

BETTER LUXE NEXT TIME

Planning to update one of your homes? Here's what you need to know, says *Katrina Burroughs*



KITCHEN

You need a **show pantry**. In a kitchen by Jamie Blake, of Blakes London, one client commissioned a pantry lined in Paonazzo marble, in a fully glazed enclosure, with brass fittings, that incorporated a coffee station with a plumbed-in La Marzocco machine and milk-jug rinser. "It's the first pantry we've done that sits in the kitchen and is visible from all parts of the room," Blake says. Juggernaut American fridges are falling from favour. "People eat out more, and get online delivery, food boxes or Deliveroo, so store less food at home," Blake says. "Tall fridge units and wall units are being replaced with shelves for art and objects. Fridges are being replaced by smaller, more discreet **drawer chillers**."

Kitchen designers, including Martin Moore, Eggersmann Design and Tom Howley, report the rise of the **twin island**. "Having two islands makes sense because it allows for more appliances — the wine cooler, steam oven and vacuum pack drawer — and it breaks up the space to make zones in the kitchen," Howley says.

Marble surfaces are on the wane. The luxury kitchen guru Charlie Smallbone has set up a new company, Ledbury Studio, to create the **Metallics** collection, mixing opulent design with **modest materials**: copper, pewter and zinc.



Kitchen gardens are a growing trend. "We are building planters and herb gardens into our spaces," says Alex Beugeard, director of design for Lanserring. Its clients are passionate about cooking with fresh ingredients. "They are replanted to reflect the seasons."

Gadget of the moment? Not a Coravin or a cheese cabinet, but a **state-of-the-art extractor**. The must-have brand is Bora, whose extremely efficient side extraction system is built into the cooktop. This allows designers to dispense with eyesore hoods and ducts, and to add statement lighting overhead. Andrew Barr, director of Espresso Design, calls it "a game-changer, with the flexibility it gives to create truly open-plan spaces".

BATHROOM

Blingy brassware is back. The favourite finish for the super-rich is... gold again. Rose gold, satin and matt gold bathroom fixtures and fittings are taking over from matt black and chrome finishes, says Tristan de la Haye, managing director at THG Paris. "People are moving away from minimalism to a maximalist 1970s aesthetic. Some taps are available with precious stone inlays and guilloché engraving."

More is more, agrees Colin Roby-Welford, creative director at Fired Earth, whose gold Metallic Vitreum glass tiles are hot. Annabel Williams, a designer with CP Hart, has clients who mix "industrial

matt black and brassware with Victorian tiled floors, vibrant wallpapers and statement lighting".

Marble is as popular as ever in luxury bathrooms — if it's in an unusual colour, from dark and dramatic hues to soft pale-pink tones, says Hamish Smith, creative director for Ca' Pietra. James Lentaigne, creative director at Drummonds, has noted clients spec'ing "the richer, darker Verde Guatemala marble, usually teamed with fittings in warm brass tones or dark antique finishes".

Bedroom style is taking over in the bathroom. The furniture designer Simon Orrell is creating dressing tables for bathrooms; he did matching parchment ones for a client's bathroom and dressing room. The interior designer Daniela Tasca York puts floor-length drapes in ensembles to soften the space and link bed and bath zones.

To add a contemporary edge to an opulent scheme, use **concrete** elements such as Kast basins, suggests Jane Gilchrist, director of Alternative Bathrooms.

The trendiest taps? Hunky **luxury-industrial brassware** from the Watermark Collection, an American brand. Its chief executive, Benjamin Peak, says clients are moving on from matt black: "Our Gun Metal and Oil Rubbed Bronze finishes are popular." The Titanium range will be launched this month at Clerkenwell Design Week, London.



OXFORDSHIRE £11.25M

Make your way up the sweeping driveway and you arrive at this Georgian beauty, built in red Flemish-bond brick and Bath stone. On the edge of the village of Binfield Heath, Holmwood is an 11-bedroom mansion with fantastic views over the Thames Valley. It's less than four miles from Henley-on-Thames, and two from Shiplake station. **01491 843000, savills.co.uk**



There is a famous rock star who has four large homes dotted across Britain. His favourite is his retreat by the sea in Wester Ross, which is so remote that it takes half an hour to walk to the nearest shop. "For him, the complete silence he gets in the Highlands is the ultimate luxury," says Rupert Sweeting, head of national country sales at Knight Frank estate agency.

In the property market as in all things, the definition of luxury depends on where you are and whom you ask. As a rough guide, though, you're looking at what Lucian Cook, director of residential research at Savills estate agency, terms "super-prime" — in other words, property costing more than £5m in London or more than £2m elsewhere.

The more zeros you add, the higher up the luxe ladder you climb; if you're seeking the ultimate in extravagance, you need to speak to the 0.01%, the ultra-prime purchasers who splashed out on 38 properties in the capital costing more than £20m in 2018 — the highest number of deals at this level in five years, according to Knight Frank.

Despite political uncertainty, there are still buyers out there keen to slim down their gigantic bank balances. In one week at the end of April, Robert Bailey, →

HOW THE 0.01% REALLY LIVE

Hypoxic chambers and hot yoga are highly prized, but privacy is what the super-rich will pay top dollar for, says *Alexandra Goss*