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Branded Residences Are Everywhere: What You Need to Know Before You Buy

How to vet before you invest, from the construction history to the developer's expertise and additional fees

By: Michael Kaminer
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The Ritz-Carlton Residences in Sunny Isle Beach, Florida
JEFFREY GREENBERG/UNIVERSAL IMAGES GROUP

Whether you're a fan of fashion, furniture, food or fast cars, there's now a branded residence for you, with more on the way.

According to a report this year from Graham Associates, a London marketing firm that specializes in branded residences, more than 250 brands are now in the space, up from 190 last year. Among them: New York's Major Food Group; Missoni; Mercedes Benz; and high-end Italian luxury furniture maker B&B Italia.

"People are just queuing up for these things, and when the stars align, there is nothing to stop these projects from selling faster than non-branded projects," said Chris

Graham, managing director of Graham Associates. "But the true measure will be resale performance, and metrics that will only become clear over time."

Learn the Basics Before Buying

With that in mind, buyers—many of whom are foreign investors who purchase units sight unseen—need to ask what's behind the curtain, said Maile Aguila, an agent at the Agency in Miami who has sold homes in several branded residential projects. "What's the track record of the development team? What are the construction warranties? And what is the brand's contractual role? The long-term brand and operating agreements should be disclosed," she said.

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On the financial side, "do the numbers make sense with the reserve funds and monthly fees? Think about whether the numbers seem real," Aguila said. "Developers sometimes want to keep fees low so they don't scare off first-time buyers. But higher fees actually mean your resale will be stronger," because the project will be better maintained, she said. "I would rather be told the truth of what it will really take to run the building."

Likewise, buyers need to start asking more pointed questions about details from finishes to financials, said Reginald Bouzy, a longtime realtor who this year launched Le Comble, a marketing platform for branded residences.

"For the building, what materials and systems are going in, including the structure, soundproofing and windows? On the legal side, what's in the offering documents and HOA [homeowners' association] rules? When does control pass to owners?" he said.

Even project locations should get more scrutiny, Bouzy said. "What's planned nearby, and how does pricing compare to recent sales? The clearest warning signs about a project trace back to the developer, not the brand."

Get the Building's Backstory

Some buyers may not know that a beloved brand has no role in the project's execution, Graham said.

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"The candid truth is that construction companies are selected by developers. The brand has little to do with it," he said. "About 99% of the time, the project's done properly. But with the sheer number of projects going up, buyers should do their due diligence."

In 2015, there were just 323 branded residential developments worldwide, according to a February 2026 report from Savills; by 2032, there will be 1,747 such projects, the firm estimated. Miami, New York and Dubai have seen the densest development of branded residences, according to Savills, along with coastal destinations like Phuket, Thailand; Comporta, Portugal; and Mexico's Los Cabos.

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"A beautiful building is only one part of the equation. The design also needs to enable seamless service, efficient property management and a highly personalized living experience," said Chris Meredith, group head of residential at Four Seasons. Pictures is the company's Puerto Rico development.
FOUR SEASONS PRIVATE RESIDENCES PUERTO RICO

Among hotel brands in 2026, Four Seasons operates the largest number of completed branded residences worldwide, according to Savills, followed by Ritz-Carlton, St. Regis and W. Among non-hospitality brands, the leaders in residential projects were Yoo Inspired by Starck, Trump, Greg Norman and Versace.

"Our standards touch virtually every aspect of the residential experience, from the design and functionality of the homes and amenities to the spaces required for our teams to operate effectively behind the scenes," said Chris Meredith, group head of residential at Four Seasons.

"From the earliest stages of a project, we work closely with our development partners, architects and designers to consider not only how a property will look, but how it will function once residents move in," Meredith said. "A beautiful building is only one part of the equation. The design also needs to enable seamless service, efficient property management and a highly personalized living experience."

While most branded residences become success stories, there have been some missteps. Alleged construction defects at Miami's Aston-Martin Residences, where units have listed as high as $75 million, led owners to file high-profile lawsuits this year against the project's development team and contractors, who have denied the charges. A spokesperson told Realtor.com that the building upheld "premium standards of design and construction."

Developers who work with brands take that responsibility seriously, said Michael Patrizio, managing director and head of condominium at Mast Capital, whose projects include the Banyan Tree Residences West Palm Beach and the Cipriani Residences Miami.

"The brand is the magic sauce and the cherry on the cake, but we spend a lot of time ensuring that whatever we've designed and presented is actually something the labor force in South Florida can deliver," he said. "We pride ourselves on attention to detail, whether it's the construction concrete pour or the order of light switches."

Hospitality Brands Do It Well

For some observers, hospitality brands offer a layer of security for long-term investments. There is "a hierarchy of brands in the residential space," said Aguile of the Agency. "Hospitality brands take care of protecting their brands. They're picky about how a property is managed. And they have long-term goals."

Hospitality brands, in fact, gave birth to the category; New York's Sherry-Netherland Hotel, opened in 1927, is widely considered the first branded residence. "The space started with hospitality brands, and there was a reason for that," said Henry Collins, associate director of global residential real estate at Savills in London. "The sector has burst out of that, but not all brands are equal, and they don't bring the same level of care."

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A growing concern is “maintaining quality,” Graham said. “Most non-hospitality brands abdicate those responsibilities to a third-party management company. I know projects in Miami that are now on their third or fourth operator in as many years.”

Ultimately, what makes a branded residence successful is what makes any residential project successful, said Bouzy of Le Comble. “The developer still matters most,” he said. “A strong brand cannot fully compensate for weak construction, thin reserves, or poor post-handover support.”

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