

Inside the American Copper Buildings, Kips Bay’s transformative new rental

Eye-catching architecture and on-trend finishes try to recast a sleepy neighborhood

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JDS Development Group’s American Copper Buildings, where rentals are available from \$3,300 and up. *Max Touhey for Curbed*

Murray Hill and Kips Bay have traditionally repelled the cool-seeking crowd, but the American Copper Buildings along the neighborhoods’ East River border may be the development that changes that truism.

From the beginning, the American Copper Buildings have been sold as edgy, both literally—thanks to the buildings distinctive angular architecture—and figuratively. When the vision for the [former mud pit](#) was first [unveiled](#) in August of 2013, former SHoP Architects principal Vishaan Chakrabarti [told the *New York Times*](#) that the buildings “dance with each other, not like Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire, but like Shawn [Carter] and Beyoncé.”

The hyper-trendy interior finishes, like statement custom lighting and crocodile marble slab accent shower walls, also firmly suggest that American Copper is trying to lure a new

kind of occupant to the far east side. For his part, JDS Development Group head honcho Michael Stern thinks it's working, saying that the buildings have already contributed to "the continued growth of Manhattan's urban coast not only through their dynamic architecture but with the lifestyle and convenience we're offering."

All of this work to attract renters who might normally go to hipper neighborhoods seems to be paying off. Of the selection of 600 market-rate rentals that [hit the market](#) since early April, 65 percent of them have been leased.

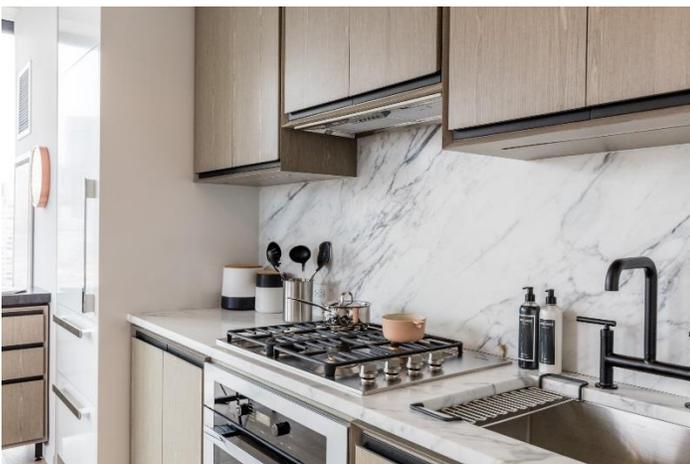




That number might not sound huge, but living in the American Cooper Buildings requires commitment—both fiscally and to its location on off-the-beaten-path First Avenue. Rents here start at \$3,300 for a studio, \$4,750 for a one-bedroom, and \$6,660 for a two-bedroom. Amenities, positioned as a major draw, come at an extra fee.

When a renter chooses to drop over \$3,000 per month on a rental, its location is often high on the priority list—but First Avenue at East 35th Street isn't too notable a locale. On top of that, the closest subway is several blocks away. Alternative forms of mass transportation prevail here, like the East River Ferry and the bus, both with stops just a few steps away.

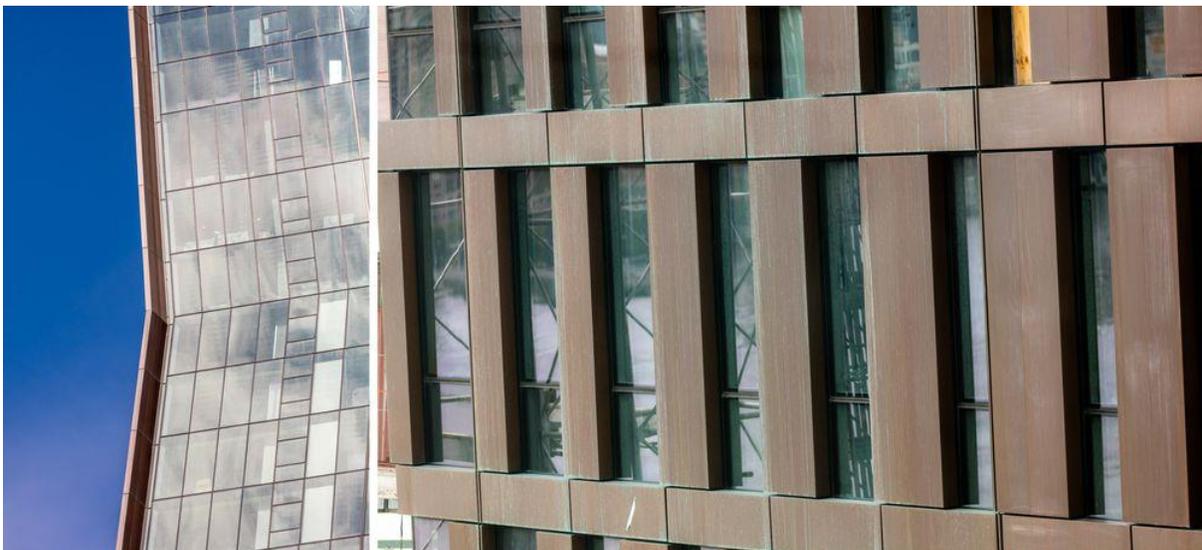
The buildings also have some amenities that will appeal to car-favoring folks who rely on cabs and ride-hailing services. For them, the development has its own porte cochère in addition to valet service and underground parking.





But the buildings' most noteworthy amenities are found in its 100-foot-long skybridge, spanning the 27th through 29th floors. Billed in marketing materials as "the first major skybridge in New York in 80 years," this is where the development's gym, 75-foot lap pool, juice bar, and outdoor lounge can be found. A rep for Citi Habitats, who's marketing the building, noted on a recent sales gallery tour that just how much access to these amenities will further set renters back has yet to be confirmed.

One benefit to American Copper's far east locale is its stellar views. East and west floor-to-ceiling windows—that yes, do show a very slight slant—showcase all that surrounds the buildings, framing views of the Empire State Building and the boroughs beyond the East River. There are 4,592 windows on the two buildings and over 5,000 copper panels line the facade.



Although leasing and move-ins have just started, the buildings are already starting to show signs of age on their exteriors. The copper panels from which the development draws its name are already starting to oxidize, similar to how the corten steel facade of SHoP's Barclay's Center is aging.

At 540 and 470 feet, both towers will eclipse the city's other copper-clad structure of note: the 305-foot Statue of Liberty. That skyline icon may look just a little less unique when its rivaled in color by this uptown rental.