

# A sinking island

*A survey of top listings and biggest price cuts around Manhattan — and how much further they might need to fall*

By SARAH RYLEY

In this volatile market, it is difficult to predict the bottom. But many analysts today agree sales prices have to fall significantly from the market's peak for property to move. Not all markets in Manhattan are the same, so *The Real Deal* commissioned custom data on past sales from PropertyShark.com and on current listings from StreetEasy.com to gauge which markets have already seen a decline, how far

off the current listing prices are from recent quarters and which areas are seeing the most price cuts. Jonathan Miller, president of appraisal firm Miller Samuel; Sofia Kim, vice president of StreetEasy.com; and Beverly Sonnenborn, a vice president of Sotheby's International Realty, also agreed to comment on the price of a sample listing in each market.

## Uptown

Median sales price 2007 Q4: **\$360,000**  
Median sales price 2008 Q4: **\$396,000**  
Median listing price: **\$449,000**  
Number of listings with price cuts: **72 of 227 (32%)**  
Average price cut: **7.27%**

Price assessment of most expensive listing: 203 Cabrini Boulevard. Planned, six-bedroom townhouse in Cloisters section of Hudson Heights, reduced from \$4.8 million to \$2.95 million. Kim said, at \$950 per square foot, "This seems to be overpriced ... A more realistic price would be around \$2.2 million based on recent comparable sales."

## Upper West Side

Median sales price 2007 Q4: **\$950,000**  
Median sales price 2008 Q4: **\$852,500**  
Median listing price: **\$1.195M**  
Number of listings with price cuts: **736 of 1,507 (48%)**  
Average price cut: **7.6%**

Price assessment of most expensive listing: 25 Columbus Circle. Full-floor penthouse atop Time Warner Center, city's most expensive apartment at \$65 million, but brokerage spokeswoman said there's another "quiet listing" in the building for \$80 million. Kim said, "Based on recent closings from last quarter, the average price per square foot in this building is \$5,300 per square foot. While this is a penthouse unit, \$7,800 per square foot seems overpriced in this current market. This unit will see increased activity at \$55 million."

## Midtown West

Median sales price 2007 Q4: **\$745,000**  
Median sales price 2008 Q4: **\$1.006M**  
Median listing price: **\$1.115M**  
Number of listings with price cuts: **185 of 581 (32%)**  
Average price cut: **11.5%**

Price assessment of most expensive listing: 146 West 57th Street. Five-bedroom, four-bathroom condo on the 76th floor listed for \$15 million. Kim said the price should be \$10 million. "This unit is on a very high floor and the views are spectacular, but this is a two-unit listing that has yet to be combined," and it's nearly double the average price per square foot of similar comps in the building and surrounding area.

## Chelsea

Median sales price 2007 Q4: **\$927,754**  
Median sales price 2008 Q4: **\$1.150M**  
Median listing price: **\$1.499M**  
Number of listings with price cuts: **246 of 590 (42%)**  
Average price cut: **7.8%**

Price assessment of most expensive listing: 166 West 18th Street. Penthouse with eight bedrooms, nine bathrooms at the Yves Chelsea listed at \$16.49 million in May. Miller said, "Since the property did not sell over the five months prior to the fall market correction, it may have been as much as 10 percent above market conditions at the point since properly priced properties were selling within four months at that time ... Using the overall market adjustment, the list price would need to be adjusted at least 30 percent to approach levels in the current market."

## West Village/Greenwich Village

Median sales price 2007 Q4: **\$861,000**  
Median sales price 2008 Q4: **\$807,500**  
Median listing price: **\$1.4M**  
Number of listings with price cuts: **251 of 529 (47%)**  
Average price cut: **8.61%**

Price assessment of most expensive listing: 360 West 11th Street. Combined penthouse and duplex for a total of 20 rooms at the Palazzo Chupi, built by the artist Julian Schnabel, for \$41 million. Kim said, "Although the Palazzo Chupi is a unique residence, it is overpriced at \$5,500 per square foot. The eclectic finishes and overall design would not appeal to most people. This listing would see increased interest at \$26 million."

