

COTTAGES & GARDENS

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Brokers Agree That This Staging Secret Helps Move a Property Quickly



Photographs by Evan Joseph

Does an apartment designed by a well-known decorator sell faster—even if it will be delivered unfurnished to a new owner? Sometimes a big name can make all the difference. “The more famous the decorator, the wider the buyer pool,” says Patrick Lilly, a Core broker whose current listings include the Celerie Kemble–designed condo of *Fox News* anchor Melissa Francis. “About a third of the people who have come to see the home know Celerie personally. The connection between a top designer and the listing’s demographic is key to reinforcing the lifestyle aspirations of buyers.” Located on the Upper East Side, the 4,000-square-foot four-bedroom is asking \$6.69 million.

A well-known name “gives a property a competitive edge,” agrees Core broker Heather McDonough, who is currently marketing a \$4.2 million, 2,110-square-foot two-bedroom residence at 311 West Broadway with interiors by Thom Filicia. “If the decor keeps a listing top of mind for the buyer or causes a broker to notice it, that can really set it apart. And some people looking for a turnkey home will often offer to buy the furnishings.” A beautifully staged scene can be especially important when selling prewar properties, such as the \$44 million restored 19th-century townhouse at 11 East 82nd Street, where designer

Steven Gambrel's signature mix of vintage, antique, and custom furnishings allows buyers to envision what a modern spin on historic can look like.

Pedigreed architects factor into the equation, too. Consider the cachet associated with the \$10.9 million, 4,700-square-foot five-bedroom home at 4 East 62nd Street, renovated by Maya Lin. "She is so well respected that the moment her name is mentioned, you can see people's eyes light up," says Corcoran's Marie Schmon, who shares the listing with Sotheby's Olivia Hoge. "Famous designers add luster to the narrative and generate attention with the clients you want to reach."