

The Boston Globe

A battle of amenities: Boston luxury towers compete on who can offer the most extravagant perks

By [Beth Teitell](#) Globe Staff, Updated March 10, 2025, 8:46 a.m.



Matt Milley swims in the 75-foot indoor lap pool in The Millennium Residences at Winthrop Center, a luxury condo complex in Boston. BRETT PHELPS FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

It was frigid out, and so icy that all over town [pedestrians were tumbling](#). But on the 35th floor of the Millennium Residences at Winthrop Center, life felt as easy as a summer afternoon, and Richard Baumert was marveling at the lap pool: 75 feet long, surrounded by floor-to-ceiling windows, its water a bewitching shade of . . . let's call it *concierge blue*.

“You’re doing laps in the sky!” exclaimed Baumert, the managing partner of Millennium Partners. He sounded as awed as a child — and as strategic as a developer positioning his building against rival luxury buildings. “This is a huge draw for people.”

Down on earth, where [rents have grown punishing](#) and some [Bostonians are being pushed from their homes](#), [affordable housing has become a central issue](#) in the mayoral campaign.

But in the sky — the city’s new status neighborhood — the fight is not over meeting the basic needs of life, but over lifestyle. It’s a war of amenities. On beast mode.



Club VIP is a pet day care and wellness spa in The Millennium Residences at Winthrop Center. BRETT PHELPS FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

In a world where two-bedroom condos routinely go for \$2 million plus, monthly homeowners associations costs can run you \$2,000 or more, and penthouses sell for tens of millions of dollars, buildings are no longer just buildings. In the words of [Ricardo Rodriguez](#), a Coldwell Banker luxury real estate agent, they’re “vertical country clubs.”

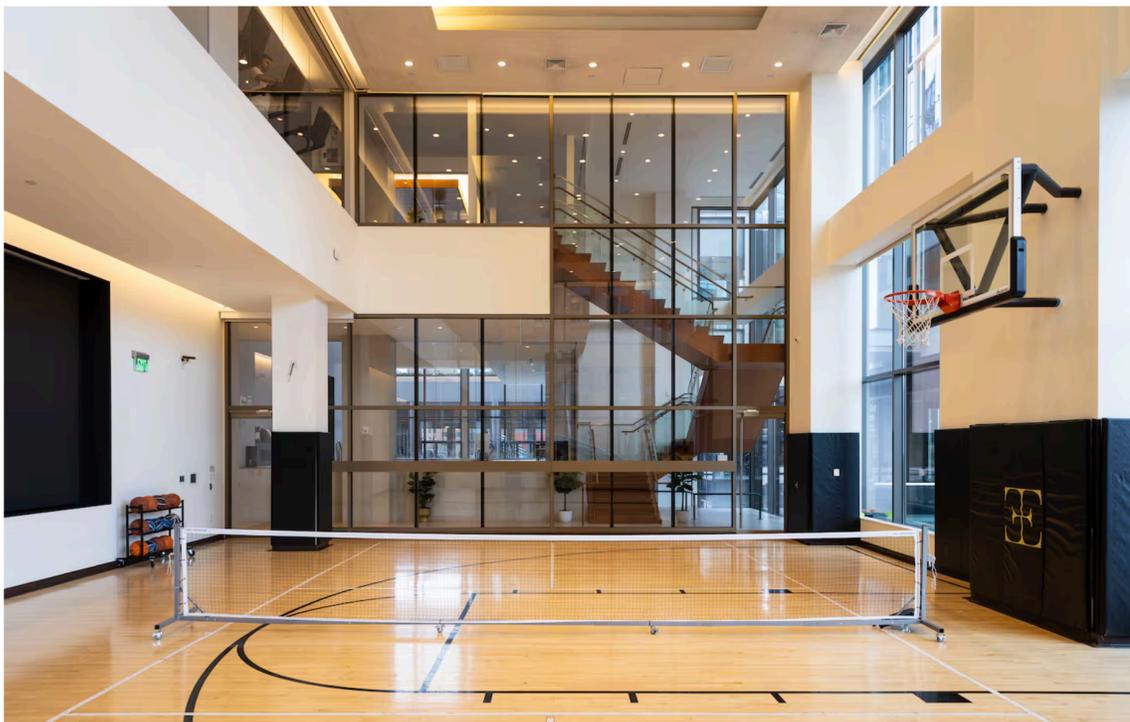
There are resident-only restaurants run by fancy chefs. Golf simulators that come with a wet bar. Children’s playrooms that are so perfectly staged no children should be allowed. Decks landscaped to evoke the Mediterranean, screening rooms for private movie nights, IV drips, “Succession”-worthy work spaces, fitness centers with locker rooms more lavish than many homes. Places just for stretching. Service so gracious it spoils you for interactions with members of your own family.



