 2019. Plus, Chelsea Barracks Kitchen by Ollie Dabbous will be opening exclusively for the duration of the world's most famous garden showcase (21-25 May 2019).

To mark the occasion, landscape architect Neil Porter of Gustafson Porter & Bowman, tasked with the permanent planting strategy for Chelsea Barracks, has worked with four-time RHS Chelsea gold medal winner Jo Thompson to create two floral spectaculars.



Mulberry Square, inspired by the bright, striped paintings of London artist Bridget Riley and England's grand country estates, extends over 100m long and 30m wide, and is planted with herbs and flowers that can be picked for cooking. It forms the gateway to, and the main thoroughfare through, the Chelsea Barracks estate.

'We incorporated evergreen hedging to break up the expansive length of Mulberry Square, and then herbs, planting, vegetables and flowers have been entwined to create an artistic patchwork,' said Thompson, whose involvement follows her gold medal winning Chelsea Barracks garden at the 2016 Chelsea Flower Show.

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'Professionally it's great to be involved in the Chelsea Flower Show for a 10th successive year,' she adds, 'but it's equally special to have the opportunity to help make a more permanent mark on the landscape in a location seen as the heart of the horticultural world.'

The second garden square, Bourne Walk, running along the border of Chelsea Bridge Road, has been planted with established trees and native flora to encourage wildlife to the area.



'What's particularly exciting about the gardens at Chelsea Barracks is that, the way they have been designed means there is a variation of colours and smells at each different point of the year, as the seasons change,' said Porter. 'From day one, the gardens will be bold and lively for residents and neighbours alike.'

'A British masterpiece in urban design, garden squares have been a feature synonymous with London for the past 400 years and so it was important to us that we honour and incorporate this element of English heritage into the landscape design of Chelsea Barracks, said Richard Oakes, Chief Sales and Marketing Officer Europe and Americas at Qatari Diar.

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To have grand open spaces within our city is a rarity that shouldn't be taken for granted, and we are thrilled to be able to reveal the first two of the squares to the public this May.'

The opening of the site and garden squares to the public marks a significant milestone for the 12.8-acre, £3.5 billion development, which has been 12 years in the making after a series of bumps in the road, including a letter from Prince Charles to the then prime minister of Qatar criticising the 'unsympathetic' steel and glass designs by the architect Lord Richard Rogers.

Chelsea Barracks is formed of luxury apartments, penthouses and townhouses with a resident-only spa and gym, restaurants, shops and five acres of previously concealed land dedicated to public gardens. Prices for a two-bedroom apartment start from £5.25m, rising to £37 million for a six-storey townhouse with basement swimming pool. The first residents will start moving in from August.

chelseabarracks.com