

IN THE REGION/New Jersey

I'll Take It! (and the Sofa, Too)

By ANTOINETTE MARTIN

THE way homes for sale are being dressed up, or "staged," these days can provoke an overwhelming love-at-first-sight, I-want-it, I-want-it-all kind of fervor in certain buyers, real estate sales agents are noticing.

"Some now demand the 'whole package' — including the decorating," said Paul T. Csik, senior vice president of American Properties Realty, which is marketing 34 ultra-high-end condominiums at its Bellaire development, under construction in Demarest.

Two model units at the complex, where asking prices are \$1.895 million to \$2.995 million, are being shown fully furnished in French Provincial style — complete with lush silk draperies and wood folding screens — and buying everything is an option, price negotiable.

"The idea of buying a home fully furnished is starting to appeal more to buyers," Mr. Csik said, "especially buyers of this caliber." He said those in the market for a luxurious condo were often making a "lifestyle decision" rather than a financial one, and noted that interior design could facilitate changing the way one lives.

At the Peninsula at City Place, a condo conversion project in Edgewater, a would-be buyer can tour three model apartments done in "Atlantic," "Pacific" or "Nordic" style, and select a specific look — buying all or part of the furnishings that go into it.

"This is something new in the business," said Farnaz Mansuri, president of De-Spec Inc., a Manhattan-based design company that created the looks for the Peninsula condos. "We are basically creating a collection of items and employing the apartments as a showroom in which buyers can touch and feel and make their personal decisions."

Sales have been under way for only three months at the 201-unit Peninsula, and so far no one has taken the option of buying a condo furnished exactly as shown in the model. But many have made their way online to the De-Spec Web site (de-spec.com/store.html) to browse or place an order.

"So far," Ms. Mansuri said, "people are buying individual pieces, especially the bigger pieces, like sofas, dining tables and shelving."



ACCESSORIZING

An array of accessories used at the 201-unit Peninsula at City Place in Edgewater and sold on the Web site of De-Spec Inc., a design company.

She added that inquiries about the furnishings began instantly when the models opened in February, even before the Web site was ready to handle orders, and she estimated that about 600 phone calls had come in.

Those who tour the one-, two- and three-bedroom condos, which are priced from \$400,000 to \$800,000, are given a small informational brochure with pictures and prices for individual pieces of furniture and accessories, Ms. Mansuri said.

A hanging lamp that looks like a spotlight on a frozen steel cord is \$366. Bookshelves in walnut, cherry or oak — the same hardwoods are of-

Some buyers are drawn to furnishings in model units.

fered as flooring — are priced at \$1,200. An off-white linen-covered sofa is \$3,500, and a small Eames-style coffee table costs \$838, but a "satellite" fruit bowl can be had for only \$44.

Every room in the models is furnished, down to the toys in the children's rooms, which are also for sale.

The Peninsula complex itself has been given a \$100 million upgrade by Savanna Partners. It consists of three Hudson riverbank structures built four years ago as rentals next to the City Place retail center.

Several other new developments are selling furnished homes — but

only the models, and sometimes only because someone asks.

The fully furnished model home at Cedar Hollow Estates, a community of 11 attached town homes in Wall, was bought lock, stock and barrel by someone smitten with its subdued earth tones and gilt accents.

Meanwhile, at the Adams Square development in Hoboken, the furnished model unit has been sold three times. The furnishings are not for sale, but whichever unit holds them sells right away, said Mitchell Rechler, a principal of R Squared Real Estate Partners, the developer.

The furnished model at Christopher Court in Montclair, a development of 12 single-family homes, is on the market with the furnishings included in the price (\$1.495 million).

At several other upscale town house developments, including RoseVallé, now being built by Sterling Properties in Chatham Township, fully outfitted home entertainment centers are being offered as options. RoseVallé buyers can also choose to have the basement finished with a home theater that has six seats on a graded incline, panoramic sound, a front projector and a wet bar area as well as a card-game table and a billiard table. Home prices at RoseVallé are \$1.235 million to \$1.625 million.

Sterling's Viera at Hanover Township, a community of 40 town homes for residents 55 and older, also offers a choice between a partly finished basement and a home theater package. Prices for the town homes at Viera start in the \$600,000s.

At three Tarragon Development communities — Trio in Palisades Park, One Hudson Park in Edgewa-

ter and 1100 Adams Street in Hoboken — condo buyers are being offered packages that include amenities like basic lighting control systems and integrated home theaters.

They can opt for motorized window shading systems with push-button wall switch controls and an Internet interface to control shades from a computer or personal digital assistant. A digital audio system package, which includes an iPod dock, high-quality in-wall speakers and a satellite radio tuner, is also available.

Tarragon's audio package is \$3,331; its lighting package starts at \$3,536.50; its basic window-shade system starts at \$10,274. A total package including all three options starts at \$17,080.

Ms. Mansuri of De-Spec said the light fixtures being featured at the Peninsula were proving very popular.

"I think that's the one way you can really tell if a home is professionally decorated or not," she said, "the lighting."

The Pacific design, which includes Asian-inspired touches, features a wall-mounted drop light with a Japanese-lantern-shaped shade. It costs \$374.

In the Atlantic apartment, six modern lamps are on display: a mushroom-shaped white table lamp (\$644.50); a big globe-shaped floor lamp (\$316.50); a light-bulb-shaped floor lamp (\$133.50); a silver wall-mounted task lamp (\$308.50); a black metal floor lamp with a green reflector (\$331); and a set of "moon rock" lamps 7 to 18 inches in diameter (\$161).