

# MAINLINE

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## THE VIEW FROM THE TOP

It may be a flagging real estate market, but some of Philadelphia's most luxurious condo buildings are just now topping off. That means it could be now or never for purchasing penthouses—after all, there's only one top floor. And while some list prices are as elevated as these apartments themselves, new construction means custom build-outs, floor-through opportunities and tons of modern amenities. If you're looking to get in on the top floor, here's your guide:



[1] TOP OF THE PARC  
225 South 18th Street

**THE BUILDING:** The three-story Hillier Architects-designed topper to Parc Rittenhouse condos, in the overhauled former Sheraton/Rittenhouse Regency Apartments building, has its own name, its own web site ([topoftheparc.com](http://topoftheparc.com)) and its own private elevator. Marketing materials insist it will “redefine the term ‘penthouse living’ in Philadelphia”; Inquirer architecture critic Inga Saffron says it looks like someone “plopped a discount store on the roof” of the 1924 structure.

**THE PENTHOUSE:** The top floor is sold, but Penthouses 18 and 19 are still available as raw space: 18 includes 15,084 square feet plus deck space, and 19 is 7,545 square feet.  
**THE PRICE:** \$7.5 million for 19; \$15 million for 18.

**THE PERKS:** Eleven-foot ceilings and Parc Rittenhouse amenities such as concierge, fitness center and a rooftop pool. Amenities exclusive to Top of the Parc include room service from Stephen Starr's Parc bistro. Actual “parc-ing” spaces are available—but not included in the price.



[2] 10 RITTENHOUSE SQUARE  
18th and Walnut streets

**THE BUILDING:** It's new construction that incorporates historic facades on Rittenhouse Square, designed by renowned architect Robert A.M. Stern for developer ARCWheeler. The building topped off this past October and the residences are slated for fall 2009 move-in.

**THE PENTHOUSE:** Remaining full-floor units, sold as raw space on floors 30, 31 and 32, all feature 11-foot ceilings, flexible floor plans and finishes, windows on four sides and around five terraces apiece.

**THE PRICE:** Approximately \$13 million.

**THE PERKS:** The building features a doorman, a full-service concierge, an indoor pool, a fitness center, gardens, private terraces and room service from a yet-to-be-named upscale restaurant that's to be located on the first two floors. There are also separate guest suites and a residents-only valet parking garage, and you'll live practically above the Barney's CO-OP to be located in the adjoining building that once housed the old Rittenhouse Club.

**RESIDENCES AT THE RITZ-CARLTON**  
10 Avenue of the Arts

**THE BUILDING:** Developer Craig Spencer says his brand new tower, with an eco-friendly glass curtain wall, is foot-for-foot the most expensive new construction in the city. Ritz-Carlton amenities are key to the Residences, which overlook City Hall and the soon-to-be scenic Dilworth Plaza, and are slated for December move-in.

**THE PENTHOUSE:** The top floor includes 7,500 square feet and views of City Hall and beyond; four more half-floor penthouse spaces occupy the 46th and 47th floors just below.

**THE PRICE:** \$12 million for the full-floor penthouse.

**THE PERKS:** Get what you want—the penthouses are sold as raw space. Amenities include a gated garden courtyard, a fitness center with 60-foot lap pool, 24-hour concierge, dog-walking, the Ritz's on-site spa and restaurant, a chauffeur-driven town car, room service (including from Chef Eric Ripert's posh 10Arts restaurant downstairs), and much more.



[3] THE AYER  
210 W. Washington Square

**THE BUILDING:** This glamorous, park-side Art Deco high-rise, dating back to 1929, underwent a \$75 million renovation before opening this year as stylish condos by Brown Hill Development and The Goldenberg Group.

**THE PENTHOUSE:** The Ayer just made three bi-level penthouses available this fall, with ceilings as high as 18 feet and 13-foot-high windows. All share the 13th floor and each ultra-modern, 3,100-square-foot (or more) unit includes three bedrooms, three or more baths, media rooms, hardwood floors, super-sleek bulthaup b3 kitchens with Miele stainless steel appliances, and luxe 9-foot by 15-foot master bathrooms.

