

GOTHAM

An Insider's Guide to the Upper West Side's Emerging Manhattan Valley

By Mark Ellwood | December 7, 2016 | [Home & Real Estate](#)

Manhattan Valley is entering the scene as Morningside Heights' cooler younger sister.



Surrounded by greenery, Circa Central Park is one of the residential cornerstones of the little known neighborhood Manhattan Valley.

Manhattan Valley is a secret enclave of the Upper West Side. Mention it by name and even seasoned New Yorkers might struggle to find it on a map. Yet this historic neighborhood just south of Morningside Heights rimming Central Park's northwestern reaches has been re-energized by a swathe of new residents.

One newcomer is Sean Rawlinson, whose casual Italian spot, Macchina (2758 Broadway; 212-203-9954), leans heavily on a custom-built wood-fire oven and offers inventive flourishes like a dirty martini swirled with toasted olive juice. Rawlinson is an alum of nearby Columbia—"I went there more years ago than I want to mention," he says—but the buzzy neighborhood prompted his return. "We see the same people four times a week, which is what I wanted," he explains, describing the raw industrial feel of his 60-seat place as "stylistically more downtown." The lure, he explains, is the area's housing stock, which consists largely of roomy two and three-bedroom homes, which are ideal for young families keen to remain in the city.



Arresting views wrap around this living room at One Morningside Park.

Similar to nearby Harlem, some of the area's apartments are carved out from brownstones and townhouses that date back to the earliest maps of the city. Other incomers here have opted for Manhattan Valley's new developments, all expressly configured for that same clientele: There's family-friendly, luxury living at [One Morningside Park](#) (321 W. 110th St., 212-866-3210) or [Circa Central Park](#) (285 W. 110th St., 212-280-0285), which hugs the roundabout at 110th Street and Frederick Douglass Boulevard. The latter, a 38-unit new build, features standard high-end amenities, like a roof terrace and gym. Further south, the Columbus Square complex added more than half a million square feet of retail space, including a much-needed Whole Foods.

To longtime residents like Anthony Kurutz, Manhattan Valley's rebirth is welcome largely because the area's vibe has been preserved. "Certainly there have been some new buildings, some nicer restaurants, but the fabric of the neighborhood is intact, and that's the charm of it to me," he says. Now a full-time coffee roaster, Kurutz opened a café here two years ago: [Plowshares](#) (2730 Broadway; 212-222-0280), with its Chemex pour-over coffeemakers and Nitro cold brew, is a java-nerd mecca and de facto clubhouse.

Another local, 34-year-old Richie Schatz, spent his teenage years living nearby. He and his father, Alan, moved their family business, [Schatzie the Butcher](#) (2665 Broadway; 212-410-1555), here 18 months ago. "In other neighborhoods, you see a block of banks, but here they want small businesses to succeed, and people are more laid-back," Richie explains. They've expanded with an on-site burger joint, where you can pick a slab of meat and have it ground to order and served in less than 10 minutes. A contemporary take on a classic, it's the perfect metaphor, and meal, for Manhattan Valley.

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