

A day in the life of a condo concierge

► From personal shopping to limo service to pet care — meet the professionals who go above and beyond to fulfill their client's requests



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Faster than a speeding courier, more powerful than a stretch limousine, able to fulfill unusual requests in a timely manner, it's super-concierge.

White-glove concierge services used to be the exclusive realm of hotels and resorts. Now it's becoming a big condo trend in Toronto. A myriad of services are now provided to make things easier for busy condo dwellers.

Pardon me, do you have any Grey Poupon?

Robert Wise is a principal in the Forest Hill Group (FHG), a company specializing in concierge, valet and security services for some of Toronto's most exclusive condos.

From the sublime to the ridiculous, and everything in between, there's nothing these guys have not been

Going the distance

What's the weirdest request so far?

► **Turkish delight:** "We had somebody at one of our residences come back from a trip from Turkey and at the hotel he was in, he noticed a certain type of hardwood that was unusual and not cheap, obviously." The client asked if there was a way to acquire that specific hardwood and have it installed in his condo suite. "It was eventually done, and it was beautiful," says Wise.

asked to do.

"It's pretty well anything as long as it's legal and ethical. We do get cluttered with all kinds of odd requests, some fun, some not so fun, some expensive and some extremely cheap," he says.



DUNCAN MCALLISTER

► Nathan Mastin, head concierge for Forest Hill Group. He is on duty at The Avenue luxury condo.

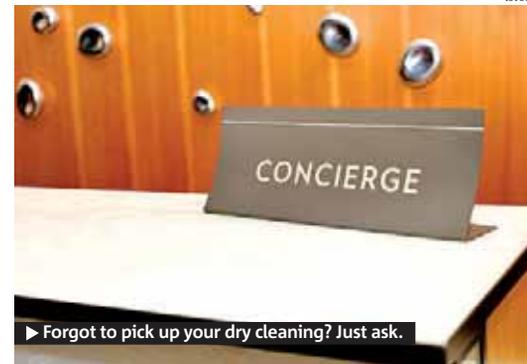
"Private jets are not something out of the ordinary for us. On New Year's day we had the request just to go for dinner in the evening and fly back that night."

ROBERT WISE, A PRINCIPAL IN THE FOREST HILL GROUP

"We have a back office team that will actually do the legwork in terms of figuring out the costs, the times and if the request is possible. We like to say that no request is impossible."

Opportunity knocks

Wise and his partners started FHG over a decade ago, by creating their own summer jobs detailing cars in and around the Forest Hill area. "We started literally



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knocking on doors and giving out flyers in this beautiful neighbourhood here." And Toronto's condo boom has been good for business. FHG have a relationship with Pusateri's Fine Foods to do the valet parking and car detailing at all the sites. "We have a niche that we're trying to service. We try never to say no," adds Wise. And the list of services is a long one. From personal shopping to suite

cleaning, pet services to movers, limo service to massage therapy — it's all doable by Wise and his team.

A helping hand

So what type of person needs a concierge service? "The whole point of our service is so that people can balance their work and life. Everyone's 24-7 now because of email, BlackBerry and the iPhone."