

29 September – 1 October 2026
Madinat Jumeirah, Dubai

THURSDAY, 1 OCTOBER 2026

The Next Big Bet: What Will Define the Future of Branded Residences?

SPEAKERS

Riyan Itani
Founder
Global Branded Residences Ltd.

Christopher Sanderson
Co-Founder & Chief Creative
Officer
The Future Laboratory

Alfredo Bataller
Chief Executive Officer
SHA Wellness / AB Living Group

Raj Shroff
Director
Signature Developers

Jurgen Hautmann
Senior Director, Hospitality & Asset
Management
RAK Properties

OVERVIEW

In the final panel of FHS World 2026, moderator Riyan Itani of Global Branded Residences Ltd. convened a high-calibre panel of developers, brand leaders, and a futures strategist to interrogate where branded residences are heading next. The conversation spanned the great wealth transfer and its implications for buyer demographics, the divergence between ultra-luxury and premium mid-market branded product, the rise of wellness and longevity as a genuine residential proposition rather than a mere amenity layer, and the continued dominance of the UAE as a development destination. Panellists drew on live projects — from Four Seasons and Aman residences in Ras Al Khaimah to SHA's first wellness island in Abu Dhabi — to ground forward-looking predictions in on-the-ground developer reality. The session closed with each speaker placing their singular 'big bet,' collectively assembling what moderator Itani summarised as a blueprint for the next generation of branded residential product: quality living, holistic experiences, nature-integrated design, intelligent technology, and longevity at the core.

KEY THEMES

- The great wealth transfer and the shifting demographic profile of the luxury buyer
- Divergence of branded residential product from ultra-luxury to premium mid-market
- Wellness and longevity as foundational residential proposition, not amenity add-on
- Technology and nature integration as the next frontier of residential design
- UAE's continued dominance as a branded residential development market
- Brand identity as a reflection of personal values for the next-generation consumer

TAKEAWAYS

- Developers should prepare for a significant demographic shift in the luxury buyer: the first stage of the great wealth transfer will move wealth to a younger, primarily female consumer who will engage with brands and assets in fundamentally different ways.
- Branded residences are bifurcating — operators and developers should consciously position their product either at ultra-luxury or at the emerging premium tier (sub-\$3M), as a one-size-fits-all strategy is no longer viable.
- Wellness must be embedded in the core software of a residential project — data interpretation, personalised longevity programming, and multigenerational design — rather than delivered as a spa amenity layer, to command a meaningful price premium.

- Master developers should be selective and location-specific when choosing brand partners, ensuring the brand genuinely adds value and is contextually appropriate rather than simply applying a logo for a price uplift.
- For developers weighing geographies, the UAE — inclusive of Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and Ras Al Khaimah — continues to offer superior ROI, faster planning and permitting, and growing consumer demand compared with established Western markets such as London or Paris.
- The next wave of branded residential differentiation will come from technology-enabled personalisation (smart homes that recognise residents) combined with biophilic design — and hospitality-trained leaders are best positioned to deliver this.

QUOTES

"Brands aren't something. They're not just products that you buy, which is what most of us in this room think about brands. They are a true reflection of their own personal identity, their values, their purpose, and their moral ecosystem."

— **Christopher Sanderson, Co-Founder & Chief Creative Officer, The Future Laboratory**

"It's not about one week a year, I go to one clinic resort. No. I want to embrace this. I want to have a personal, professional expert that guide me, that understand when I'm traveling and I need to come back home, what is the recovery plan after a trip."

— **Alfredo Bataller, Chief Executive Officer, SHA Wellness / AB Living Group**

"It's a software what makes a difference. Who interpret your data and how to use this data to make your home a tool for you and your family to live better and longer."

— **Alfredo Bataller, Chief Executive Officer, SHA Wellness / AB Living Group**

"A billionaire will buy a Rolls Royce but bitch about the petrol prices. Same thing is with branded apartments."

— **Raj Shroff, Director, Signature Developers**

"The branded residence offers them a unique opportunity to actually engage with consumers in a 360 degree, 365 way. So I think the market is only just begun."

— **Christopher Sanderson, Co-Founder & Chief Creative Officer, The Future Laboratory**