## Soho/Tribeca

Median sales price 2007 Q4: **\$1.875M**  
Median sales price 2008 Q4: **\$2.716M**  
Median listing price: **\$2.95M**  
Number of listings with price cuts: **206 of 574 (36%)**  
Average price cut: **9.42%**

Price assessment of most expensive listing: 240 Centre Street. A trophy apartment in the former gymnasium of the renovated Beaux Arts police headquarters featuring a stunning domed great room with 25-foot ceilings for \$30 million. Miller said, "This is one of my favorite Downtown buildings because of the architecture. This is a unique space and not comparable to most of the apartments in the building, especially those on the market. The property has been on the market nine months at the same price. In the market last year, if a property did not sell in four months, it was likely at least 10 percent overpriced. Add another 20 percent on average for the market drop in the fall."

## Harlem

Median sales price 2007 Q4: **\$499,999**  
Median sales price 2008 Q4: **\$496,500**  
Median listing price: **\$725,000**  
Number of listings with price cuts: **304 of 715 (42%)**  
Average price cut: **10.18%**

Price assessment of most expensive listing: 1200 Fifth Avenue. New, 4,215-square-foot penthouse in a prewar renovation across from Central Park for \$14.5 million. Miller said, "This property has been on the market for approximately three years during an especially active period for high-end properties. With the marketing time of the luxury segment averaging 169 days in the most recent quarter, this property would appear to be priced significantly above current market levels."

## Upper East Side

Median sales price 2007 Q4: **\$880,000**  
Median sales price 2008 Q4: **\$975,000**  
Median listing price: **\$1.295M**  
Number of listings with price cuts: **997 of 2,240 (44.5%)**  
Average price cut: **8.31%**

Price assessment of biggest percent price cut: 103 East 84th Street. Studio penthouse in co-op with terrace, reduced from \$375,000 to \$199,000. Kim said, "This would move closer to \$150,000. With the required 50 percent minimum down payment, and the exorbitant maintenance [\$1,476], renting is a more attractive option."

## Midtown East

Median sales price 2007 Q4: **\$970,000**  
Median sales price 2008 Q4: **\$757,225**  
Median listing price: **\$1.195M**  
Number of listings with price cuts: **434 of 931 (47%)**  
Average price cut: **8.15%**

Price assessment of biggest price cut: 12 Beekman Place. Co-op with one bedroom, den and corner terrace, reduced from \$2.385 million last March to \$1.485 million. Sonnenborn said, "It looks like it's well-priced for what it is."

## Murray Hill/Gramercy Park

Median sales price 2007 Q4: **\$847,375**  
Median sales price 2008 Q4: **\$807,000**  
Median listing price: **\$895,000**  
Number of listings with price cuts: **430 of 994 (43%)**  
Average price cut: **9.13%**

Price assessment of most expensive listing: 23 East 22nd Street. Billed as "the ultimate penthouse in the sky," a glass-encased triplex with separate butler's quarters atop One Madison Park, listed December 2007 at \$45 million. Sonnenborn said it's overpriced.

## Lower East Side/East Village

Median sales price 2007 Q4: **\$738,500**  
Median sales price 2008 Q4: **\$612,500**  
Median listing price: **\$875,000**  
Number of listings with price cuts: **160 of 332 (48%)**  
Average price cut: **8.34%**

Price assessment of most expensive listing: 40 Bond Street. A triplex townhouse with a private garden by Pritzker Prize-winning architects Herzog & de Meuron, sold in 2007 for \$7.9 million, re-listed for \$12.2 million, then reduced to \$9.95 million. Sonnenborn said, "The price should be close or at where the [first] buyer bought it."

## Lower Manhattan

Median sales price 2007 Q4: **\$755,000**  
Median sales price 2008 Q4: **\$905,000**  
Median listing price: **\$1.17M**  
Number of listings with price cuts: **163 of 675 (24%)**  
Average price cut: **6.03%**

Price assessment of most expensive listing: 15 Broad Street. Six units combined for 9,500 square feet at Downtown by Philippe Starck, listed in January for \$22.5 million. Miller said it's tough to price this unit because it's one of the largest in the Financial District and came on the market so recently. But, "a 3,200-square-foot duplex closed for \$1,244 per square foot at the end of last year, coupled with the general pattern in the Financial District that larger units do not sell for a premium price per square foot, that's a 47 percent [decrease] to bring it in line with the last sale."