**THE PRICE:** From \$3.7 million.

**THE PERKS:** Units are move-in ready, though you're stuck with an open plan that includes lots of interior glass walls, and only the Southeast penthouse has a balcony. Luxuries include the building's concierge, a chauffeur-driven Mercedes S550, a parking space with valet service on-site and a fitness center.



[4] 1706 RITTENHOUSE SQUARE STREET  
1706 Rittenhouse Square Street

**THE BUILDING:** Planned for a May 2010 move-in, this new 31-story Scannapieco structure just started construction and is already 40 percent sold. According to the hype, it's a "building of penthouses," as all units are fully customized, full-floor spaces with floor-to-ceiling windows and balconies.

**THE PENTHOUSE:** The uppermost two-story unit is already spoken for, but the 28th and 29th floors are available as 4,200-square-foot penthouse spaces, with 11-foot ceilings and balconies that stretch along the entire west side of the building.

THE PRICE: \$6 million.

THE PERKS: A futuristic automated parking and car storage system, a full-service concierge, a conference center, fitness center, lap pool and on-call massage, a shared garden terrace and the luxuries of condo living all on a quiet residential street. As for the downside, we'll come out and say it: Despite all contrary indications, Rittenhouse Square Street is not, in fact, on Rittenhouse Square.



[5] THE RESIDENCES AT TWO LIBERTY PLACE  
1601 Chestnut Street

THE BUILDING: After the top 20 floors of Two Liberty went condo, even Richie Sambora and former mayoral candidate Tom Knox decided to move into what's now the highest residential tower in Philly. According to Director of Sales Jacob Dreyfuss, the "office building merely functions as a stilt;" the residences have a completely separate lobby and elevators.

THE PENTHOUSE: Floors 53 through 57 are available as totally customizable penthouse space. Buy full-floor units ranging from 7,250 square feet (on the smallest, but highest floor) to 11,325 square feet, or go for a half-floor or a multi-level palace in the sky.

THE PRICE: \$15 million for a full-floor, custom build-out.

THE PERKS: Unobstructed views for 45 miles; a 37th-floor owners' club with spa, sauna, swimming pool, pet concierge and grooming center, and access to concierge, housekeeping, plant services, pet-sitting, catering and a car service.



[6] MURANO CONDOMINIUM  
21st and Market Streets

THE BUILDING: A curving, modern, glass and poured concrete structure, Murano offers new construction and über-contemporary layouts and finishes. Residents are

practically above Trader Joe's and just a few blocks from Rittenhouse Square. This neighborhood is still in transition, so penthouses offer endless views—though some also have a clear view of the Forum, Philly's most acclaimed pornography palace, across the street.

**THE PENTHOUSE:** Four 43rd-floor units have up to 12-foot ceilings, balconies and floor-to-ceiling windows. Penthouse units start at 1,660 square feet; the largest, 2,700 square feet, is a three-bedroom, 3½-bath unit.

**THE PRICE:** Penthouses from \$2.3 million to \$4 million.

**THE PERKS:** Amenities include an indoor 60-foot lap pool, an indoor sun deck and a shared outdoor patio, a full fitness center, a hospitality suite and a full-time concierge. There's a private parking garage attached to the Murano, though parking spots are sold separately.



[7] **THE RESIDENCES AT DOCKSIDE**  
717 S. Columbus Blvd.

**THE BUILDING:** Columbus Boulevard may not have the cachet of Rittenhouse Square, but the views are unbeatable. Sure, you're sequestered between the highway on one side and Camden on the other—but if you're seeking waterfront property in Philadelphia, it's the only game in town.

**THE PENTHOUSE:** The penthouse floor offers several options, like a 1,957-square-foot, three-bedroom unit, with a living room, dining area, kitchen decked out with GE stainless steel appliances and granite countertops, two baths and a waterfront terrace.

**THE PRICE:** \$1,000,500 to \$1,350,500 for a three-bedroom penthouse. (Smaller units are also available.)

**THE PERKS:** Penthouse privileges at a more affordable price. A reserved indoor parking space is included, as is a full-time doorman, bike storage and other additional storage, fitness center, indoor pool and pet-friendly facilities.