



# The Senior Living COMMUNITY OF THE FUTURE

## How to Spot a Senior Community That's Ahead of the Curve

BY PIERRE VERGER

Each generation of seniors brings with them different philosophies on life, which eventually determine what kind of senior living community they prefer. While Baby Boomers tend to focus on amenities, comfortable surroundings, and social interactions, Gen Xers want the independence to choose how to live out their senior years according to their individual preferences. The best senior living communities appeal to both generations, with amenities and features that are suitable for a variety of needs and tastes.

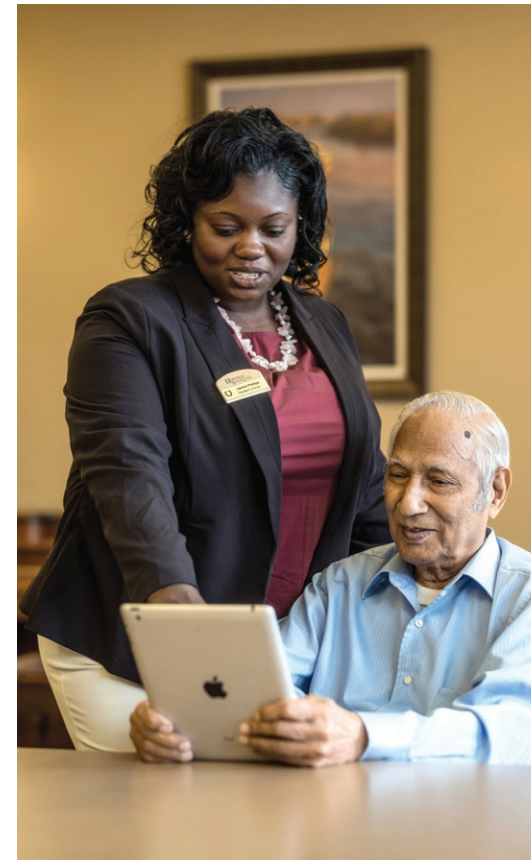
### A Focus on Hospitality

As Baby Boomers prepare for senior living care, they have more choices than ever before. Most are looking for lifestyle-focused communities where they can feel at home. Top-tier senior living communities are adapting to this need by investing in premium amenities and offering on-demand services, such as a 24/7 concierge, room service, and spa treatments. When touring a community, ask about their culinary program and whether residents have access to organic or locally grown foods, a diverse menu, and

predining experiences, like ordering a cocktail from an on-site pub.

### Technological Integration for Both Personal and Medical Use

Aging adults use technology in almost every aspect of their lives, and will increasingly value technological access. Look for a community that offers high-speed Wi-Fi for residents and guests throughout the building, not just in common areas. Some communities go one step further, providing residents with iPads preloaded



with memory games, which can also be used to order meals, schedule life-enrichment activities, and communicate with families and care providers.

### Specialized Staff to Administer the Full Continuum of Care

The traditional nursing home model is predicted to decline by about 20 percent by 2021. Many older adults are preferring to age in a community that offers the full continuum of care under one roof—from independent living to assisted and enhanced assisted living to memory care—so they don't need to undergo a disruptive move as their health needs shift. When touring communities, ask whether they offer multiple levels of care, whether apartments can easily be converted from independent to assisted living, and whether the community has a multidisciplinary health team to provide specialized care.



### Urban Locations and Outdoor Spaces

Today's seniors increasingly want to age in an urban setting within close proximity to museums, entertainment, shopping, and dining, rather than being relegated to the suburbs. New communities are featuring more open/shared spaces, similar to hotels, and may even partner with local businesses, such as entertainment and education venues, restaurants, and spas, in order to increase access to services.

Because seniors are remaining active longer and understand the benefits of outdoor activities, more and more senior living communities are offering space for residents to garden, pathways to enjoy walks, and outdoor relaxation areas, such as ponds and gazebos. Pay attention to whether these areas are well maintained and if the residents are utilizing them regularly.

Your home is the backdrop to your most precious memories. By choosing a community that's focused on quality care, premium amenities, and hospitality services,

seniors can be sure their next home is warm, inviting, and comfortable.

*Photographs provided by Heritage Senior Living.*

*Pierre Verger is Chief Operating Officer at Heritage Senior Living, one of the largest senior living providers in Wisconsin. Headquartered in West Allis, Heritage Senior Living operates 15 upscale senior living communities throughout Wisconsin that feature premium amenities and several care levels. Learn more about Heritage Senior Living at [heritagesenior.com](http://heritagesenior.com).*

