

London Evening Standard



Homes & Property Mini marvels

Micro homes that
are small but
perfectly formed
...and affordable

**LONDON'S TOP PROPERTY
GUIDE INSIDE TODAY**

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WEST END FINAL

Life doesn't come any higher

NEW YORK'S skyline is changing rapidly. In the world's fastest-moving city, developers are vying to build ever-taller, ever-slimmer towers, with most activity centred on Manhattan's Midtown between 53rd and 60th Streets.

"The higher the better seems to be the mantra," says property veteran Howard Lorber, chairman of Douglas Elliman. "There are no bad neighbourhoods in New York City any more. Midtown used to be an office district but now has become popular as a residential area. You are close to Fifth Avenue, Museum Mile, Carnegie Hall and Central Park."

EMERGING MIDTOWN

Lorber has flown in from his weekend home in the Hamptons to lead a tour around **135 West 52nd Street**, a relative minnow at only 48 storeys. The former hotel is being turned into 109 one- to four-bedroom apartments priced from £989,000.

Communal facilities include restaurants, gyms, a pool and even a golf simulator, but the six levels of whole-floor apartments are the real news. Loft-style living was previously the preserve of former warehouse districts such as Tribeca and SoHo but the trend is moving uptown.

The most notable addition to the Midtown skyline is **432 Park Avenue** between 56th and 57th Streets. This 1,396ft tower became the highest residential building in the Western Hemisphere when builders topped out last year.

Slim and with striking 10ft-square windows, 432 Park Avenue outdoes the Empire State Building's 1,250 feet and the Chrysler Building, at 1,046 feet. Designed by architect Rafael Vinoly with 103 flats over 96 floors, the effusive marketing brochure claims it "echoes masterpieces like the Pantheon in Rome". Well over half the building is sold, mainly to Americans, and the first occupants will move in come autumn.

The prices are as eye-watering as the views. A full-floor apartment starts at £46 million. and the smallest flat for

There are no bad neighbourhoods in New York City now that Midtown offers family-size flats in super-tall towers, says **Cathy Hawker**



From £989,000: 135 West 52nd Street offers loft-style living in Midtown, with on-site pool and golf simulator

sale, at 3,600sq ft, is £10 million. The £62.6 million penthouse sold early, as did the £3.2 million entry-level flats. Staff apartments start from £989,000 and 384sq ft.

This block will not be the tallest for long, however. At 1,423 feet, **225 West 57th Street** should steal its crown in 2018, one of four planned super-slimmer neighbouring towers.

FAMILY-FRIENDLY LATERALS

Manhattan, never previously a family favourite, used to be considered best for young professionals starting out

in their careers, who would live there before moving to the 'burbs to settle down and raise a family.

According to Bluerock Real Estate chief executive Ramin Kamfar, however, that is no longer true. He lives in the prime Upper East Side with his young family and believes city living is the way forward.

"Uptown Manhattan has schools, hospitals and of course Central Park," he says. "Families would love to stay here but there weren't the larger apartments for them. In addition older people are coming back into the city from the suburbs once their children have left home."

The Charles, Bluerock's project in First Avenue between 72nd and 73rd Streets, started in 2008 and was mothballed during the recession. Now building has begun again with over 75 per cent of homes sold. The final available units start from £4.3 million for four bedrooms across an entire floor.

"This is one of Manhattan's wealthiest neighbourhoods but east of Third Street was relatively undiscovered," Kamfar adds. "A new subway opens along Second Avenue this year and US real estate has always followed transport links."

- **135 West 52nd Street:** through Knight Frank (knightfrank.com)
- **432 Park Avenue:** 432parkavenue.com
- **The Charles:** charlesnyc.com

■ Twitter: [@cathyhawker](https://twitter.com/cathyhawker)



Tall order: slender new tower 432 Park Avenue's smallest flats start at £10 million



A PLACE TO STAY

TWO British imports are making waves in the competitive NYC hotel scene.

Soho House New York private members club and hotel, left, opened in the Meatpacking District 11 years ago and was an instant hit with the media crowd. It features a rooftop pool with a "Hamptons in the City" vibe and an industrial-chic Club Floor.

The hugely successful High Line, a 7.5-acre urban park on the site of a disused railway line, has brought new

money to this gritty western side of Manhattan with more than 20 new high-end developments in the planning. Further east among the intimate boutiques and galleries of SoHo, **Crosby Street Hotel** has brought British style to the classic red-brick warehouse district.

- **Soho House:** sohohouseny.com
- **Crosby Street Hotel:** firmdalehotels.com