

Taking the Sweet Smell of Success To a New Level of Literalness

By JENNIFER STEINHAUER

WHAT does the lobby of your building smell of? Disinfectant? Wet dog? If you are one of the 11 buyers of the 13 multimillion-dollar apartments in the Loft SoHo, opening at 30 Crosby Street in the fall, expect ylang-ylang and rose oil.

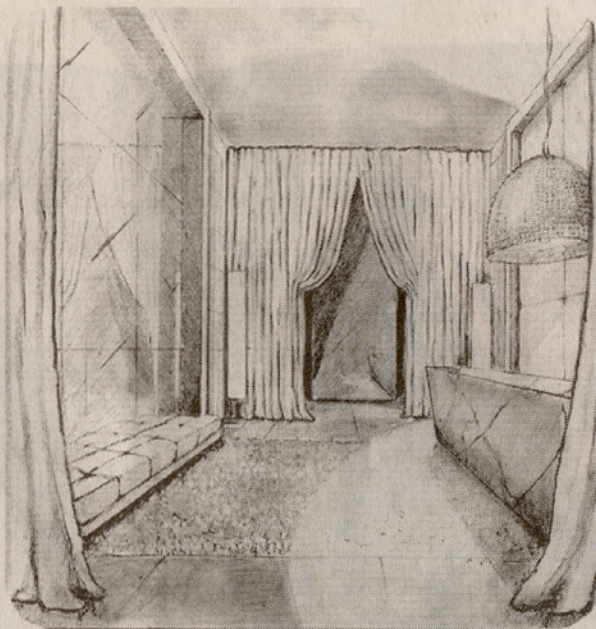
The developers of the luxury property had already planned a wine cellar and wine-tasting room, leather walls, personal garbage systems, which automatically sort the recycling. Then they decided that they really needed a custom lobby scent. No other building in New York has one. Nothing as bourgeois as, say, fig. And nothing as overt as the stuff sprayed by a stealth formation of women in black overcoats on the first floor of Bloomingdale's.

The idea was subtly to affect the mood of Lenny Kravitz, Liv Tyler and the other extremely well heeled residents, who will soon be closing on apartments in the subtly scented building.

"We decided that in the morning, there should be something invigorating," said Edward Baquero, a managing partner of Landmark Development, the building's developer. "A sort of great-day-seize-the-moment kind of scent. And when they come home, it should be more a feeling of serenity. A sense of calmness."

The developer turned to Aveda, the aromatherapy behemoth, to design the scents, which will circulate via the building's duct system, using a technology from England that pumps the essential oils into the air. "It won't be a blast," said Daria Myers, the

Aromatherapy for the rich will energize in the morning and soothe in the evening.



Rendering by Paul Latham

senior vice president for global marketing at Aveda. "It is very subtle. Very ambient. And you will feel that change in moods as you walk through the lobby."

Ms. Myers said that while the Japanese

sometimes waft aromas through the air in office buildings or hospitals, the idea has not taken hold in this country. Consultants from Japan and England, and a herbalist weighed in on the project, as Ms. Myers said, "to determine the organic certification and the functionality" of each essential oil. (This is the company, after all, that trademarked the name Pure-fumes to describe its organic essential oils.)

Aveda executives did not want to reveal their special concoctions for the Loft SoHo. In fact, the scents are still being finalized. (Each component, Ms. Myers said, must undergo "mood mapping," which tests its psychological effects.)

But the scent meant to do all the top-of-the-morning work is likely to include a grapefruit note, which is known to be refreshing, as well as peppermint, orange and cinnamon. In the evening, residents will be soothed by lavender (said to be relaxing), ylang-ylang and rose oil, with perhaps a deodorizing hint of lemon. In cold weather, warming scents will be added; in the summer, cool ones. Benjamin Noriega-Ortiz, the Loft's interior designer, will approve each.

"We really go over the top," Mr. Baquero said. In a building where apartments sell for \$2.5 million to \$7.5 million, does this seem in any way surprising?



David Corio for The New York Times

Edward Baquero, left, and Stephen Touhey, the developers of building in SoHo that has exclusive scents for its lobby (drawing