

Luxury Listings NYC

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What's a Central Park view worth? A look at the value of special amenities

By Katherine Clarke

In a year full of eye-popping luxury listings, pricing a New York City apartment can seem increasingly subjective.

Right now, for example, a five-bedroom spread at 15 Central Park West is on the market for \$95 million, even though it's some 20 percent smaller than the \$88 million penthouse in the building that set records when it sold last year.

What justifies the higher price? The smaller unit has much better views of Central Park.

It's well known that New Yorkers are willing to pay more for certain basic features. A doorman, for example, can add up to 15 percent to an apartment's value, industry veterans said.

But which other icing-on-the-cake features fetch premiums in today's real estate market — and which ones don't?



Central Park views

In Manhattan, Central Park views may be the single most valuable apartment amenity right now.

In the right circumstances, unobstructed park views can tack an additional 50 percent onto an apartment's purchase price, according to real estate appraiser Jonathan Miller of Miller Samuel.

Central Park views are considered preferable to river views in New York, Miller said.

Outdoor space

The method appraisers use to value outdoor space — such as a balcony, terrace or garden — has changed dramatically in recent years.

In the 1980s and early 1990s, outdoor spaces were assigned a fixed dollar value based on their size, Miller explained.

Today, outdoor space is valued at 25 to 50 percent of the price per square foot of the interior.



Prewar

New York City homes built before World War II tend to be 10 to 15 percent more expensive than similar homes built in the decades after the war, Miller said.

The reason? Prewar buildings tend to have better soundproofing and higher ceilings than their postwar counterparts, along with hardwood floors and walls made of plaster rather than drywall, he said.

Fitness centers

Flashy fitness centers may help developers market new buildings, but Miller estimated that the presence of a gym in a building adds less than 5 percent to an apartment's total value.

In fact, buyers in new luxury developments seem to expect a gym.



New construction

On average, apartments that have never been lived in fetch a price premium of 15 percent to 25 percent, said Neil Binder, who heads the Bellmarc Group.

"There's just a thing about fresh and new that people find compelling," he said.

