

# Park Imperial History

The Park Imperial North<sup>1</sup> condominiums were originally constructed in 1955 according to tax records. The site includes a total of 51 attached units arranged in various groupings across the 5 acre site located at the corners of Vista Chino and Via Miraleste and Via Miraleste and Louise Drive.

Park Imperial North is located in the [Racquet Club Estates](#) area of Palm Springs. The complex includes uncovered off-the-street parking, a hot tub (added later) and two pools. Park Imperial North and its sister complex, Park Imperial South, were both designed by [Berry Burkus](#). The developer was Jack Meiselman<sup>1</sup> noted Palm Springs developer. Meiselman developed Park Imperial under the name “Trudy Richards”<sup>3</sup> which is commemorated by a ceramic tile embedded in the concrete at the entrance of each unit.

The Exclusive Agent was Gannon Realty Company (owner - George Gannon) with [Frank Bogart](#) acting as the Sales Director. Starting price was \$17,950 – with only a \$1960 down payment. The models were furnished by Popular Furniture & Interiors. Park Imperial North was built as an all-electric “Gold Medallion” home with all of the appliances produced by General Electric.

Features included:

- Acoustic Tile “Quiet Conditioning” throughout
- All Wool wall-to-wall carpeting
- Terrazzo walkway inside and through to the rear patio
- GE Textolite™ countertops in color TX-4500 – White Gold
- GE “Mark 27” Electric Range and Oven with fully automatic clock and timers
- GE “Quick Recovery” Water Heater with a 10 year Guarantee

Other site amenities:

- Practice Putting Green (this was advertised, but historians are unable to confirm its existence)
- Shuffle Board Court

There were two floor plans offered:

**Plan 200** (need sq footage) which included a Master Bedroom and a Den/Bedroom. The Den/Bedroom came with an accordion folding door and a small closet. This plan included a hall bathroom with a “Jack and Jill” shower that was shared by both the Hall and Master Bathroom. The Master Bathroom included a bathtub.

**Plan 300** (need sq footage) which included a Master Bedroom, 2<sup>nd</sup> Bedroom, and a Den/Bedroom. The Den/Bedroom came with an accordion folding door and a small closet. This plan included a hall bathroom with a “Jack and Jill” shower that was shared by both the Hall and Master Bathroom. The Master Bathroom included a bathtub.

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<sup>1</sup>Historians believe that Park Imperial North was the first condominium complex built in the City of Palm Springs. Although the initial newspaper ads advertised the complex name as Park Imperial Rivera (adjacent to the Rivera Hotel – opened in 1959), the complex came to be known as Park Imperial North.

<sup>2</sup>Jack Meiselman was a prominent mid-century builder in Palm Springs. He, along with his brother Bernie, were responsible for building a number of affordable mid-century modern homes in the Palm Springs area during the 1950s and 1960s. Jack Meiselman (born 1899, died 1994) initially collaborated with the Alexander Construction Company on the building of Palm Springs tract homes, but Meiselman and Alexander had a falling out. That led Meiselman, along with his brother Bernie, to begin building his own modern tract homes in Palm Springs in the late 1950s. The Meiselman brothers scrutinized where Alexander was building his highly successful homes and then snapped up parcels of land adjacent to the Alexander homes. Meiselman homes are more rare than Alexander homes in Palm Springs, with about 350 Meiselmans built versus more than 2,000 Alexanders. Most Meiselmans are scattered in amongst Alexanders, in neighborhoods including Racquet Club Estates, Sunmor, Sunrise Park and Desert Park Estates.

<sup>3</sup>Historians believe that Trudy Richards, much like “Betty Crocker, was a fictional character used as a trademark in the initial advertising campaigns.