

LOS ANGELES CONFIDENTIAL™

EXCLUSIVE

Casey Affleck

BREAKS ON THROUGH
TO THE OTHER SIDE

POWER TRIP WITH

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PLUS! CONTRIBUTORS CANDY SPELLING,
LYNDA RESNICK, ARIANNA HUFFINGTON,
CHRISTINE PETERS AND MORE!

Good Green

Don't listen to maudlin frogs with banjos. It's extremely easy being green. BY MAYRAV SAAR

THANKS TO SAVVY ARCHITECTS who are bringing enviro-friendly designs to the luxury market, green no longer means simple. A quick drive around LA (in your Prius, natch) will reveal high-end homes with compressed-wheat doors and driveways of grass, as well as apartment complexes with edible roofs. And all this comes without having to sacrifice style. Sorry, Kermit.

HOME GREEN HOME

Think an eco-conscious home is a solar-powered mud hut propped up on compost boxes? Take a look at the five-bedroom, five-and-a-half-bath jaw-dropper on 23rd Street in Santa Monica. Developer John Lee and architect Kyle Moss built the "green house" in a staid neighborhood to prove that being environmentally responsible doesn't mean being "weird."

"A lot of people think that if you're going to build green, you're going to give up luxury," says John Hathorn of the real estate team Pence Hathorn Silver, which recently sold the house for \$4.7 million. "But this house looks and feels like any home in the neighborhood." Gaia is in the details: Crushed recycled mirrors are combined with sawdust from granite factories to create countertops that look just like the real thing. The front door is bamboo veneer over compressed wheat. And the driveway is a lush lawn covered with

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special netting that prevents cars from damaging the grass.

The builders are working on two more houses, another in Santa Monica and one in the Pacific Palisades, to offer shelter for earth-conscious types who prefer Christian Louboutin to Birkenstocks.

HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?

When residents of the Flat want a snack, they won't have to go any farther than the roof. The apartment building in downtown LA is expected to open a rooftop garden in January that will be a true oasis in the sky. Because they absorb and filter rainwater and put oxygen back into the atmosphere, green roofs are gaining popularity, but few offer 360-degree panoramic views of downtown LA. And fewer still will supplement the offerings at local restaurants. Blue Velvet, situated on the ground floor of the Garland Street building, will incorporate fruits, vegetables, and herbs from the sky garden in its dishes, as well as in its signature Market Martinis.

"It's just the right thing to do," says Bret P. Mosher, developer and owner of the Flat. "In my later years in life, I plan on looking back on things that I can be truly proud of." To which we add: preferably in a rooftop garden and with a chilled Lemon Marmalade martini in hand.

THE CONDO THAT CARED

How desirable is green living in LA? All 176 units of the 13-story Elleven were sold in April 2006, before the condo complex had even been com-



pleted. The first sustainable high-rise residence in downtown LA, the building is designed to require less energy and to offer the car-adverse real public-transit options, promising a different, healthier way to live Downtown.

The building is so conscientiously crafted that this fall it became the first condo in California to receive LEED Gold certification, the second-highest rating a green building can garner. With units ranging from 770 to 3,100 square feet, Elleven was smart from the start: Builders used about 1,365 tons of construction debris from the city's landfill. Its strategically placed landscaping captures and filters rainwater before it ends up in storm drains.

The South Group, however, isn't content with just one shining green achievement. The company is in the process of opening two other condos, Luma and Evo, that will offer similar earth-friendly features. And two more buildings along South Figueroa will begin construction next year. South Group envisions a greening of the architectural field downtown: wide, pedestrian-friendly sidewalks, drought-resistant landscaping, bike racks, storm-water-filtration planters, and stuff actually worth walking to.

"The big secret's out: People are beginning to realize that if they live in a place where they can leave their car at home, that's a better lifestyle," says Tom Cody, principal of the South Group, which is a collaboration between Gerding Edlen Development and Williams & Dame Development. "That's the paradigm shift going on in Los Angeles. The old American dream of living in Calabasas is no longer the American dream. It's the American myth." ★