



## What's Cooking in the City's Newest Condos

by Marion Lachoff

The secret ingredient to a new building's success increasingly depends on the design choices allocated to the kitchen. No longer confined to a separate enclosed area, contemporary kitchens are being cleverly integrated into open floor plans, which accommodate changing 21st-century lifestyles. Collaborative teams of savvy developers, architects, and interior designers are dishing up a menu of amenities to entice buyers in a highly competitive luxury real estate market. From top appliances and materials to "green" design features, the city's newest condos offer a futuristic glimpse into emerging housing trends. New York residents, who possess an insatiable appetite for take-out meals, may even become inspired to cultivate their culinary skills in the following user-friendly environments.

### 254 Park Avenue South

Originally built in 1913, this handsome limestone structure, located midway between Gramercy and Madison Square parks, is currently being transformed into a sophisticated condo. Interior designer Charles Allem, who is in the process of outfitting two new W hotels, brings a similar contemporary aesthetic to his first residential building project.

Although the surrounding neighborhood is filled with hip restaurants, residents who choose to stay at home to cook and entertain will be well served by their sleek, functional kitchens. Even compact studio apartments, which have the added benefit of 12-foot ceilings, are

packed with all the necessities. Allem selected a cool, urbane palette in the open plan spaces. Ebony stained cabinetry provides a vivid contrast between the seamless Caesar stone countertops, which range from beige to gray tones depending upon the apartment size.

Smaller units are configured in a U-shape with a serving bar at one end opening onto the main living area. Appliances include a stainless-steel Bosch dishwasher and four-burner stove, GE microwave convection oven, custom-paneled Liebherr refrigerator, and combination washer/dryer. In addition, there is a stainless Kohler sink and faucet and unobtrusive Miele vent system, which carries exhaust fumes outside the building. Kitchens in the larger apartments are neatly arranged against the length of a long back wall, and contain larger Sub-Zero refrigerators and wine coolers.

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254 Park Avenue South  
Photograph by Peter Lindbergh