

NEW YORK POST

November 6, 2008

Showing Off

By KATHERINE DYKSTRA

KERMIT was right: It's not easy being green.

"If you're going for LEED [certification], you're going to spend more money, it's more time-consuming and involves a lot more meetings with a lot more people involved," says Natalie Terrill, project manager at Viridian Energy & Environmental. She's also the sustainable-building consultant for the Laurel, an Upper East Side condo project working toward LEED certification.

If it's such a headache, why do it at all?

"You have cost issues and time issues and availability of product, and in the end you do what's right," says Stuart Marton of the Alexico Group, which is developing the Laurel. "It's what's right for the environment and right for what purchasers want."

The construction of the Laurel represents the first time Alexico, whose developments include TriBeCa's 56 Leonard and the Upper East Side's Mark Hotel, has gone after LEED status on one of its projects. At least 10 percent of the building materials were extracted, harvested, recovered or manufactured within a 500-mile radius, and other green elements of the Indiana limestone building include underground parking (which reduces warming) and a recycling program.

Inside, its 129 residences are eco-conscious, as well. And that's exactly why Hearst magazines chose the building for its 2008 designer showcase, which opens today and runs through Dec. 28.

VERANDA

Inspired by the bird's-eye view of the church spire seen from the Laurel's south-facing windows, designer Charlotte Moss chose an Italian theme for this apartment. In the living room, the warmth of a pumpkin-colored sofa and bronze glass-topped coffee table complement the bright early light portrayed in an oil painting of a Venician canal. An antique mahogany screen divides the seating area from the dining area. And if there's a need to create an Italian feast, the kitchens in the Laurel have stainless-steel Energy Star appliances that include steam ovens and eco-friendly touches such as water-saving low-flow sinks.





O AT HOME

Designer Darryl Carter turned the living area in this apartment into something of a salon by surrounding a dining table with steel bookshelves built to fit inside the floor-to-ceiling windows. Those windows, like all the exterior glass in the Laurel, are coated so they simultaneously retain 10 percent more heat inside the apartment and block one-third of the solar heat coming from outside, reducing both heating and cooling costs. In the master bathroom, Carter hung a Belgravina mirror on top of the standard mirror. Master bathrooms in the Laurel feature Duravit "Starck 2 Series" water-saving toilets and low-flow sinks.

HOUSE BEAUTIFUL

McAlpine Booth & Ferrier Interiors used varying shades of gray throughout this apartment, providing both continuity and texture. Soft, flowing gray draperies, found in every room, are used to create a feeling of cohesion. In the living room, a Ghent wing chair is used to disguise a column. In the bedroom, the bed is floated in the center of the room to make the space appear bigger. Each unit in the Laurel features insulated walls with glazing and space temperature control, which results in lower heating, cooling and lighting costs. Adding to the eco-friendly elements in this apartment are found objects such as the French iron table with Plexiglas top in the living room and the wooden antique anchors in the master bedroom.

