

## These buildings have the most insane perks

By Adam Bonislawski

June 20, 2018 | 7:23pm | Updated



Zaro Bates is the on-site farmer at Staten Island's Urby development, harvesting vegetables that renters there can buy weekly.  
Stefano Giovannini

City living is a blast, no doubt, but in a metropolis of 8 million, having fun can sometimes be a grind. Want to grab a cocktail? Buy some vegetables? Get a blowout?

Sounds great, but you better be ready to fight it out in line with the rest of the animals.

Unless, of course, you live in a place where you can go out while staying in.



The condo tower at 111 Murray St. in Tribeca will have a Drybar exclusively for building residents.  
Cameron Webb

From a bar to an on-site farm to a hair salon, new real estate developments across the five boroughs (and in Jersey, too) are amping up their amenities to include experiences that once required a trek outside. And, because nothing makes a nice thing nicer than a whiff of exclusivity, many of these perks are strictly residents-only.

Take, for instance, 571-unit Staten Island Urby (rents from \$1,890 to \$2,900), which offers “farm-to-apartment” dining. The development near the ferry stop in St. George has a 5,000-square-foot farm along with an apiary run by husband-and-wife team Asher Landes and Zaro Bates. He keeps the bees, she handles the farm.

The building’s harvest isn’t exclusive to residents — the couple sells to local chefs and through a CSA — but renters can request particular foods for planting, Landes says. Just try that at your local Gristedes.

About half of the CSA’s 45 members are building residents. Among the crops offered are salad greens, root vegetables, tomatoes and squash, Bates says. Full shares cost \$22.50 a week (\$450 for the season) and half shares are \$12.50 (\$250 for the season).

Then there’s Rockpoint Group and Brooksville Company’s 807-unit 63 Wall St. (rents from \$2,635 to \$6,686), where management has converted offices in the former headquarters of bank Brown Brothers Harriman & Company to an on-site bar dubbed a “speakeasy.”



63 Wall St. is about to debut a glitzy bar exclusively for residents and their guests.

Brian Zak/NY Post

Decked out in grand Roaring '20s style with wood paneling, chandeliers and a custom brass-and-marble bar, the spot, which officially opens next month, is ideal for unwinding with an adult beverage and some light snacks. But to knock one back, you'll need to live in the Financial District building — or at least know someone who does.

The bar, serving beer from \$5 and cocktails from \$12, is open to 63 Wall residents and their guests only.

“It’s like a private club,” says David Sorise, a senior vice president with Pinnacle City Living, which manages the building. “People are really interested in having a place that’s private, where they can gather with their friends and other residents in a kind of closed environment.”

Across the Hudson, tenants of KRE Group’s Jersey City rental building Journal Squared (from \$2,149 to \$3,551) are treated to similarly exclusive entertainment. The building has partnered with the company Basecamp, which arranges lodging for traveling musical acts. In exchange for playing free

shows for residents (and up to four guests), bands get to crash, gratis, in a Journal Squared apartment during the NYC leg of their tours.



Journal Squared in Jersey City gives musical acts (like Mikky Ekko, seen here) free housing in exchange for intimate concerts).

Alyssa Ki

Since the program started in December of last year, Journal Squared has hosted six concerts by acts including Mikky Ekko (featured on Rihanna’s 2013 single “Stay”) and Anthony Russo (whose song “California” generated some buzz last year). The shows typically draw crowds of 150 to 200 people, says Amanda Vittitoe, director of marketing at KRE. Not bad for a 538-unit building.

The shows also give residents a chance to dip their toes in the rock ‘n’ roll lifestyle.

“You get to hang out with the band, see them perform, and then they kind of chill out [with residents] afterwards,” Vittitoe adds. “You can be like a groupie.”

Sounds like more fun than an in-building business center.

At 445-414 Gerard Ave. in the Mott Haven section of the Bronx, Treetop Management is building a 416-unit rental complex (monthly prices not yet available) that will include a professional-grade audio and video production space as well as a podcast studio — all intended to target a younger, creative demographic, says Bond New York’s Douglas Wagner, who represents the development.



Stefano Giovannini

Do these out-of-the-box features truly lure tenants and buyers? Probably not, says Andrew Witzke, 28, a renter at Taconic Investment Partners’ 392-unit building 525 W. 52nd St. That said, they’re certainly fun. He and his fiancée Shaylyn Harper, 27, are big fans of the development’s various experiential amenities, which have included private tours of the Hudson Valley’s Storm King Art Center and Benmarl Winery.

The couple moved to Manhattan last year from Boston, and found the outings “a very easy way to make friends and meet people and start to recognize faces around the building,” says Witzke, who works in management consulting. “It wasn’t material to our decision [to rent at 525 W. 52nd St.], but it’s a really nice benefit we’ve gotten a lot of value out of.”

A self-professed golf nut, Witzke adds he particularly likes the golf simulator, which has hosted lessons from pros. A \$75-a-month fee covers building events as well as access to common areas like the rooftop lounge (the website lists availabilities from \$3,909).



Celebrity chef Charlie Palmer is offering menu planning and VIP reservations to 70 Charlton St. owners.

Jakob Dahlin

Another really nice benefit: Having a James Beard Award-winner whip up a menu for your dinner party. Owners at Extell Development’s 92-unit Hudson Square condop (a building that consists, typically for tax purposes, of a condo subdivided into cooperative shares) 70 Charlton St. enjoy exclusive access to celebrity chef Charlie Palmer for services like menu planning and wine

collection curation (prices depend on the size of the job). Residents also get bonuses like VIP reservations and kitchen tours at Palmer's restaurants around the country.

Among the buyers at 70 Charlton is farm-to-table evangelist Palmer himself, so neighbors might also hobnob with the chief informally. "These are the type of people who are going to Charlie's restaurants, who want that experience of going back to the kitchen for a tour and want to go to different curated dinners," says Elysa Goldman, vice president of development at Extell.

More mundane perks also benefit from the glow of exclusivity. Sure, a person can go shopping at BCBG anytime they want (online even!), but that's clearly not as much fun as getting the run of the place on your own, as recently happened for renters at real estate firm Instrata's Nomad and Gramercy developments. The brand's 168 Fifth Ave. location was open for two hours exclusively to residents of the two buildings, who could take advantage of a little extra elbow room as well as special discounts, says Neeta Mulgaokar, a broker with Mirador Real Estate who helped set up the event. (There was no cost for admission.)



111 Murray St. is getting a Drybar salon.

Redundant Pixel

Meanwhile, 111 Murray St., the 157-unit Tribeca condo tower from developers Fisher Brothers, Witkoff and New Valley (prices from \$4.3 million to \$40 million), will have a residents-only Drybar salon, where services will cost the same as the chain's other locations (from \$45 in New York).

“When you go to these kinds of places, you have to deal with a lot of crowds of people. You have to deal with waiting times. There’s not a ton of privacy. And it’s definitely not as convenient,” says Lauren Witkoff, executive vice president at Witkoff. “This takes a luxury that [residents] would normally have to go outside their home for and gives them the convenience and privacy of having it right in the building.”

For that price, they deserve it.