

= Murano (skyscraper) =

The Murano is a residential skyscraper in Center City , Philadelphia , Pennsylvania , United States . Part of a condominium boom occurring in the city , the Murano was announced in 2005 and was developed jointly by Thomas Properties Group and P & A Associates . The building , named after Murano , Italy , was completed in 2008 at a cost of US \$ 165 million . The site , previously occupied by a parking lot , was the location of the Erlanger Theatre from 1927 to 1978 .

The blue glass and concrete , 43 @-@ story , 475 feet (145 m) skyscraper was designed by Solomon Cordwell Buenz and Associates . Murano 's condos range between 740 square feet (69 m2) and 2 @,@ 625 square feet (240 m2) and were designed to be loft @-@ like with each featuring a balcony . The building features ground level retail space and an adjacent parking garage . Located in the West Market Street neighborhood of Center City , a neighborhood that first saw residential development in 2002 , the building struggled to fill its units during the late @-@ 2000s recession . In July 2009 the Murano 's owners held a successful auction on forty of the building 's units . Thomas Properties Group lowered the price for the remaining unsold units based on what the forty units went for at the auction .

= = History = =

The Murano was announced in 2005 when Philadelphia , Pennsylvania was experiencing a condominium boom that had begun in the late 1990s ; between 1998 and 2004 more than 70 Center City office and manufacturing buildings had been converted into rental and condominium apartments . The project was jointly developed by Thomas Properties Group of Los Angeles and P & A Associates of Philadelphia . The planned site of the Murano was on West Market Street in Center City , an area which had not had any residential development until 2002 when 2121 Market Street was converted into apartments . Construction began around the end of 2005 .

Built by construction firm Turner Construction Company , the US \$ 165 million Murano was completed in 2008 with residents first moving in on June 18 . The building was completed with seventy percent of its units sold . As of December 31 , 2008 , sales on 111 units had been closed and an additional 14 units were under contract of sale . In 2008 and 2009 the late @-@ 2000s recession hurt the condominium market , with citywide sales declining 64 percent and high @-@ end condo sales declining 24 percent . Analysts believed the Murano was overpriced based on the neighborhood , with potential buyers unwilling to take a chance on the developing West Market Street neighborhood during a recession . In 2009 , Thomas Properties Group was looking to quickly fill up the tower to help pay for condo fees and maintenance costs . On June 27 , Thomas Properties Group auctioned off 40 units in the tower . The 40 units went for between US \$ 335 @,@ 000 and US \$ 796 @,@ 000 , priced at nearly 20 percent less than the units sold before the auction . Thomas Properties Group priced the 137 remaining unsold units according to what similar units went for during the auction .

= = Architecture and features = =

Located at 21st and Market Streets , the 43 @-@ story , 475 feet (145 m) Murano is named after Murano , Italy , a town famous for its glass . Designed by Solomon Cordwell Buenz and Associates , the Murano has 302 condos that include one to three bedroom condos that range from 740 square feet (69 m2) to 2 @,@ 625 square feet (240 m2) . Also included are penthouses that range from 1 @,@ 660 square feet (150 m2) to 2 @,@ 625 square feet (240 m2) . The condominiums are designed to be loft @-@ like and each feature a balcony . The curved facade features floor @-@ to @-@ ceiling blue windows separated at intervals by bands of white concrete . The Murano contains 570 @,@ 000 square feet (53 @,@ 000 m2) including 9 @,@ 000 square feet (840 m2) of ground floor retail space .

Adjacent to the building on 21st Street is a parking garage . The developers planned to put ground level retail in the parking garage but say they were dissuaded by residents who feared the shops

would attract the homeless .

Philadelphia Inquirer architecture critic Inga Saffron praised how the concrete bands break up the glass and " serve as a bridge , linking the Murano visually to its older neighbors " . However , she criticized how the building doesn 't connect physically to its neighbors , such as lack of access to John F. Kennedy Boulevard and lack of shops on the ground floor of the parking garage . Saffron believed shops in the parking garage would have helped create a connection between West Market Street and the Logan Square neighborhood .