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Residential
as a product

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5.11 DESIGN FOR THE SUPER-RICH: DEVELOPER TRENDS

1 KITCHENS

Concealed kitchens are a focus for the discerning buyer, says Mayfair-based developer Luxlo.

The kitchen at its £19m Fountain House penthouse in Mayfair has been fitted with sliding doors that conceal all shelving and appliances. There is also a retractable cover over the sink unit and built-in grill/teppanyaki plate, which serves as an additional worktop (pictured top, opposite).

Amit Chadha, managing director of Luxlo, explains: "As prices per square foot continue to rise, the role of the kitchen is changing from a purely functional area, to one that is designed to be used as an additional entertaining space, where all appliances are concealed.

"Starting with integrated appliances, this trend has now developed to allow for all of the kitchen units, sinks and even hotplates to be hidden away."

The kitchen of Fountain House, which has panoramic views across Hyde Park, has been designed to enable it to be either a part of the main reception area, or separated via electronic double doors. Once inside the kitchen, everything from the top-of-the-range appliances through to the kitchen sink is cleverly concealed behind floor-to-ceiling bespoke Tsunami cabinetry.

"Even the central island has an electronic marble surface that, when closed, enables the unit to be used as an extra surface for a drinks party," says Chadha.

2 FULLY SERVICED APARTMENTS

"The demand for fully serviced apartments in London is increasing," says Nick Candy, co-founder of Candy & Candy.

"One Hyde Park was the first residential development in London to offer its residents full hotel-based services through its partnership with the Mandarin Oriental Hotel. Other parts of the world do this level of service really well but London is yet to catch up.

"Many of Candy & Candy's private clients see and experience some of the best design and

technology features in the world in their everyday lives, so the requirement to remain at the forefront of cutting-edge design is therefore essential to our business. Clients today are demanding sophisticated yet functional design features in their homes, from plasma TVs that are concealed behind art and mirrors, to dressing rooms with 'intelligent' mirrors that tell you what the weather is going to be like that day," he adds.

3 SUSTAINABILITY

Oliver Burns, a small developer-designer with a focus on what it describes as "thoughtful luxury" and sustainability, believes those buying London's best homes are now demanding greener homes.

Joe Burns, co-founder of the development and design firm, says: "There has been a real shift in consumer perceptions towards the environment, especially where the younger buyer group is concerned.

"The challenge is that ethically sourced and environmentally friendly products are still in low supply and therefore difficult to specify. There are some beautiful products out there for luxury developers, however."

Wall coverings made from ecological materials are one feature making an impact in sustainable design at present. At one of its apartments in the Walpole Mayfair scheme on Arlington Street – where one penthouse is being marketed at £18m, or £4,000/sq ft – the developer used a mother-of-pearl wallpaper made from ethically sourced Capiz shells.

4 'DRESS-TO-SELL' SHOW APARTMENTS

"Turnkey" apartments have become popular in top-end schemes, whereby prime buyers view a unit fitted out, rather than as a shell. Developers are therefore increasingly creating a succession of show flats and selling them off, one by one.

This was a strong theme at One Hyde Park.

Candy explains: "In addition to designing all communal spaces in the building and the base build