

New York family

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Last year's news was that developers were building more and more amenity-rich "suburbs in the sky" to respond to the needs of the growing number of affluent families choosing to raise their kids in the city. The news this year is that, if anything, the trend is getting stronger and taking root. In almost every neighborhood of Manhattan, along with several areas of Brooklyn, Queens, and the Bronx, there are buildings sprouting up that are specifically designed for families, with larger units and more bedrooms, and amenities that run the gamut from themed playrooms to gyms and pools to screening rooms. For those who can afford it, the tantalizing question becomes: Do you stick to a classic form of city housing, like a great-pre-war apartment, or do you try this exciting new style of family housing?

If you want to consider a new building, there's no better way [of course] than doing your research: visiting buildings, studying plans, and learning more about the developers and architects and other properties they've created. Our guide to the latest wave of family-minded properties, divided by

THE Building BLOOM

THE NEW FAMILY-FRIENDLY LUXURY BUILDINGS ARE MORE THAN A TREND: THEY ARE CHANGING PEOPLE'S IDEAS ABOUT CITY LIVING

BY SUZANNE REISMAN

A Bold Move

For those who are ready for a very big change, have you considered Philadelphia? Buying a home there makes sense for people who travel there for business, have kids going to school in the city and are looking for a great investment, or just want a new life challenge. New York is a great city to raise a family, but it's not the only one! One of our favorite buildings in Philadelphia is The Ellington. The luxury condominium is in Center City, an increasingly family-friendly part of town in close vicinity to the zoo, museums and culture centers, and restaurants. It's also nearby excellent private, charter and public schools. Originally built in the 1920s, the building itself has been completely modernized and includes a beautiful lounge that residents can use free of charge for events like birthdays; a fitness center; and spacious one- and two-bedroom units and penthouses with floor plans conducive to family living and luxury finishes. "We have a lot of young families moving here," says Greg Dwornikowski, VP Asset Management of Pitcairn Properties, the development company of The Ellington. Not only that, but right now it's a buyer's market. "People see Philadelphia as right now an anomaly in value," says Dwornikowski. "It's a real bargain and that isn't going to be the case forever."

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