

# THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

November 12, 2014

## **The Ultimate Luxury: a Doorman**



*Luxury condo owners in New York City pay 65% more per square foot in buildings that have a doorman*

Don't knock it 'til you've tried it.

New Yorkers want doorman service at their luxury condo buildings, and they'll pay a premium for the privilege, according to recent sales data.

The average price a square foot for apartments in doorman buildings was \$2,958, roughly 65% more than in non-dorman buildings, which sold for \$1,797 a square foot. CityRealty, a real-estate data site, looked at 2014 sales through the third quarter of the year in 200 luxury condo buildings in New York City—half with doorman service and half without.

“At the upper tier of luxury, I think it's expected,” said Gabby Warshawer, director of research at CityRealty. Part of the reason for the price gap, she said, is that many of the newer luxury buildings, which offer full-service amenities, had the most sales. Residential tower 15 Central Park West topped the list, averaging \$6,517 a square foot with 14 sales this year. Other pricey Manhattan doorman buildings include the Time Warner Center, One57 and Walker Tower.

Manhattan's Midtown West neighborhood, dominated by large, full-service buildings, had the most sales in doorman buildings, while the trendy downtown neighborhood of Tribeca had the most sales in nondorman buildings, according to CityRealty.

There are roughly 30,000 unionized residential building service workers in New York City, which includes doormen, porters, and other service professionals. They earn about \$45,720 a year, according to Local 32BJ of the Service Employees International Union.

Doormen do far more than open doors. Frank Vasquez, 45, has worked in the same building on West 79th Street for close to 16 years. He says he has gotten to know multiple generations of families on the job, which includes hailing taxis and watching owners' kids while they run to the grocery. There are other hats he wears—counselor, for instance, when a neighbor gripes about the noise or somebody smoking in public areas. “I’ve gotten pretty good results,” he said.

Having a doorman is especially useful for owners who use the apartment as a pied-à-terre and need someone to keep an eye on the place, said Ginger Brokaw, an associate broker with Town Residential. And “when you have a busy life in New York, it’s invaluable,” said Ms. Brokaw.

But there are downsides. “Doormen do know everything,” said Emily Beare, an agent with CORE. That can be great for buyers who want attentive service, but a nuisance for high-profile owners. “At One57, the second time I went there, they knew my [full] name,” she said. “It made me feel very special.”

### **Corrections & Amplifications**

A chart in earlier version of this article incorrectly identified dollar amounts as the average list price, per square foot, instead of the average sale price.