

Tale of two condos: luxe and superluxe

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West of Avenue Road, Bloor goes from pizza to private elevator, AMY VERNER finds how decadently delicious! From the rubble and remains of deep-fat fryers and leatherette banquettes, two condominium buildings will emerge that promise to redefine the art of luxury. Once considered a dead zone, the block of Bloor Street West just west of Avenue Road has suddenly become hot real estate. These glass-and-limestone buildings will house multimillion-dollar apartments complete with premium 24-hour concierges and valet parking, among other hotel-inspired services.

MUSEUM HOUSE

Proposed Museum House on Bloor by architects Page and Steele. A 19 floor condo tower proposed I at 206 Bloor St. West. museum10to10

Size matters: 19 floors, 1,971 to 5,618 square feet, \$1,675,000 to \$4,075,000 (penthouse price TBA).

Best brochure line: "A masterpiece that defines the epitome of living and the infinity of space."

Art as bait: Three sculptures do not a museum make, but developer Sheldon Esbin will be showcasing his personal collection of Rodins in the lobby in addition to the works of a rotating series of painters (expect a Motherwell canvas).

Neighbourhood shop name-drop: Bling, boots and handbags: Cartier, Tiffany & Co., Hermès, Prada, Chanel and Gucci.

In a previous life, I was: A Pizza Hut.

A community with cachet: Esbin and Page + Steele's principal Sol Wassermuhl have already claimed two of the premium upper-floor units -- a good sign that they stand behind their skyscraper.

Swank design courtesy of: Among Canada's foremost interior designers, Powell & Bonnell (they won the Association of Registered Interior Designers of Ontario's Project of the Year last September) are not only creating a serenely sophisticated lobby but can also be commissioned to leave their stamp on the residential suites. Think refined contemporary on an ultra-luxe level.

Appliance alliance: Miele in the kitchen and en suite laundry room and Kohler in the bathrooms. Let's hope their sales representatives get a big bonus.

Condo quirks: The good news is a valet will always be available to fetch your Bentley. The hitch is the underground parking is accessed via one auto elevator, which doesn't bode well for the 8:30 a.m. Bay Street crush. A second-floor guest suite does, however, make a visit from the in-laws more bearable. Plus, there's a cold storage room in the lobby for food and flower deliveries.

Cofferred offered: There are two suggested choices for the living area -- contemporary or classic. Opt for classic, and voilà, a coffered ceiling is yours!

Hot and watered: You'll have to get chummy with the penthouse owner -- the 5,618-square-foot unit has a private outdoor hot tub and indoor cedar sauna.

A Bloor Street bonus: Buyers will automatically receive a Royal Patron's Circle membership to the Royal Ontario Museum, valued at \$1,500. The dinosaurs will be neighbours!