

# European styling adds to modern kitchens

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Stark reality may best describe the trend of urban contemporary kitchens found in downtown high-rises. It's the antithesis of the cluttered, Old World kitchens found on the North Shore.

Modular, organized, clean, sleek kitchens found in an urban setting tend to mirror the minimalist glass-and-steel exteriors of modern high-rises.

"Buyers have shown a preference toward modern designs in most of the projects currently marketed downtown," says Chicago condominium appraiser Gail Lissner, vice president of Appraisal Research Counselors Ltd.

Modern kitchens with the touch of European style have become hot commodities luring buyers to several condominium developments in the Chicago area, housing analysts say.

The influx of European-style kitchens suggests that the modernist trend that has recently swept the Chicago housing market is not limited to exterior building architecture, but also has infiltrated the interior design of new condos.

"A building with a modern exterior logically needs a modern interior - our buyers expect that," says Mark Sutherland, principal of Sutherland Pearsall Development Corp., developer of 550 St. Clair.

Details on several condominium developments that showcase European-style kitchens follow.

550 St. Clair is a modern 26-story condominium planned a half-block east of Michigan Avenue in Streeterville.

Of 112 condominiums, more than 65 percent of the residences have been purchased, including a mix of studios, one-bedroom, two-bedroom, three-bedroom and penthouse residences, says Jerry Houlihan, director of marketing for Sutherland Pearsall Development.

Sutherland Pearsall is carrying the contemporary exterior theme into the furnishings.

"For a limited time, when you purchase any residence in our building you will receive a gift certificate for \$5,000 to \$30,000 toward merchandise at a contemporary furniture salon, plus a design consultation," says Houlihan.

Two decorated vignette condominium models - a studio unit and a three-bedroom residence - are on display at the 550 St. Clair sales center.

Sutherland says the kitchen-cabinet design is fitted with silver-textured cabinets, a high-end line from Germany, topped with matte-finish black granite countertops and back splash.

The galley-style studio kitchen features upper cabinets with frosted-glass doors and a premium appliance package.

Studios at 550 St. Clair are priced in the \$200,000s, while one-bedroom one-bath residences range from the low-\$400,000s to the low-\$500,000s. Two-bedroom, two-bath residences are priced between the upper-\$400,000s and the mid-\$500,000s.

Three-bedroom homes featuring two or three baths are priced within the mid-\$700,000s to \$1 million and higher. Penthouse residences are also available.

Construction on 550 St. Clair is projected to start soon and first move-ins are planned for 2007.

The sales gallery and model for 550 St. Clair is located on the 4th floor at 201 E. Ohio. Sales gallery hours are from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday; from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Tuesday and from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. For more information on 550 St. Clair, call (312) 222-0550 or visit [www.550StClair.com](http://www.550StClair.com).

At 600 North Fairbanks Court, European-style kitchens are highlights of the 41-story new-construction condominium tower designed by Helmut Jahn.

Construction on the building, a few steps east of Michigan Avenue is expected to begin late this month.

European-influenced kitchens will include cabinetry from Italy.

"The goal is to bring European influence into the design," says Jahn, chief executive of Murphy/Jahn Inc. "Europe has encouraged innovation in technology and materials. The expectations for living accommodations are higher in Europe in such areas as fresh air, light and visual privacy."

600 North Fairbanks will consist of 28 residential floors with views of Lake Michigan. The building's top floor will include a media/conference/party room, fitness center, sun deck and lap pool.

The exterior building design is contemporary and transparent, featuring a curved glass curtain wall and a lobby highlighted by 20-foot ceilings.

The residences are marketed to buyers seeking open, loft-like floor plans combined with an abundance of glass, exposed steel and concrete.

Ten-foot ceiling heights of exposed concrete and columns coupled with hardwood floors blend with the backdrop of a sleek high-rise, creating an urban environment.

Available residences at 600 North Fairbanks include one-bedroom, two-bedroom, two-bedroom-plus den, three-bedroom and penthouse units with 821 and 3,117 square feet of living space. The condominiums range from \$320,000 to \$1.9 million.

Residences at 600 North Fairbanks contain balconies recessed to enhance the clean look of the building.

The sales center for 600 North Fairbanks, at 610 Fairbanks, is open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday to Friday and from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. For more information, call the sales center at (312) 951-0807 or visit [www.600NorthFairbanks.com](http://www.600NorthFairbanks.com).

Contemporary-style lofts with European-style kitchens are available at 630 N. Franklin, a 165-unit new-construction building which is nearing completion.

"The 630 N. Franklin building is 95-percent sold and construction is nearing completion with immediate availability on remaining units," says developer Cohn Kihnke, president of CMK Development Corp.

Young professionals are "attracted to the architectural style of our development - modern, clean buildings both inside and out," says Kihnke.

CMK Development's European-look kitchens evolved from the design of the 28-unit Contemporaine, a 15-story modern high-rise condominium which it developed and sold out at Wells and Grand in River North.

The European kitchens are outfitted with custom cabinetry, appliances, fixtures, premium hardwood floors and granite. Each residence embodies a European architectural finish that inspired subsequent CMK Development projects.

"At 630 N. Franklin are contemporary boutique condominiums in the River North Gallery District," says Scott Hoskins, managing broker of CMK Realty. "Our signature European-style kitchens showcase stainless-steel appliances and granite countertops."

Remaining residences at 630 N. Franklin feature two bedrooms and range from \$319,900 to \$479,900.

Residences feature floor-to-ceiling windows, private outdoor space, hardwood floors and 10-foot concrete ceilings. Luxury carpet with choice of colors and style is offered in bedrooms, as well.

For more information, or an appointment, call (312) 692-1741.

Contemporary condominium design is found at 1620 S. Michigan, a 249-unit new-construction mid-rise by CMK Development in the South Loop neighborhood.

Architects Brininstool & Lynch designed the new-construction 12-story building in CMK Development's signature contemporary style, with plenty of glass and modern, clean lines. These modern residences also include CMK Development's signature European-style kitchens with stainless-steel appliances and granite countertops.

"The 1620 S. Michigan building is 95-percent sold and construction is progressing rapidly with delivery scheduled for summer," Kihnke says.

Remaining residences at 1620 S. Michigan include two-bedroom condominiums with one or two baths ranging from \$265,900 to \$352,900, and two-bedroom-plus den, two-bath residences priced from \$435,900.

Available residences feature floor-to-ceiling windows, hardwood floors, choice of luxury carpet in bedrooms and dens, designer lighting and solid-core entry doors.

The sales center for 1620 S. Michigan is located at 1430 S. Michigan Ave and is open noon to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday and 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday to Friday. For more information, call (312) 692-1741.