

# GOTHAM

## All About Robert A.M. Stern's 20 East End Ave.

By C.J. Hughes | August 19, 2015 | [Home & Real Estate](#)

Can [Robert A.M. Stern's 20 East End Avenue](#) revitalize a neighborhood once favored by the city's elite?



The grand entrance foyer at Robert A.M. Stern's 20 East End Avenue, a building that will have 43 condos on 18 floors.

East End Avenue, tucked along the East River and just 11 blocks long, is an edge-of-the-map speck that was once a magnet for the city's movers and shakers, although it's hardly a place you'd go to be part of a scene now. In 1931 Vincent Astor, scion of one of the city's earliest fortunes, helped build the street's poshest co-op, 120 East End Avenue, which attracted top society figures of the day like Thomas Hitchcock Jr., as well as Metropolitan opera stars, fashion designers, and financiers.

But a buzzy new building by Robert A.M. Stern—an architect known for high-rises in high-profile places like 15 Central Park West and the soon-to-open 30 Park Place—may help put East End front and center again, a prospect that fans of grand legacy style like Stern are thrilled to see. Known by its address, 20 East End Avenue, the 18-story, 43-unit condo at East 80th Street, from Corigin Real Estate Group, will have a sturdy and ageless look, with limestone and brick walls and generous windows. And if it looks different from most condos today, that's by design.



A library at 20 East End Avenue. Apartment interior finishes were also selected by Robert Stern.

"Many buildings today are enclosed in glass with strange shapes and are like alien forms in the city," Stern says. "I'm not saying we shouldn't have them, but I'm not comfortable with them myself." While 20 East End may resemble its prewar neighbors, stylish interior touches—and a wealth of well-appointed amenity spaces—set the condo apart. Each of the apartments, which range from 2,000-square-foot two-bedrooms to 6,000-square-foot five-bedrooms, was designed by Stern, from baseboard moldings and cabinet pulls to backsplashes over stoves, including some custom-made finishes. That's unusual leeway for any architect, even a starchitect, say brokers and developers.

"We wanted complete harmony between the interior and exterior," says Edward Baquero, the president of Corigin, whose past condos have included 30 Crosby Street, a metal-shuttered converted corset factory in Soho, and the much glossier new-construction Element, on West 59th Street in Lincoln Square. "And it was hard to find somebody who was good at both."

In addition to the apartments, which were 45 percent sold in July after six months of marketing at an average of \$2,900 a square foot, Stern also lent his hand to common areas, like an unusual eight-sided lobby. Pick one door and enter a comfortable sitting area; another door reveals a staircase that spirals up to a library with silk carpets, beamed ceilings, and a fireplace. Adjacent to it is a pool room with walnut-paneled lockers in which to stash goodies for parties. Meanwhile in the basement, a wine cellar boasts a dining table.



The building was designed to resemble its prewar neighbors on East End Avenue. Apartments range from two- to five-bedrooms.

"If you had a 20-room apartment, you would probably have these kinds of spaces in your home," Baquero says, referencing the megasize apartments that were typical of Astor's set during the interwar years. But since 20 East End's units are smallish compared to those sprawling residences and others now going up across town—but by no means tiny—Baquero had to put certain amenities in external areas. Also, 20 East End will feature a motor court, a fancy version of a driveway entered through a tall Dakota-like arch, where families returning from Litchfield or the Hamptons can unload their luggage. To keep it elegant, there won't be any streetlevel storefronts, which gave the building room for that court, according to the firm.

While East End is hardly a hipster destination, Baquero hopes to introduce New Yorkers to an area they have long overlooked, one close to top schools (Chapin is at 100 East End; the Brearley School is nearby on 83rd Street) and with proximity to roads that lead to weekend retreats.

Another bonus: the nearby Carl Schurz Park, which resembles a scaled-down Central Park, with rock outcrops and colorful beds but far fewer people. And the park's charms can be powerful, notes Stephen Dartley (575 Madison Ave., 212-350-2283), an associate broker with [Douglas Elliman](#) who sells at other properties on East End. "This location has a lot of loyalty," he says. "The people who love it, they don't want to leave." *Corcoran Sunshine Marketing Group, 20 East End Avenue Sales Gallery, 744 Madison Ave., 4th Fl., 212-396-2020*