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New 'Must-Have' In NYC Buildings: The Best Air



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Rooftop at Charlotte of the Upper West Side, which is among New York City's brand new residential ...

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The pandemic-era's renewed focus on health and wellness has been accompanied by a flock of fascinating phenomena. Among the most salient: a crusade by residential buyers to look beyond conventional ventilation and air filtration in an effort to find the cleanest, purest and just plain finest indoor air around. The response of developers has been to incorporate high-efficiency air filtration systems to purify incoming fresh air, remove irritants and allergens and eliminate nearly all viruses, bacteria and mold.

It's a timely move. In early May of this year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updated its guidance regarding multifamily housing. Among its recommendations: "Consider conducting ventilation system upgrades or other steps to increase the delivery of clean air and dilute potential contaminants in the building."

In New York City, where many developers appeared to be steps ahead of CDC's updated guidance, the clean air campaign has been taken to lengths that two years ago would have been regarded as ludicrous. For example, within the boutique condominium building Charlotte of the Upper West Side, air in each residence is exchanged with fresh air 13 times a day. Entering fresh air is filtered through a state-of-the-art filtration system, which purifies the incoming air. The air passes through ultraviolet light, is adjusted for humidity and heated or cooled to temperatures the resident has set.

In addition to its Swiss-engineered energy recovery ventilation system, the building includes rigorous insulation and air tight seals to limit leaks. The cumulative impact of these features will be considered as the structure seeks Passive House certification.

Here are a few other New York City buildings that take air to rarified heights.

Jolie

The Covid-19 pandemic demonstrated to Trinity Place Holdings the importance of investing in air quality enhancements of its under-development Jolie residential tower in Manhattan's Financial District.

The developer upgraded air filters from MERV (Minimum Efficiency Reporting Values) 7/8 to MERV 13 in the building's amenity spaces and lobby. MERV ratings, which are recorded on a scale of 1 to 16, refer to the effectiveness of air filters in trapping small particles that should be prevented from circulating through a residential setting. In its elevator cabs, Trinity employs air purifying and sterilizing systems from SteriLyft, which uses special filtration and UV-C light to help clean the air. The result: reduced germ spread in tight spaces that prevent users from sufficiently social distancing for safety.