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What Luxury Amenities Do Real Estate Experts Look for in Miami?

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As developers seek to attract the highest spenders, an acclaimed developer and a top broker discuss the trending amenities most popular in the Miami market.

Between the endless summer weather, idyllic ocean vistas, and posh hot spots brimming with visiting and local glitterati, Miami offers a plethora of luxuries to the potential homeowner. But when you couple the city's enviable environment with its condos' extravagant amenities, from rooftop terraces to private restaurants and backyard boat docks—resortlike features that even A-list celebrities would covet—it becomes difficult to resist the Magic City's allure.

Jeff Spear, president of the South Florida real estate investment and development firm The Spear Group, and Eddy Martinez, CEO and leading broker at the Miami real estate agency Worldwide Properties, are certainly in tune with the particulars that buyers desire. Spear, whose latest North Beach development, Iris on the Bay (1111 Lincoln Road, Ste. 805, Miami Beach, 786-693-9669), provides ultra-trendy turnkey four-story townhomes, and Martinez, who sells grand properties like the luxe condos of the South of Fifth development Continuum South Beach (50 South Pointe Dr., Miami Beach), discuss the latest lust-worthy attributes causing buyers to beg, "Where do I sign?"

Eddy Martinez: Every buyer has a personality that defines them. There are buyers who want to feel like they're in a resort, something like Continuum that has two and a half acres of land, which is unprecedented for South Beach. On the tip of the water you have the beach, a private beach club, private tennis clubs, restaurants, so that's like a whole other world. At Iris on the Bay, there's a boat dock—Miami is all about water. Then you're going to have buyers who really like a boutique project and more intimate living. You come into your garage, you're private—there's no lobbies to deal with, and no doormen. You can go upstairs and have a rooftop barbecue and you don't have to reserve it with the HOA.

Jeff Spear: One of the most important amenities for any real estate development is the location. What's very special about Iris is that you're only a few blocks from the beach. They've got dog beaches and parks. You're on the water—we've got boat slips. You can get into kayaking, paddleboarding, rowing—there are no fixed bridges, so boating becomes an easier amenity as well.

EM: That's what Miami is all about—we have amazing beaches, and the restaurant scene has exploded. The Continuum has one of the top concierges in the entire South Beach area; he's really well connected with the best restaurants in town, and he gets the best tables for the residents. We also do events at every opening of a new restaurant, where the restaurants do a little party just for the residents of Continuum before they open. That's always been a big hit, too.

JS: Beilinson Gomez Architects designed a very contemporary, modernistic design for [Iris]. We have tremendous movement in the architecture. We have four floors and private elevators, which really makes it very functional and usable. The elevators can be used to transport your groceries and suitcases—it's a very useful amenity in the house that makes it very livable.

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EM: Architecture really has a big impact. I think it's a form of an amenity because it enhances your lifestyle. The modern design has a very big following. A lot of buyers love the contemporary or modern look; they're not so much into the Mediterranean [style]—of course, you have families that love that. What flies off the shelf is the modern design, and I think that's because of the younger people coming into the market. It's very trendy and very sexy.

JS: We really wanted to have some green features, too. We have tankless hot water heaters and natural gas piped into all the units. We also have a roof terrace that really becomes your yard. You can add optional summer kitchens on the roof, and you can have an under-counter refrigerator; you'd have a sink and a barbecue right on the terrace with an amazing view. And in Miami, you can use it all year round, not just in the summer.

EM: Miami has always been regarded as a paradise, which is why we're one of the top destinations in the country. At the end of the day, everybody wants to have a boat, open your back sliding door on your yacht, and there you go. That's easy living.