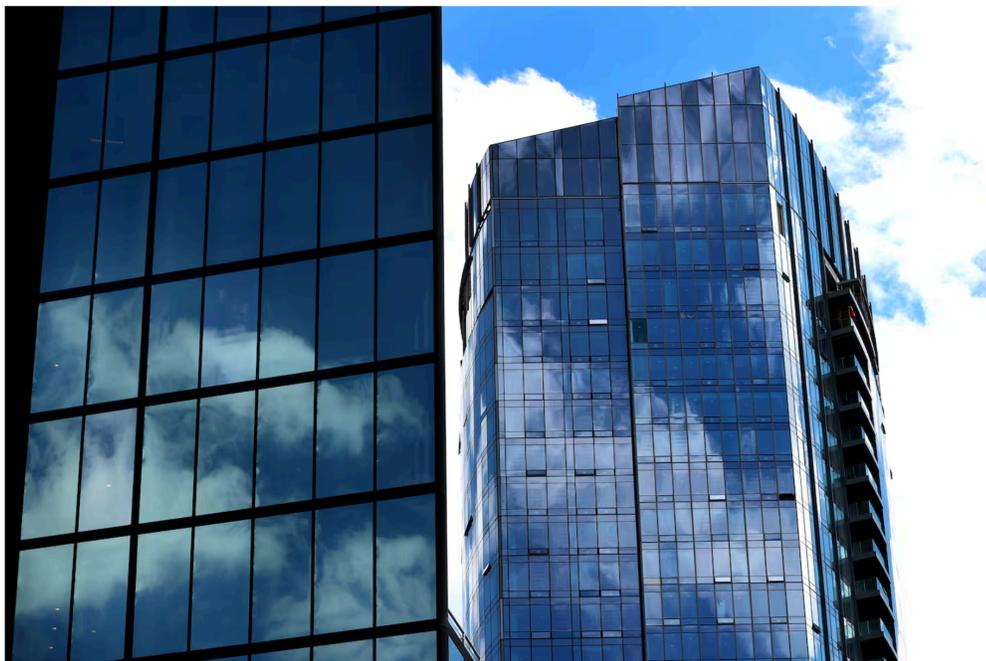
The golf simulation room is part of The Collective business club in The Millennium Residences at Winthrop Center. BRETT PHELPS FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

At The Four Seasons One Dalton, not only is the driveway covered, the sidewalks are heated. EchelonSeaport has three pools, one with a waterfall and cabanas; and a basketball court that converts into a pickleball court. At Raffles Boston Residences, there are butlers and perhaps something even better — a framing for your life that sounds like it was written by [Don Draper](#) himself.

“Home,” [the website reads](#). “It is here that we return time and again, after all our voyages of discovery. It is the beginning and end of every journey, a feeling we carry in our hearts, a memory that calls us back.”



The basketball court and gym at Echelon Seaport. BRETT PHELPS FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE



The Raffles hotel in the Back Bay at 40 Trinity Place, Boston. DAVID L. RYAN/GLOBE STAFF

There, in addition to glorious outdoor spaces for humans — including a pool and an open-air ninth-floor “front porch” with rocking chairs — there’s outside space for dogs, too. To run, and also to relieve themselves.

“Some buildings make them go indoors,” said Simona LaPosta, a real estate agent with Advisors Living, who was showing a reporter around. She allowed herself a quick wince, perhaps at the thought of the odor or maybe to drive home a selling point.

Many of the city’s luxury towers have been built in areas that lack the charm of Back Bay or Beacon Hill, but who cares! There’s no need to ever leave (except to fly to your other homes).



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As David Bates, a real estate agent with William Raveis, wrote in his [lively newsletter](#): “Bostonians once flaunted their social position by living in historic buildings with premier addresses. Today, however, the city’s wealthiest residents can flex their status by owning high-floor residences in Boston’s new residential skyscrapers.”

Indeed, the city's newest luxury tower, the [Ritz-Carlton Residences, Boston, South Station Tower](#), is over a train station.

But no matter. "Life Above the Clouds" is how the location is positioned on the website. "Beginning at an elevation of more than 450 feet" the residences "comprise a collection of extraordinary private homes and amenities in the sky."



The kitchen, dining, and living area at the Millennium Residences at Winthrop Center. DAVID L. RYAN/GLOBE STAFF

If we were in New York City, nicknaming convention would practically demand we call this new neighborhood "BoSky."

Just a generation ago, Boston was a town where even doormen weren't that common. But in the summer of 2000, the game changed, according to a 2023 [Globe Spotlight report](#) on Boston's housing crisis and the luxury tower building boom. That's when the Trinity Place condo building opened in Copley Square, with a *then*-astounding claim: that life there would bring a "Total Fulfillment of Needs." Since then, more than 50 sizable developments featuring multimillion-dollar condos — both new construction and renovations — have opened in Boston.

And by now, woe to the building that doesn't offer at least a dog-washing station, indoors though it may be.



The game room in The Millennium Residences at Winthrop Center. BRETT PHELPS FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

In late February, Bates, the real estate agent, did a keyword search for amenities in the 763 condos on the Boston market. The goal was to see what's become a must-have — even in nonluxury buildings.

“*Concierge*,” he said, reading out a keyword. “There are 224, even some in East Boston. One hundred and forty-one [listings] have a *pool*. *Decks*, that's 268. *Valet*, there are 95. Forty-nine have some kind of *sports simulator*.”



The library lounge at Echelon Seaport. BRETT PHELPS FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

“[The Archer Residences](#) joined two historically significant buildings to create the first fully amenitized, full-service luxury condominium in Beacon Hill,” reads the website for the seven-story project on Temple Street.

Alas, even in BoSky, sometimes there must be a nod to reality. As the website for Ritz-Carlton Residences over South Station tries to boast, the location provides “. . . immediate vehicular access to I-90, I-93 and the Ted Williams Tunnel.”

There's one nightmare no amount of amenitization can buy you out of: Boston drivers.

Choose a lane, buddy!



The lounge in The Millennium Residences at Winthrop Center. BRETT PHELPS FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE