

# Well Home

Q1 2019

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## FROM THE CABBAGE PATCH

Homes are the heart of our world and everything else connects to them. To be well, we need a well home

**W**e all want what's best for the health and wellbeing of our loved ones and ourselves, but although we know more about the science of health and wellbeing than ever before, the challenge of staying well seems to grow more complex with every passing year.

What does it take to live a well life? For sure, we can go to a spa or the gym – and grab a green smoothie on the way home – and these are all important boosts to our wellbeing, but it's what we do every day which really underpins our vitality: self care is something we need to be mindful of all the time, not just on special occasions or when we can schedule it in.

Rather than being something we do in between the unhealthy stuff as a kind of antidote, a preventative lifestyle needs to be built in to our lives, so we can make good choices effortlessly.

And because our homes are the heart of our world and everything connects to them, in order to be well, we really need a home which is set up for this purpose.

So what's *Well Home* all about? Why have we decided to launch a global 'prosumer' magazine and website to focus on wellbeing in the home?

Our purpose is clear – it's to share inspiration and knowledge, it's about empowerment.

We sense a movement growing as people begin to realise the joy of living a joined-up life where the important things are in harmony. A life where our wellbeing is underpinned by the way we live and the simple things we do on a day to day basis.



Everyone's definition of a well home is personal

This first issue of *Well Home* is a self-funded passion project from the team at Leisure Media and we're interested to know what you think.

Is it useful? Should we do another one? Do you think home wellness is becoming a market, as we do?

We're looking for partners to help us with distribution to wellness consumers around the world – ideally via spas, wellness resorts and hotels, so if you'd like to get *Well Home* for your guests, we'd love to hear from you.

We're looking for investors to work with us to get the show on the road and for advertisers who want to reach wellness consumers to grow their business.

We're also gathering content for the next issue (because we very much hope there'll be one).

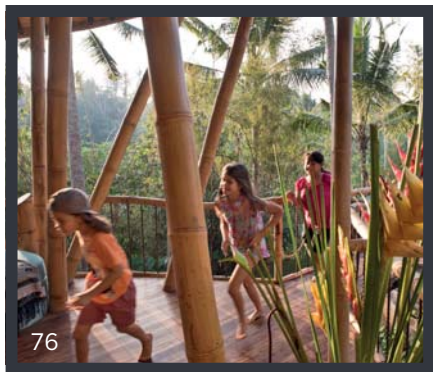
So if you'd like to get involved, then please get in touch and we'll see where this adventure leads us.

**Liz Terry, editor, Well Home**  
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## About Well Home

Well Home is the world's first prosumer magazine for the home wellness market.

Our vision is to bring together consumers, home builders, architects, designers and companies which supply products and services for the home to share knowledge and to inspire.

Our aim is to enable people around the world to use their home as a base to live their best life.

We also recognise that living a well life extends outside the home.

For this reason, we celebrate 'Well Home Away from Home', in our resorts and spas section and 'Shop Well' in our retail section.

Contact us for coverage at

[editorial@wellhomeglobal.com](mailto:editorial@wellhomeglobal.com) and for partnerships, marketing and advertising at [partners@wellhomeglobal.com](mailto:partners@wellhomeglobal.com)

To order free copies of Well Home for your spa or resort, go to [wellhomeglobal.com/order](http://wellhomeglobal.com/order) or call Joe Neary on +44 1462 471910

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A close-up, side-profile photograph of a person with long, wavy brown hair performing a deep forward bend (Uttanasana) on a bright red yoga mat. The person's head is tucked down towards their knees, and their arms are extended forward, resting on the floor. The background consists of light-colored, sheer curtains, creating a soft, natural light environment. The overall mood is serene and focused.

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# Well Home inspires

## Rockwell Group's visionary Waterline Square brings new meaning to the 'high-life'

One of Manhattan's most anticipated residential condominiums, the US\$2.3 billion Waterline Square development, is expected to be completed by September 2019.

Comprising towers by Richard Meier & Partners, Kohn Pedersen Fox and Viñoly, the development will range along New York's Hudson riverfront, spanning five acres.

Architect David Rockwell – who in 2017 designed an "ethereal, dream-like environment" for Tokyo's Prince Gallery Hotel – is responsible for designing the indoor amenities for Waterline Square.

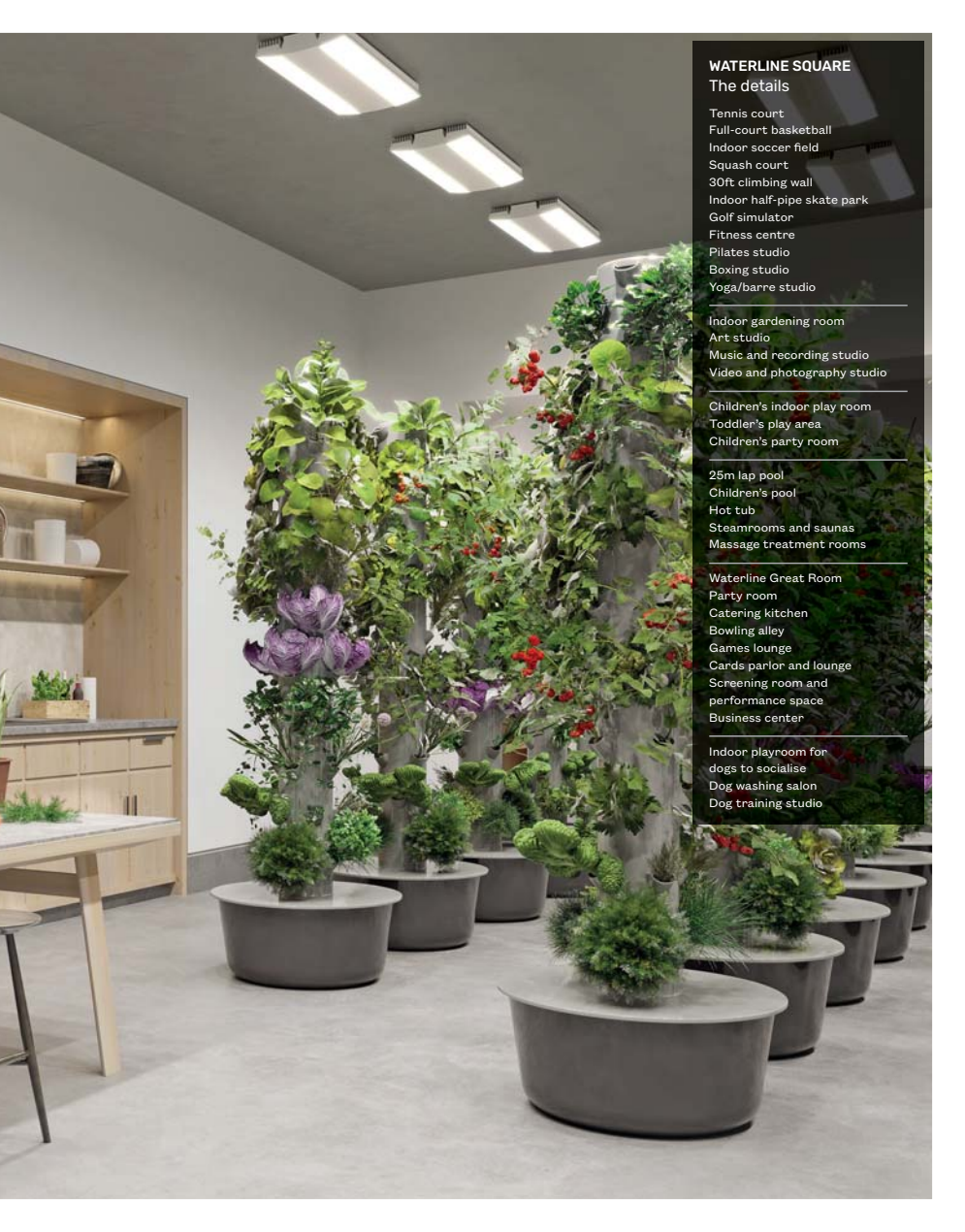
The Waterline Club connects the three buildings that make up Waterline Square and offers a range of amenities and a 'lifestyle programme' for residents. Wellness facilities include a basketball court, skate park, bowling alley, soccer field, tennis court, and other facilities such as a 25-metre pool and a spa.

Residents will also have access to an art studio, a music studio and a gardening workshop (this page). A children's play area has been designed by Roto.

**Turn the page for more photography**

The Gardening Studio is one of a long list of amenities being planned for Waterline Square in New York City





## WATERLINE SQUARE

### The details

Tennis court  
Full-court basketball  
Indoor soccer field  
Squash court  
30ft climbing wall  
Indoor half-pipe skate park  
Golf simulator  
Fitness centre  
Pilates studio  
Boxing studio  
Yoga/barre studio

Indoor gardening room  
Art studio  
Music and recording studio  
Video and photography studio

Children's indoor play room  
Toddler's play area  
Children's party room

25m lap pool  
Children's pool  
Hot tub  
Steamrooms and saunas  
Massage treatment rooms

Waterline Great Room  
Party room  
Catering kitchen  
Bowling alley  
Games lounge  
Cards parlor and lounge  
Screening room and performance space  
Business center

Indoor playroom for dogs to socialise  
Dog washing salon  
Dog training studio

## Well Home inspires Waterline Square







Waterline Square in New York City has taken wellness to the limit, with a wide range of facilities, including (clockwise from top left), an art room, full size basketball court, tenpin bowling centre and a recording studio. The facilities are shared by residents of three residential towers, all by signature architects







WITH OUR FLOORING AND YOUR INSPIRATION  
THE POSSIBILITIES ARE ENDLESS

## Amrit to introduce patrons to philosophy-inspired high living

Named for the immortality-inducing drink of Hindu divinities, Amrit Ocean Resort & Residences is a planned wellness community that will seek to vivify residential life with insights gleaned from Eastern philosophy and practice. Fittingly, the retreat, which is on track for completion in late 2019, will be based on Singer Island in Palm Beach County, Florida, an area once considered the domain of the legendary Fountain of Youth.

To create its oceanside paradise, the resort plans to provide amenities to improve the mind and body, such

as an outdoor yoga studio, meditation garden, and an "infusion zone" (a skincare-focused spa supervised by an on-hand nurse). Residents will also be assisted on their path to wellbeing by a specially-designed app, which – by acting as a virtual digital assistant – will advise them on diet, fitness, and local cuisine.

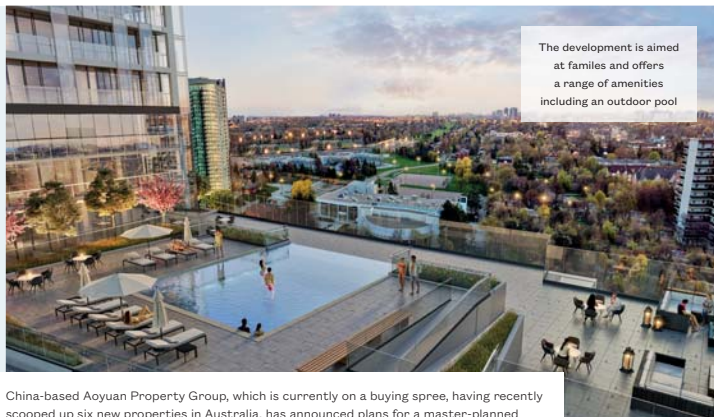
Jointly designed by S&E Architects and Bilkey Llinas Design, Amrit will cover seven acres of the Floridian shoreline, allowing space for 351 Units.



The Amrit Ocean Resort & Residences is located by the beach in Palm Beach County, Florida



## Aoyuan plans new super village in Toronto



The development is aimed at families and offers a range of amenities including an outdoor pool

China-based Aoyuan Property Group, which is currently on a buying spree, having recently scooped up six new properties in Australia, has announced plans for a master-planned community in Toronto. The development, Aoyuan's first foray into the Canadian real estate market, will effectively be a microcosm, catering to families with village-style facilities including a community centre, daycare, multiple play areas, and a public park.

The project, which will consist of 541 new condominium units and 180,000 square feet of offices and retail spaces, will also include a sky deck for community-building, featuring such amenities as an outdoor pool and a garden for mindful contemplation.





The Green Heart public space sits at the centre of the development. It was inspired by Asian paddy field terraces

## Live in an urban jungle at Singapore's Marina One



Christoph Ingenhoven, the architect whose beautiful, eco-friendly spa designs have graced hotels in Austria and Germany, has set his sights eastward to Singapore, where he has created a green mini-city.

The Marina One project, Ingenhoven's largest project to date, was formally opened by Singaporean and Malaysian dignitaries earlier this year.

Consisting of four high-rise buildings, Marina One is a hybrid habitat with 37,000sq m of vertical



jungle inspired by Asia's paddy field terraces.

As a living space focused on sustainability, the complex mirrors Ingenhoven's previous work.

The habitat has its own flora and fauna (350 plant species to be exact) as well as a fitness club, and pool.



## Enhancing senior living

Senior living specialist Watermark Retirement Communities has announced a new collaboration with integrative health consultancy Under A Tree to develop a comprehensive wellness programme for its newest senior living community.

The programme, which is set to be implemented at Watermark's new 'Hacienda at the Canyon' community in Tucson, Arizona, will feature and provide a number of concierge-style facilities and activities, such as an onsite fitness centre, an art studio, acupuncture sessions and golf lessons.

At its core, the new residence – the latest addition to Watermark's chain of 52 senior living residences – is marketed as an oasis of sorts, a paradise for anyone who takes a carte blanche approach to life.

As a Hacienda resident, not only will you be able to choose between traditional and credit-based meal plans, but you'll also be able to engage in innovative mindfulness therapies, such as those which focus on horticulture and equestrianism.



The Hacienda at the Canyon senior living campus is set to open in Tucson in 2019

The Hacienda will also be the place to be for nature lovers. The campus, based on the edge of a sprawling, sun-drenched desert, is located nearby numerous biking and hiking trails.

Overall, the Hacienda will be ideal for those forward-thinking pensioners who take their wellbeing seriously.

The site's culture of hospitality will be personally curated by Under a Tree's CEO Amy McDonald, who has spent decades in the luxury business.



Residents can take part in farming and beekeeping workshops. Social events are also offered

## Urban farming galore at Urby's Staten Island community

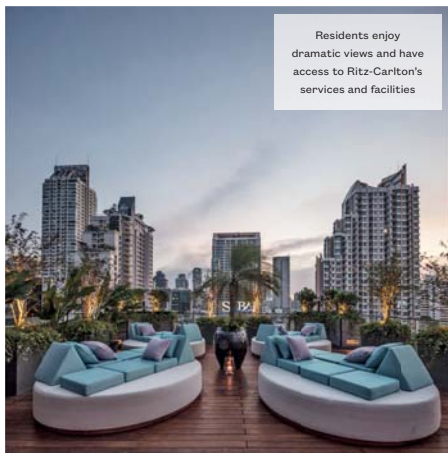
New Yorkers can get a taste of the countryside at Urby's Staten Island apartment complex, which includes elements one might expect to only find miles away from the hustle and bustle of the Tri-State metropolis. Among the many things residents have access to are a 5,000-square-foot farm, an apiary, and various DIY gardening and beekeeping workshops.

What makes these offerings unusual is that they are explicitly curated by live-in farmer Zaro Bates and her business partner Asher Landes.

Bates and Landes also oversee the community's social events, which are geared towards helping residents cultivate interactive and cooperative relationships.



Residents enjoy dramatic views and have access to Ritz-Carlton's services and facilities



## David Collins Studio opens new Ritz-Carlton residence in Bangkok

The Ritz-Carlton is a global, time-honoured brand, known – like London-based interior designer David Collins – for its grasp of luxury aesthetics and glamorous interiors. It therefore comes as no surprise to see that the collaboration between the two continues this tradition. This newly opened residence, built in Bangkok's MahaNakhon building and designed to reflect both international and Thai sensibilities, is the latest Asia-centred project from the David Collins Studio.

Facilities include saunas, a relaxation room, yoga studio, sun deck, and waterfall-lined pool. Residents also have the use of a dedicated concierge, housekeeping and valet services and the option to enjoy in-home fine dining. ●





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*Six Senses Kaplanlaya immersed us into unique yogic programs, locally-inspired spa treatments and even a brand new Holistic Anti-Aging Center.*

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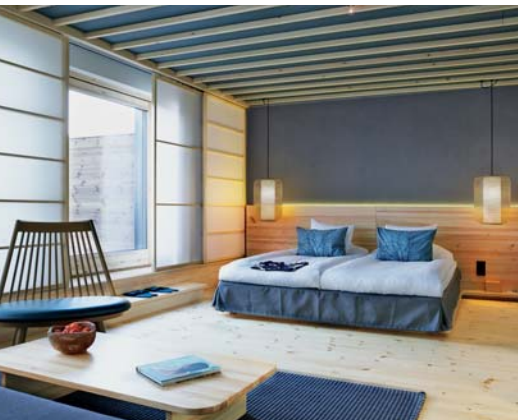
*Carol DeMirjian  
Los Angeles, California*

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## Well Home AWAY FROM HOME



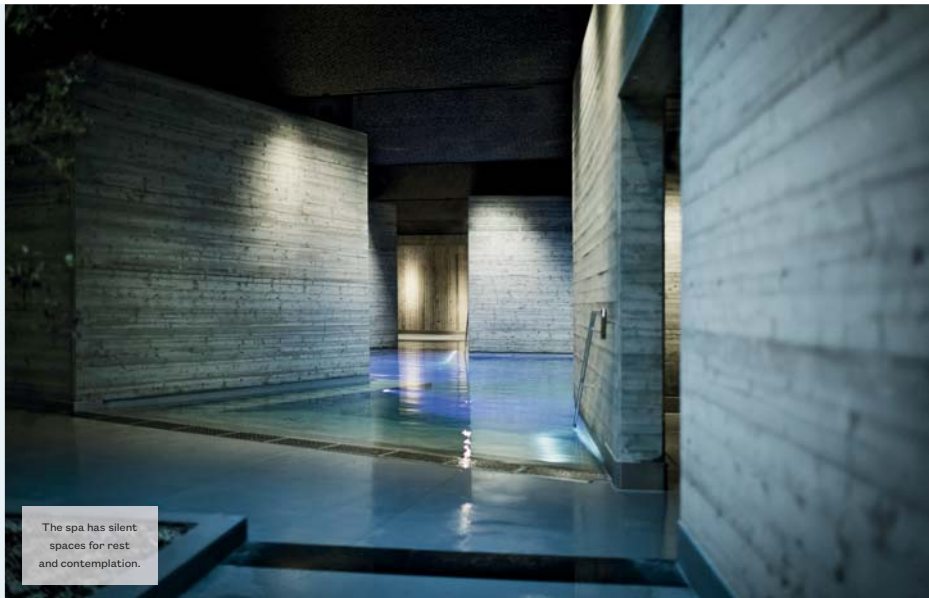
### Japanese and Scandinavian hospitality combine at Yasuragi near Stockholm

A winner in the 2018 World Luxury Spa Awards, the Yasuragi spa near Stockholm blends the tranquillity of Scandinavian minimalism and Ryokan traditionalism to create a truly relaxing retreat.

The spa, which overlooks the Stockholm Archipelago, is serious in its approach to wellness, offering a range of activities including yoga, Zen meditation and Qi Gong. On arrival, guests are encouraged to take part in the spa introduction, which involves bathing in traditional Japanese style.

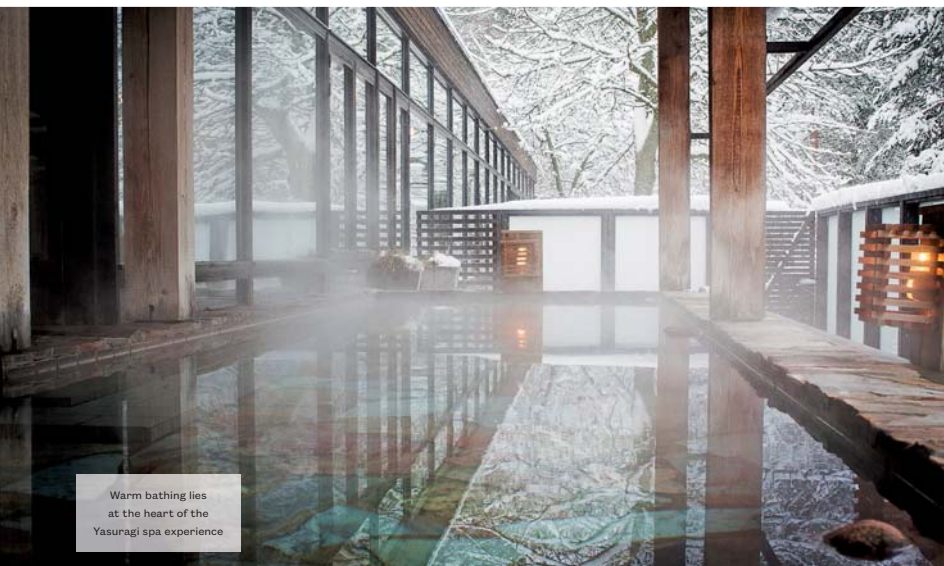
The hotel, which has 191 rooms, is also dedicated to sustainability, and holds a number of environmental certifications. In 2015, it became the first hotel in Scandinavia to receive certification from the Marine Stewardship Council and Aquaculture Stewardship Councils for sustainable wild harvested and cultivated fish.

The hotel's entire energy use is fossil fuel free and food waste is collected to make bio gas.



The spa has silent spaces for rest and contemplation.



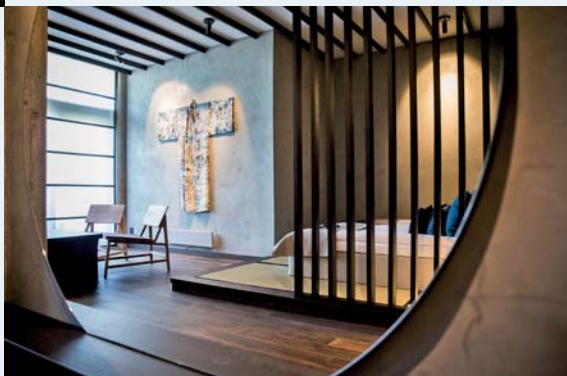


Warm bathing lies  
at the heart of the  
Yasuragi spa experience



The spa was designed by Stockholm-based architectural practice DAP. The tranquil styling continues into the bedrooms and public spaces.

There is a vegan and raw food restaurant and a teppanyaki restaurant, as well as cocktail and sake bars





The Equinox Hotel is part of the Hudson Yards district

## Equinox to break new ground with first fitness-focused hotel

Exercise lovers will be happy to hear that high-end fitness giant Equinox, which recently revealed plans to launch a fitness hotel in Chicago's West Loop, will be opening its first property in New York City at the emerging Hudson Yards neighbourhood in 2019.

The new hotel will focus on wellness, with extensive facilities, including indoor and outdoor pools and a state of the art gym and spa, alongside hotel amenities such as restaurants, bars and a super club. The development will also include thousands of square feet of space for luxury apartments.

Equinox's dive into the multi-billion dollar wellness hospitality sector will be a significant addition to Hudson Yards, which has been described by the developers as "the largest private real estate development in the history of the United States". Equinox – part of Related – is building a hotel business based on fitness and wellbeing.

## Swissôtel Vitality Rooms allow guests to relax and work out

Swissôtel's Vitality Room was developed in collaboration with *Wallpaper* magazine and offers wellness features such as black-out blinds, dedicated space for exercise and relaxation, air purification system and scent options in the shower, a Vitality snack bar with fruits and superfoods, and circadian lighting features. A 'wellbeing



The rooms feature 'wellbeing walls'

wall' gives guests a choice of three training modules in a compact space, with simple, self-explanatory equipment and a cyber-trainer.

The rooms also feature a clean, calm material palette and a reconfigured layout to optimise views and improve functionality.

Vitality Rooms will soon be developed in North America, Asia and the Middle East, with reports of hotels in Singapore and Dubai being next to add the concept.

## Sleep well, dream well at the Preidlhof Hotel

Set in the picturesque mountains of the South Tyrol in Austria, the Preidlhof Hotel is already an escapist's dream.

However, its new suite, the Dream Well, goes a step further, aiming to offer guests the perfect night's sleep and ultimate 'private spa experience'.

The room uses an array of electronically-generated soundscapes to give guests the best possible sleeping experience. Dreamers can



Guests staying in the Dream Well suite can wake up to a slow starting bird concert

choose to be soothed by a variety of fine-tuned sonic waves, all of which simulate the sights and sounds of nature in combination with remote-controlled lighting.

The Dream Well suite is the brainchild of Sonomi AG's CEO Daniel Lathan, an engineer who's spent decades researching the physiological and psychological benefits of acoustics-based therapies.

The suite is not the first of time Sonomi AG has created sound therapy space for Preidlhof. In 2016, the company was also commissioned to design Preidlhof's 'Deep Sea' relaxation room.





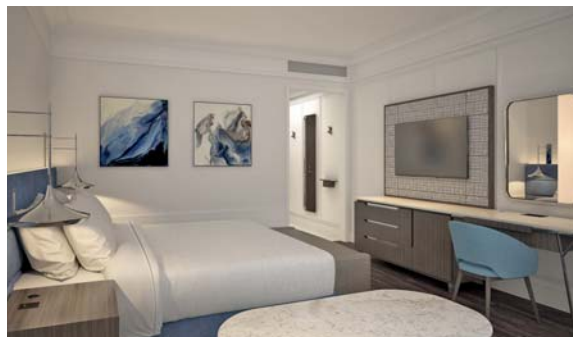
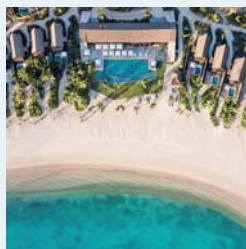
Six Senses Fiji is a luxury resort which is off the grid.



## Six Senses Fiji garners greatest places listing from *Time* magazine

Without question, Oceania – with its azure seas and sparkling beaches – is one of the world's most beautiful regions, but a Six Senses resort on Fiji takes the region's natural beauty to a whole other level. The Malolo Island-based retreat, which was recently included in *Time* magazine's World's Greatest Places list, merges high-end gadgetry with environmentally friendly wellness programmes.

Powered by its own off-the-grid solar panels, the resort also provides energy for the mind and body with an extensive team of on-hand beauticians, massage therapists, and gourmet chefs. Wellness-seekers also need not worry about family arrangements, as the hotel offers numerous multi-room suites and residences, as well as activities like scuba diving, yoga lessons, and surfing.



Delos will help to transform 10 per cent of Wyndham's hotel rooms into Stay Well Rooms



## A wellness immersion at Wyndham Hotels

Stress is inevitable, but Wyndham Hotels Group is hoping to change that by combatting stressors with superior interior design. In April, during the company's global conference at the Mandalay Bay resort in Las Vegas, executives announced that Wyndham would implement a coordinated aesthetics-centred strategy in its hotels to help customers reduce their stress levels. The group has employed a number of techniques, including changing the company's colour scheme and redesigning room furniture to maximise comfortability.

Wyndham will also be collaborating with international wellness innovator Delos. Delos has agreed to help the group transform 10 per cent of its hotel rooms into Stay Well Rooms, which come with wall-mounted air purification systems, circadian lighting, customised ambient noise technology, and built-in aromatherapy options to ensure a healing night's sleep. ●

# Well Home READER OFFER

*in association with Wellbeing Escapes*



Free room  
upgrade worth  
approx. £460



## Experience the euphoria retreat

**E**uphoria Retreat is, in our opinion, the most exciting new destination spa of 2018. It's one of those 'wow' destinations that you will fall in love with.

It's been 10 years in the making, so the attention to detail is very impressive, as is its unique design, which seamlessly fits into the historical UNESCO heritage site of Mystras at the foot hills of Mount Taygetos of Peloponnese.

The retreat is surrounded by olive groves and has a private forest where you can completely immerse yourself in nature.

Inspired by the ancient Greek and Chinese healing philosophies, which both share a common understanding of human nature and love for inner peace and holistic balance, the retreat aims to balance your mind, body and soul through a combination of inspiring and cutting-edge treatments and delicious, locally grown nutritious food.

There's a key focus on five elements; water, wood, fire, earth and metal, which are incorporated into the architecture and design and also at the heart of their signature treatments.

COME TO EUPHORIA  
RETREAT IF YOU'RE LOOKING  
FOR A FULL HEALTH-BOOST,  
YOU'LL LEAVE FEELING  
COMPLETELY REJUVENATED

The wellness programmes, such as detox, yoga, inner peace and weight-loss, have been expertly designed to help you transform, heal yourself and give you the necessary tools to live a happier and healthier life.

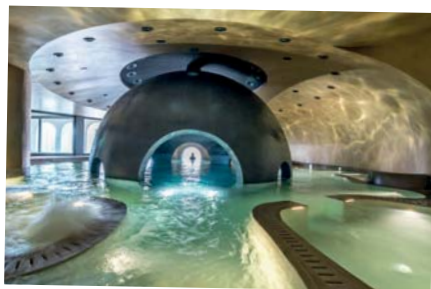
The spa is a haven of tranquillity and it's an impressive size at 3,000sq m – it's the beating heart of the retreat.

The innovative sphere pool which was inspired by the iconic Hagia Sophia church allows you to glide through the domes and fully submerge yourself while listening to the soothing sounds of music, dolphins and whales. Another impressive feature is the Speleotherapy – salt room which has partially translucent blocks of salt which are lit up in different shades, creating a relaxing ambience. The aim is to drive cell activity, boost energy and stabilise blood-sugar levels.

Come to Euphoria Retreat if you're looking to do a full health-boost, and you'll leave feeling completely rejuvenated.

**Stella Photi, CEO, Wellbeing Escapes**





#### Well Home Reader Offer details

In partnership with Wellbeing Escapes, we're delighted to offer *Well Home* readers an upgrade to a Superior Deluxe Room worth approx. £460 a week at Euphoria. This offer is valid for stays until 31 Dec 2018. Quote Well Home/777 when booking.

#### About Wellbeing Escapes

Wellbeing Escapes was established in 2006 by Stella Photi, when she saw a growing need in today's hectic world for people to take time to recuperate from their busy lives.

The company is one of the UK's leading spa and wellbeing travel companies and won Best Specialist Tour Operator in the Telegraph Travel Awards 2016. In 2017 it was awarded the Gold Trusted Service Awards by independent review company Feefo.

Wellbeing Escapes creates and arranges health-boosting holidays, from relaxing spa escapes to goal-focused programmes such as weight-loss, yoga and fitness. [www.wellbeingescapes.com](http://www.wellbeingescapes.com)

**wellbeing  
escapes**





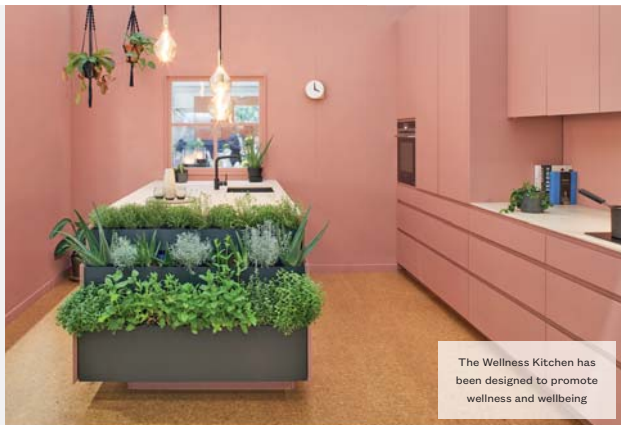


## Sieger design and Dornbracht bring the spa to you

What if you didn't have to leave your home for a spa experience? What if you actually owned the spa? German studio Sieger Design has teamed up with bathroom designer Dornbracht to produce what they call the SSPS (Small Size Premium Spa). Built specifically for private flats or apartments, the SSPS ranges from 3.5sq m to 8sq m. The spas include features such as horizontal and vertical showers, and acupressure massage jets. "In the future, much preventive health care will take place in the home", explains MD Andreas Dornbracht. "Water applications can enhance a health-conscious lifestyle in a variety of ways – not just with regard to physical fitness."



Dornbracht and Sieger Design teamed up to create the SSPS



The Wellness Kitchen has been designed to promote wellness and wellbeing

## Finch showcases new wellness kitchen

The winner of this year's Grand Designs Live Awards was Finch London's Wellness Kitchen. Rose-coloured and minimalist in its layout, the kitchen has been designed to promote wellbeing. It features a living herb wall, antimicrobial and water-resistant floors (made from all-natural cork), incandescent Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) light bulbs, and even a built-in alkaline water purifier. As we reported in *Spa Business* earlier this year, Wellness Kitchens are a trend for 2018. Finch, which has been producing eco-friendly spaces for the better part of a decade, is certainly ahead of the game.



Antonio Citterio worked closely with Technogym to design the Personal range

## Technogym reveals the art of exercise

Fitness supplier Technogym had a strong presence at this year's Salone del Mobile exhibition in Milan, demonstrating why its offerings belong at a show dedicated to design. Renowned furniture designer and architect Antonio Citterio has created many of the company's products, and this year there was a particular focus on promoting the 'personal line' he has designed with the brand. This range of cardio and functional equipment sees 30 years of research and product development translated into "beautiful fitness equipment created with exclusive materials and exquisite craftsmanship.

Of particular interest was the Kinesis Personal. Designed as a luxury addition to a home, health club, hotel, spa or office, the machine, which comes in a range of textures, offers 200 exercise possibilities in less than one square metre and is used to improve strength, coordination, flexibility, posture and breathing control.

## Let nature set the mood with Ketra's circadian lighting

Few things can compare to dawn's rosy light. Experiences like this may only exist in nature, but Ketra lighting is bringing this sensation to the home. Ketra, which was acquired by lighting controls specialist Lutron Electronics in April, first acquired fame for its 'natural light' circadian illumination products, appearing in publications like *The New York Times* and *BuzzFeed*. Ketra lights, built for residences and commercial properties, essentially provide customisable inner daylight. Lamps use light emitter technology in cooperation with ZigBee, an IoT (Internet of Things) wireless mesh network.

The lighting system can generate a broad spectrum of white, pastel, saturated colours, all of which – says Ketra – can help homeowners live "happier, more productive lives".



Ketra brings natural light into the built environment to enhance wellness



Dornbracht  
LifeSpa

Aquamoon







It's important for people to be rooted in place. This is a very special house, with powerful connections to nature

## SOLAR SYSTEM

Most people scour real estate websites in search of the perfect property, but Jennifer Beningfield has designed and built her own piece of paradise. She talks to *Well Home* editor, Liz Terry



ALL PHOTOS WITH PEOPLE: TAZIANA MERRILL; OTHERS: RICARDO DAVIES





Jennifer Beningfield and her family at the Swartberg House, Great Karoo, South Africa. Photographed by Tatjana Meirelles for *Well Home*, August 2019

**J**uggling a busy global architectural practice in London with family life, South African Jennifer Beningfield finds balance on regular trips to her holiday home in the Great Karoo desert – one of the most ancient places on earth.

Called the Swartberg House, the property looks out over the wild desert, where mongoose, tortoise, hares and aardvark roam free. It's a 24 journey from London and a four and a half hour drive from Cape Town, so the family blocks out time and goes for eight weeks each year.

The magic of the vast landscape and soaring backdrop of the Swartberg Mountains was central to the decision by Jennifer to buy the land – previously a remote sheep farm – and to build a family home there.

"It's important for people to be rooted in place," she says. "This is a very special house, with powerful connections to nature and we go there to de-stress, to de-clutter and to tune in to the natural environment."

Equal priorities on these precious visits are resting and recharging and spending time with friends and family, as Jennifer explains: "We lack time in London to connect with people over a period of a few days, just to be able to relax and be together. We often have guests while we're in South Africa and that's very special.

"The house has been designed with lots of spaces to retreat to, as well as spaces to socialise," she says, "So it's a place that really reaches out to people."

Recharging is also a big part of the family's time in Africa. A lap pool – an 'oasis in the desert' – is perfect for both daily exercise and cooling off in the heat, which can reach 40°C in summer, while a nearby yoga studio in the small town of Prince Albert offers regular classes.

The pool is enclosed by a stone wall which was chosen to match the colour of the mountains behind. It also recalls the dry stone enclosures which are used for livestock in the local area and is intended to provide a secluded world for contemplation by blocking out all distractions.

#### HIKING AND HORSE RIDING

"We get out into the environment," says Jennifer. "There are beautiful walks. We climb and go hiking in the mountains, and our daughter loves to go horse riding.

"The garden is also very important. We wanted to use the landscaping to heal the land, as it had been over-farmed and needed to be regenerated.

"The new planting has been really successful," she says with a smile. "It's attracting lots of bees. We also created an orchard and have started to pick our first fruit – pomegranates, plums, peaches, figs, grapefruit, lemons, oranges and kumquats, and we enjoy this fresh-grown food."

An outdoor seating snug is a focus for social time, with the area screened from the harsh west light in the summer and from the wind which blows on hot afternoons. A fire circle warms on cooler days and into the evenings.

The Great Karoo desert has no light pollution, so the night sky is dramatic – you can see the Milky Way without a telescope

The Swartberg House was designed by Jennifer Beningfield, founder of Openstudio Architects, for her family





Shafts of light illuminate the house during the day through openings which align with the stars in the night sky.  
(Above) one of the roof terraces





### SUSTAINABLE BUILDING

The location meant building sustainably was always going to be the best option, but Jennifer says it was also the right thing to do and a fundamental part of the philosophy of the project: “The house is very remote,” she says. “Being self-sufficient was an important part of the plan, so we created a solar house which is cooled by natural ventilation.”

A low-tech emphasis meant using ancient cooling methods to keep the house from overheating in the fierce summers.

The building has been designed to trap the cold desert air at night to avoid the use of air conditioning, as she explains: “The fabric of the house is the means by which we regulate the temperature inside. The ‘ventilation system’ is operated by us manually opening and closing huge shutters and doors in different parts of the house at different times of day.

“We open the roof at night and let the cold night air fill the house – it’s a precious resource in the desert – and then we keep the cool night air trapped inside during the day.”

Half meter thick walls protect against the fierce sun and bitter cold and the huge extremes of temperature which can go from a blistering 40°C to minus -6°C between seasons.

In winter, the large windows act as sun-catchers, allowing the dark brick floors to radiate the stored warmth of the

The lap pool is an ‘oasis in the desert’ and used for daily workouts and cooling off in the blistering summer weather

sun in the cool evenings. “I grew up in South Africa and understand the climate here well,” she says.

“To design this way, you have to know the angles of the sun and direction of the winds at different times of year and use these to create shade and to ventilate. We effectively made the building so it responds to the environment.”

### RHYTHMS OF NATURE

This low-tech approach has other benefits in terms of life at the Swartberg House. “The technology is manual,” explains Jennifer, “We have to adjust the house ourselves throughout the day and be aware of the environment around us.

“This connects our body’s rhythms to the rhythms of nature – the house brings the two into harmony and so to live here, you need to stop and breathe and connect.

“While technology can be helpful, the consequences of relying on it as a society to heat and cool our buildings means we’re not taking responsibility for our actions,” she says. “In choosing this very manual cooling process, we’ve removed the separation which is caused by technology.”

The outcome is a more calm and mindful way of living. “This house is about embedding people in the world and connecting them to nature,” she says.

“The design also connects the building to the place,” she explains. “It was laid out to give views of the landscape, with the huge picture windows facing the mountains.”

### PLAYING WITH LIGHT

Many people take a view of ‘the more the better’ when it comes to deciding on lighting sources in their homes, and many modern homes are extremely bright, but the Swartberg

We have to adjust the ventilation manually and this connects our body’s rhythms to the rhythms of nature. To live here you need to stop, breathe and connect





The family spend a good amount of time outdoors enjoying the wild natural environment and fresh air





The 230sq m house was created by local builders for less than £200k using local crafts and a small palette of natural and ancient materials

house takes a more subtle approach, with shadow and shade being valued just as much as brightness.

"Sometimes we roll back the shutters and open the huge windows and flood the house with light," says Jennifer, "But at other times, we long for shade and a rest from the sun."

The house has a series of small scattered openings, which allow shafts of light to penetrate into the shadows, and these have been carefully configured according to the positions of stars in constellations which are visible from the upper roof terraces.

At night, concealed LED strips integrated into both the external and internal openings illuminate the interior, while from outside, the house is lit with an irregular pattern that's also in sympathy with the scattering of stars in the dark skies.

The series of large elevated roof terraces embrace an openness to the sky and are used as gathering places on warm summer evenings. They give far views of the mountains, and bring people closer to the clear, star-filled skies.

"The Great Karoo has no light pollution," says Jennifer. "The house is so remote and the humidity levels are so low that the air is clear and the night sky is dramatic – you can see the Milky Way without a telescope."

## BUILDING FOR HEALTH

As an architect, Jennifer knew the health of the family would be defined by the quality of the building, so natural materials were used throughout the process and volatile organic compounds were eliminated from the construction.

The 230sq m house was created by local builders for less than £200k. It uses a limited number of robust materials, including brick floors made from local Western Cape clay.

Local crafts were also used – "The house is lime washed inside and outside on rough cast plaster – an ancient material which was applied by hand," explains Jennifer.

"The house is organically stable, so we get good air quality," she says, "And the external doors are all double glazed, which is unusual in South African domestic architecture."

"The only material which isn't local is the wood. Due to sustainability certifications we couldn't get FSA certified timber locally, so we used American White Ash from the US."

Double glazed windows and wooden shutters are opened and closed to control the natural ventilation. The house is cooled without air-con in spite of 40°C temperatures

The family spend time together at the Swartberg House in South Africa, resting and recharging from their hectic life in London



I believe in architecture that's resolutely contemporary but also feels ancient and timeless. We need to find a balance, so that the house still works for the people who live in it in 200 years time





An orchard has been planted in the garden and the family and their guests enjoy harvesting fruit for the table



The house is 'geometrically loose' – not linear. "It bends and flexes to the landscape," says Jennifer. "I like the idea of change in buildings – they should alter if people's lives change, and not be so fixed that they inhibit the way they want to live.

"I believe in architecture that's resolutely contemporary, but also feels ancient and timeless," she says. "Timelessness is important – we need to find a balance, so the house still works for the people who live there in 200 years' time.

"When I think about buildings, I imagine the lives which have been lived in them and appreciate how they have a resonance with a particular place and time. Viewing things this way opens up a world which is bigger than you."

## LONDON LIFE

Back in the real world, Jennifer is working on a wide range of projects, including a residential development at Westminster Fire Station in London. Her practice also recently won a RIBA competition to design new mass-market homes for Taylor Wimpey: "I told them they need to put joy into house building," she says with a smile, "And they listened.

"The idea of generosity is very important to me," she concludes. "We must design spaces which bring people joy."

It seems that although the Swartberg House in South Africa is very much a one-off, the spirit which created it will touch and bring joy to many more lives in future years. ●

## THE SWARTBERG HOUSE

Floor area: 230sq m  
Budget: £200k (2015)  
Architects: Openstudio/  
Jennifer Benningfield  
Joiner: Woodgrain  
Main contractor:  
Hendrik De Villiers





The Bacots moved to Serenbe in 2014, attracted by the sense of community

# LIVING THE DREAM

**We catch up with Eliza Bacot, nutritionist, wellness coach and founder of The Organic South, who lives at Serenbe with her husband Benton and their two children, William and Emmeline**

**When did your interest in health and wellness start?**

My passion for wellness really started as a child, when I became fascinated with the inner-workings of the human body and all its complexities and systems - it really blew my mind how detailed and perfect the human body is as an organism. When you love anatomy and physiology, a natural path is to pursue a career in healthcare, and I wound up with Masters degrees in both nursing and critical care.

I worked in intensive care, with a goal of learning how to restore and fix the problems of critical illness, but I soon realised how many of my patients in ICU were sick with preventable illnesses.

In 2008, I started investigating our food system, learning about nutrition, as well as pesticides, genetic modification of food, processed food and the dangers of sugar, and I soon began to change my own lifestyle.

**How did you come to live at Serenbe?**

When I was pregnant with my first child, I started thinking about toxic products and chemicals in my own home, and began incorporating essential oils for wellness and cleaning. I started my blog, The Organic South, in 2012, and my first piece was going to be about the organic farm at Serenbe. After spending a Sunday afternoon here, we fell in love with the community, and within six weeks we had a contract on a home.



“We love being surrounded by people who teach us and make us better. Serenbe has also really enhanced our thinking about the value of nature and being outside on a daily basis”



In 2016, I left my job as a nurse practitioner - I hated watching people die in the hospital; instead, I wanted to help them learn how to stay out of the ICU to begin with. I love that my background gives me the tools to help people be well and that I have been able to pivot into such an amazing space.

**What's your favourite thing about living at Serenbe?**

It has truly taught me about the pillar of wellness that I was missing in my life: community. Community and socialisation are such vital parts of wellness, and it opened me up to those values so I can now translate that to others.

**How has the community helped you?**

We love being surrounded by people who teach us and make us better. We find so many varying ideals from different people here, but we respect and learn from each other. We find that a community like this offers the opportunity to have many friends from all different walks of life, with different viewpoints and even different life stages. It enriches our life and really fits a growth mindset to be surrounded by that kind of diversity.

**How have you incorporated wellness into your life since living at Serenbe?**

Serenbe has really enhanced our thinking about the value of nature and being outside on a daily basis. And there are so many educational opportunities to learn about other facets of wellness: mindfulness classes, music events, yoga and meditation classes, community gatherings - it's just an opportunity to keep learning.

**What is it like to raise children at Serenbe?**

This is the best part. My kids have such a unique opportunity to continually view the outdoors as just a part of their daily life.

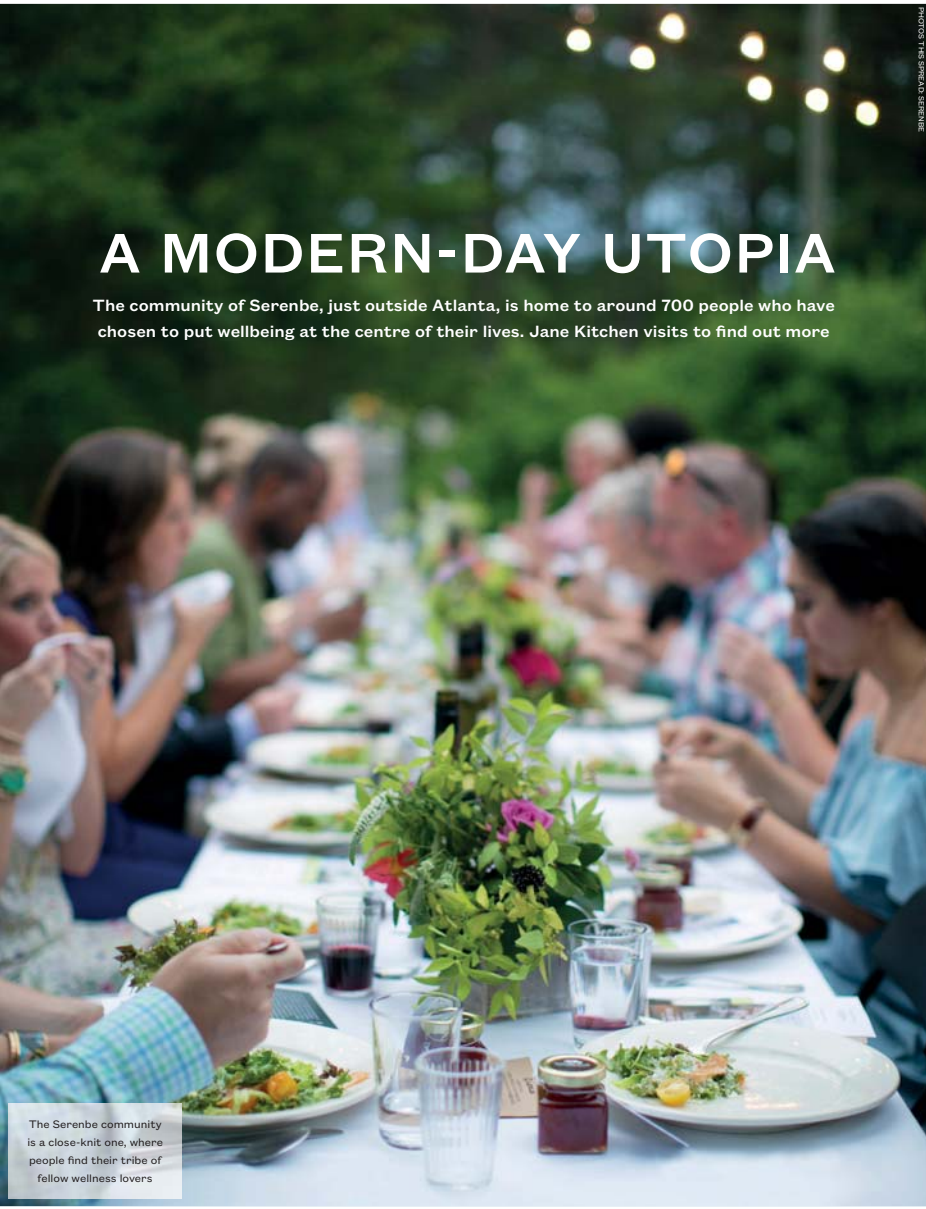
We walk often and discuss the beauty of our surroundings. They get to cultivate relationships with the friends they play with and also have the opportunity to go to school within their neighbourhood. I get the opportunity for other parents to know my children well and also have other adults in their lives.

We believe that growing up in Serenbe will cultivate an appreciation in them for wholesome food, the outdoors and great relationships. I hope they will learn to value those simple, but important things in life. ●

Serenbe offers a varied fitness programme that includes group yoga. A growing body of research suggests that exercising outdoors is better for you than working out indoors

# A MODERN-DAY UTOPIA

The community of Serenbe, just outside Atlanta, is home to around 700 people who have chosen to put wellbeing at the centre of their lives. Jane Kitchen visits to find out more

A group of people are seated along a long white-clothed table in an outdoor garden setting. The table is set with plates of food, glasses of water and wine, and small jars of jam. A centerpiece of greenery and pink flowers sits in the middle of the table. The background is filled with lush green trees and foliage, with string lights visible in the upper right corner. The overall atmosphere is relaxed and communal.

The Serenbe community is a close-knit one, where people find their tribe of fellow wellness lovers

Yoga at the stables:  
exercise and outdoor  
living are at the heart of  
the Serenbe philosophy



As the plane descends into Atlanta, the city stretches out beneath me in ripples of modern-day sprawl – highways clogged with cars inching along at a snail's pace, taking their occupants to strip malls where you can buy anything you want, anytime you want it. This is the America I moved away from – this endless march towards overconsumption – the land of McMansions, 24-hour drive-thrus and endless commutes on congested highways.

And if any city exemplifies the high cost of urban sprawl and overpopulation, it's Atlanta; home to the world's busiest airport, Georgia's capital also consistently ranks in the top worst cities in the world for traffic, as anyone who's spent time trapped on the endless loop of Interstate 285 can attest.

So I find it mind-blowing that in just a 30-minute Lyft ride from the airport, I'm whisked to a new housing development filled with rolling hills, quiet birdsong, and neighbourly nirvana, otherwise known as Serenbe.

Home to around 700 people who've decided they want to live somewhere different, Serenbe is a place where people and planet come before cars and commerce.

It's one of a growing number of 'wellness communities' which are being built around the world and nowhere are there more in development than the US. With a growing obesity problem, car-centred culture, and a failing health insurance industry, it's no wonder many Americans are looking at new ways to bring wellness into their lives.

"The US has been the epicenter of terrible car-dependent suburban sprawl for the last 75-plus years, and especially in the last 20 to 30 years," says Katherine Johnston, senior



Residents share stories with me of how Serenbe has changed their lives for the better and they are healthier and happier

Steve Nygren





Children are raised in the outdoors, enjoying acres of woodland, trails and countryside

research fellow at the Global Wellness Institute and expert in the wellness communities market. "As people have started to recognise how terrible and unhealthy this kind of development is for both people and planet, there's a growing impetus to try to build things that are better, and to experiment with new types of development."

### The antidote to suburban sprawl

Founded in 2004 by the Nygren family – Steve and Marie and their children – who grew concerned when land was being gobbled up around their holiday home farm, Serenbe is named for the serene environment that they hoped to create.

It's the antidote to America's suburban sprawl, and also Steve Nygren's vision of what a neighbourhood should be: houses set among acres of preserved forests and meadows, where neighbours know each other by name and food is harvested locally. This anti-suburban oasis owes much of its appeal to Nygren's commitment from the start to only develop 30 per cent of the land, leaving 70 per cent of the community's 65,000 acres as natural green space.

This, in turn, led to a natural focus on wellbeing and created a neighbourhood designed with walkability in mind, where woodland paths connect residents with shops and restaurants, children with schools, and neighbours with each other.

"We want to bring wellness into a lifestyle that's part of everyday life," says Steve Nygren. "Residents share stories with me on a regular basis of how Serenbe has changed their lives for the better, and they are healthier and happier. We

hear that there's less depression, less medication, and better behaviour from children. I think we forget how much stress and our mental attitude directly affects our physical being."

### The reluctant developer

Once I settle in to my room in the Serenbe Inn – once a barn on the Nygren's farm, now restored with a country chic vibe – Steve and Marie Nygren's daughter, Garnie arrives to give me a tour. Garnie was in high school when the idea for Serenbe was first conceived; now, she's COO of the company, and as passionate about responsible development as her father. She's dressed casually in jeans and a T-shirt, with a scuff of mud here and there and the kind of fresh-faced looks that living in the country gives you.

As we meander from the inn, first down a gravel path past goats and hens, then along one of Serenbe's many woodland trails, humming with cicadas, Garnie tells me how in 1999, she and her father were out on a run in this area, and as they reached the crest of a hill, they looked down on bulldozers clearcutting the neighbouring land. "That was the moment of impact," she says. "That was the day, whether my dad knew it or not, that he stepped out of retirement."

Steve Nygren had retired from a successful career in the restaurant business, and had no background in development, but he realised he needed to act fast in order to stop the Atlanta sprawl from reaching his doorstep. Nygren was inspired by European villages – and the English countryside in particular – and wanted to see the same kind of small,



We're creating an authentic place, where architecture is art and the streetscape is our canvas. With a variety of styles, we naturally attract a variety of people



Steve and Marie Nygren's daughter Garnie is COO of the company and lives at Serenbe with her family

The Nygrens were inspired by English village life to create communal spaces





The agriculture hamlet has an on-site organic farm that supplies the restaurants as well as the weekly farmer's market



dense, walkable towns that exist in places that haven't been built around cars. As he began to buy up land surrounding his farm, he looked for developers who were creating these kinds of places – ones with a palpable sense of place, that honour the arts, are aesthetically inspiring, and have plenty of green spaces. None existed. “He thought: ‘If no-one is thinking about sustainable development, then how are we leaving the land for future generations?’” explains Garnie.

#### **‘An enormous responsibility’**

Steve and Marie continued the process of buying land surrounding their farm, until they found themselves with 65,000 acres – half the size of the inside perimeter of Atlanta, bigger than all of the Napa Valley, and the largest amount of contiguous, undeveloped green space that exists in close proximity to a major airport or urban center anywhere in the US. “We realised we had a huge opportunity, but we also had an enormous responsibility,” says Garnie.

Some careful re-zoning work meant that instead of building a house on every acre – or 1,000 homes on 1,000 acres in one-acre plots – they could opt to build 1,000 homes on just 300 acres and then maintain 700 acres of permanently protected green space. That meant houses were built close together, doing the double duty of creating close-knit, walkable communities and setting aside that

70 per cent of the land for community use at the same time.

Old-growth trees have been preserved in Serenbe – a rarity in new-build American construction, where clear-cutting the trees and leveling the land makes for cheaper, easier construction. This means homes immediately look established in a way that new construction rarely does.

And houses here are anything but cookie-cutter; a 2,100sq ft traditional Colonial sits next to a 4,200sq ft modern contemporary, and yet somehow, they work together.

As Garnie explains, all this has been well thought-out, with strict rules on the way rooflines flow, and the authenticity of each style. “You can have an enormous range of architecture, because they’re all speaking to each other and relating to each other,” she says. “We’re creating an authentic place, where architecture is art and the streetscape is our canvas. Architecture should inspire, and we find that with a variety of styles, we naturally attract a variety of people.”

#### **Community building**

Serenbe will eventually grow to include four distinct neighbourhoods, or ‘hamlets’ as they’re known here, each designed in the shape of the Greek letter omega – a part of a strategy to encourage interaction and community-building among residents by making serendipitous meetings more likely along the pathways and bridleways.







The community has become a model for the built environment's role in a healthy lifestyle



A trust has been established to ensure that arts and sustainability are a protected part of the Serenbe culture







A fourth hamlet will focus on education, with schools and colleges and a university offering courses in sustainability

Two of the hamlets are fully built; in Grange, the agriculture hamlet, an on-site organic farm supplies the restaurants as well as the weekly farmer's market, and crosswalks are planted with edibles such as blueberry bushes. The Selbourne hamlet focuses on the arts, and features a rich programme of theatre and film, with regular gallery exhibits, artist lectures, plays and outdoor concerts.

To be sure arts programming continues, the Nygrens set up the non-profit Serenbe Institute for Art, Culture and Environmental Issues. For every home sale at Serenbe, 1 per cent of a house price or 3 per cent of a vacant lot price is funneled into the institute, ensuring that there is perpetual funding for the arts and environment. This includes the successful Serenbe Playhouse, an outdoor theatre which welcomes 60,000 people annually and has a \$1.4m budget.

The arts programming, proximity to the green space, and the sense of community all mean that residents pay a

The Hill restaurant at Serenbe focuses on sustainable and locally grown food, and includes produce from Serenbe Farms



premium of from five to 10 per cent more than similar houses in Atlanta, but most seem to feel it's well worth it. "We love being surrounded by people that teach us and make us better," says Eliza Bacot, a nutrition counsellor and wellness coach, who has lived with her family at Serenbe since 2014 (see page 44). "My kids have such a unique opportunity to view the outdoors as just a part of their daily life."

### Life in balance

Serenbe's newest hamlet, Mado – which means 'life in balance' in the native Creek Indian language – has a Scandinavian design aesthetic, and will focus on health and wellbeing. Here, residents will find a community pool, along with a gym, dentist, Chinese doctor and a health-focused restaurant, and there are plans in the works for a 30,000sq ft destination spa. Common areas are planted with medicinal herbs, flowers, trees and shrubs, and residents can take classes on how to harvest their front yards.

Mado will be fully built in the next five years, with 130 housing and office units being added in 2019, and another 130 in 2021. Seventy homes have already been sold, and another 40 are under construction and available in sizes and prices to fit different lifestyles: from \$299,000 for a compact 900sq ft home that would fit young couples or retirees looking to downsize, to \$900,000 for a 3,500sq ft family home.

A fourth hamlet will have public, Montessori and international boarding schools and a university the Nygrens hope will host students to study sustainability, while also offering executive training and lifelong learning.

Serenbe's tagline, "The best reason to live here is the life here" may well be the easiest way to sum up this community, which has become a godfather of sorts to a growing trend of wellness communities sprouting up around the world.

For Steve and Marie Nygren, all three of their daughters have returned to Serenbe with their husbands, and their grandchildren are being raised within walking distance of their front door. If that isn't utopia, I don't know what is. ●





The spa at Serenbe offers holistic treatments using pure natural products



Some of the first houses to be built in the third hamlet of Mado, which has an emphasis on health and wellness



# CLODAGH



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Jason McLennan is an environmentalist with a lifelong commitment to well building design

PHOTO BY DAN BLANK

# love of nature

As a leading figure in the green building movement, Jason McLennan was determined to create the most sustainable home possible. He tells Tom Walker about the unexpected wellness benefits of his nature-inspired home

Heron House, near Seattle meets the requirements of the Living Building Challenge





The double height living and dining room provides a space for the whole family to gather

If you look closely at the walls, they almost look like layers of the Grand Canyon. When you use rammed earth, you get wavy lines where the material has been compacted



**D**esigner Jason McLennan is considered one of the most influential people in the green building movement. He's the founder and creator of the Living Building Challenge – one of the world's most progressive and stringent green building programmes – and founder of the International Living Future Institute, an NGO that focuses on creating communities that are “socially just, culturally rich and ecologically restorative”. In 2011, McLennan was selected by *Yes!* magazine as one of its 15 ‘Breakthrough’ people who are currently shaping the world.

As CEO of McLennan Design – his own architectural and planning practice – he has been responsible for the design of some of the world's most advanced green buildings. McLennan played a key role in the design of the Bullitt Center, a commercial office building in Seattle, US, which is one of the largest net positive energy buildings in the world and was designed to his Living Building Challenge standards. The six-storey, 52,000sq ft (4,800sq m) building produces nearly 30 per cent more energy than it needs, has a 52,000 gallon rainwater collection, a UV light

purification system and 26 geothermal wells that help to both heat the building in the winter and cool it in summer.

#### HOME COMFORTS

While McLennan is in constant demand among those looking to advance green design, he has found time to create his own sustainable family home with a focus on wellness.

Called Heron Hall, the home is completely solar-powered and entirely off the water grid.

It's powered by 10kW worth of photovoltaic panels on its south-facing roof, while a 15,000-gallon rainwater cistern provides 100 per cent of the drinking and washing water.

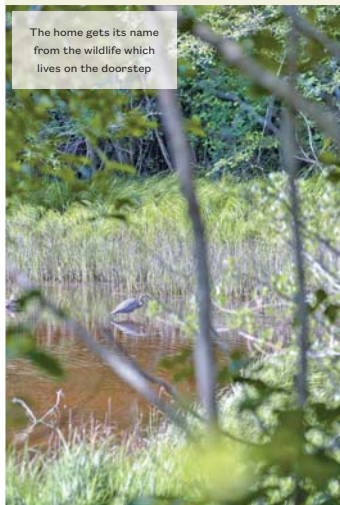
Sustainable practices have been incorporated into every aspect of the home, starting from the design and building materials. Rather than concrete, the main materials used in construction were wood and structural rammed earth – an ancient method of building robust walls.

“Rammed earth is basically a process of making stone the way nature does – by compression,” McLennan explains. “The walls are two feet thick and have been structurally reinforced and insulated. If you look closely at them, they





Jason and Tracy  
McLennan live at Heron  
Hall with their children



The home gets its name  
from the wildlife which  
lives on the doorstep



Salvaged pieces, including  
Afgan doors, stained  
glass windows and vintage  
furniture, were collected by  
McLennan and his wife for  
years before they started  
work on the project





The goal was to create a house that allows for the natural world to thrive



McLennan used as much local and salvaged material as possible during the construction of Heron Hall. The structure is made primarily from rammed earth and local timber



Quirky touches include McLennan's Hudson Bay canoe (left) and this heron sculpture made from salvaged parts by local metalworker Dick Strom



It's an amazing house.  
Very soulful and peaceful.  
It's incredibly quiet and  
very conducive to healthy  
sleep patterns

almost look like layers of the Grand Canyon, because you get these wavy lines where the material has been compacted. So not only is it a very beautiful material, it also has a very low environmental footprint."

Located on Bainbridge Island near Seattle, US, Heron Hall also blends into its natural surroundings, as part of McLennan's intention to bring the outside in.

"It's an amazing house – very soulful and peaceful," he says. "It's interesting how some of the environmental features we included have these positive, unintended consequences which are enjoyed by all the family.

"For example, the construction methods and materials we used have made it structurally really 'tight', so it's incredibly energy efficient and there are no leaks. One of the wellness-related benefits is that the house is incredibly quiet – you can't hear any unwanted outside noise – so it's very conducive to healthy sleep patterns."

He adds that, as well as it being a family home, he sees Heron Hall as a "ground-breaking living building and laboratory for living building materials and strategies."

#### NATURAL DESIGNS

One of the design principles which McLennan is passionate about – and which can be seen in his work – is biophilic design. Based on the concept of biophilia ('love of nature'), biophilic design focuses on the relationship between humans and nature and how humans are drawn to the natural world.

#### Getting started with a well home

Not everyone is able to design their dream home in an idyllic location – but it doesn't mean we can't positively affect our living environments. McLennan encourages everyone to look around their own homes for aspects they can improve.

"You can do all the same things with existing buildings that you can with new builds, it just depends on how you do them," he says. "There's no real barrier to achieving results on old buildings. It's just that sometimes

you have to come up with different strategies."

He offers a simple 'win' which everyone can begin with. "Upgrading lighting systems immediately improves a home's green credential and has the benefit of offering a payback too," he says.

"Upgrading to LED lighting and updating the controls makes economic and environmental sense and will also reduce maintenance time and cost as the bulbs last so long.

"Modern LEDs can be fine-tuned so they can also improve your circadian health."



PHOTO BY DANIELIANO



A playroom/family room in the loft overlooks the living area. The room features reclaimed items including two stained glass windows

**My work focuses on the connection between nature and humans. There are significant benefits to being surrounded by living things**

Incorporating elements of nature and providing living spaces for plants and animals within the built environment, the principle is gaining a foothold among businesses considered at the cutting edge of workplace design – including Apple, Google and Amazon. This is partly because biophilic design has been shown to improve worker concentration, engagement and cognitive ability.

For McLennan, biophilic design and the choice of natural materials – like the use of wood and rammed earth at Heron Hall – has a crucial role to play in construction projects which look to promote wellness.

“I think the materials used in a home have a significant impact on people’s feeling of happiness and wellness,” McLennan says. “But it’s something that is hard to quantify and quantify – and typically doesn’t get attention from people.

“A lot of my own work and that of McLennan Design focuses on the connection between nature and humans. There are significant physical and psychological benefits to being surrounded by living things.

“Allowing people the connection not only with natural light and views of nature, but also the presence of plants – and sometimes other species – is something that we are increasingly looking to provide through our designs.”

#### **ELIMINATING TOXIC MATERIALS**

As well as choosing the right materials to use, it’s important to know which to avoid, McLennan says.

“In terms of creating buildings that are conducive to wellness, we need to begin using materials that are healthy for people,” he says. “It’s particularly important that we begin eliminating the toxic chemicals within building materials that are, sadly, pretty ubiquitous in the industry.

“It’s the invisible things you can’t necessarily see which can cause cancer – or at a minimum can hurt air quality and trigger allergies and asthma and all manner of health issues. Some of my work has focused on tackling those issues.”

With “his work,” McLennan is referring to the creation of the Red List – an inventory containing some of the ‘worst-in-class’ materials prevalent in the building industry. Featuring around 20 products and their





The bedrooms are on the east side, so the family wakes up with the sun





McLennan developed the Living Building Challenge certification in 2006.



## Our house is constantly crawling with kids. All the neighbourhood kids like to hang out here

derivatives, it provides a guide to materials to avoid. The list was created by the International Living Future Institute – of which McLennan is chair and co-founder.

“The Red List is a list of toxic chemicals or materials that are common in the building industry and yet have almost no safe exposure level,” McLennan says. “It’s part of a campaign by the Living Future Institute to motivate manufacturers to eliminate those chemicals from their products and their supply chains – and that’s really working.”

Each of the chemicals on the Red List pollutes the environment and bio-accumulates up the food chain until it reaches toxic concentrations. It includes materials whose detrimental effects are widely accepted – such as asbestos, lead and mercury – and also others which are still in regular use, such as polyvinyl chloride (PVC), MDF and halogenated fire retardants and plastics.

### Flower Power – The Living Building Challenge

Described as one of the world’s most rigorous performance standards for buildings, the Living Building Challenge uses a flower as a metaphor. This is because, according to McLennan, the ideal built environment should “function as cleanly and efficiently as a flower”. Like flowers, each living building should:

- Harvest all its own energy and water
- Adapt to climate and location
- Operate pollution free
- Promote health and wellbeing
- Be comprised of integrated systems
- Be beautiful

### MEASURING SUCCESS

As well as avoiding materials on the Red List, McLennan’s Heron Hall home meets all the other requirements of the Living Building Challenge (LBC) – the sustainable building certification programme that he created in 2006.

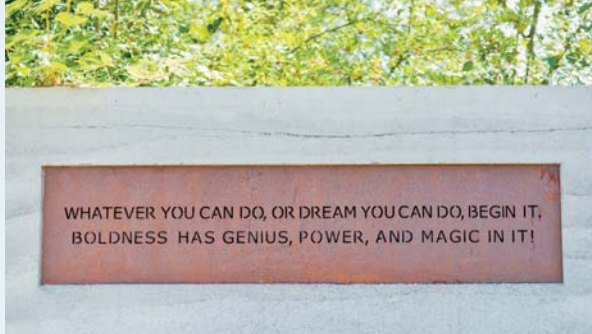
LBC sets out stringent benchmarks for everything from water and energy usage to waste management and the way the building interacts with its surroundings.

But while his home has received the sustainability stamp of approval, the key critics were those at the forefront of McLennan’s mind when he designed it: his children.

“They absolutely love it!” he smiles. “The ultimate proof of the success of Heron House and the contribution it makes to our wellbeing is that it’s always crawling with kids – all the neighbourhood kids love to hang out at our house now. It’s constantly filled with activity.”



PHOTO BY GARY BROWN



Artwork includes this moss art sculpture by biophilic designer Joe Zazzera (bottom left). Large windows in the kitchen and living areas flood the spaces with natural light (below)



PHOTO BY GARY BROWN



## Jason McLennan Q&A

### What differences have you noticed since you moved into Heron House?

We lived in a unique home before this one – but not as green as Heron Hall.

We had good 'nature connections' in the past house as well, however, I can say that my allergies have been better in this house and we're loving living in it.

### What do the children make of the house?

They love it! We designed the 'kids world' section of the house for them to socialise in – our house is always filled with children.

### How does build cost compare when you look at traditional building methods?

I definitely spent more on better materials and high quality construction.

### Where does your passion for the environment originate?

It all goes back to my childhood. I grew up in Sudbury, a nickel mining city in Ontario, Canada. It was bleak there when I was growing up – the industry in the area devastated the landscape and I believe this contributed to the allergies and asthma I suffer from.

We spent our holidays at my aunt's cabin on a wilderness island. It had no electricity, running water or indoor plumbing, and conservation was key. It was, in effect, my first 'living building', and it had a huge impact on me and helped define my life.

### Do you have any further ideas or advice to share with people who are interested in living in a well home?

Do it! It's so important to focus on the air you breathe, the water you drink, your thermal comfort, daylight – it's all related. ●



# THE KITCHEN REIMAGINED

ARCHITECT **VERONICA SCHREIBEIS SMITH** HAS DESIGNED THE KITCHEN OF THE FUTURE, BY PRIORITISING THE HEALTH OF HERSELF AND HER FAMILY

**A**s a busy mom and founding principal of a boutique architecture firm, I found myself without time or energy to feed myself, let alone nourish myself and my family with healthy, nutrient-rich meals.

Like many of us over recent years, I'd become acutely aware of the role nutrition plays in empowering wellbeing, longevity, and performance – not to mention the prevention of disease, illness, and premature aging.

My desperation to make healthy eating a reality for my family and my frustration with the challenge fuelled the inspiration for the Wellness Kitchen.

I had realised two things: firstly, kitchens have changed little over the last 70 years, despite massive shifts in the food

industry, and secondly, the majority of time-saving elements in kitchens are there to service diets that consist of eating preservative-laden, highly-processed food.

So the kitchen had to be re-imagined to make it more convenient to eat a living, vegetable-based diet, while daily rituals had to be both a realistic and an enjoyable reprieve from the frenetic pace of everyday life in the information era.

## New focus

The project began by re-imagining all aspects of how we consume food at home; from the delivery, storage, preparation, cooking, and consumption of food, all the way through to its disposal.

Rather than prescribing any particular diet or trend – vegan, paleo, and so

on – the underlying premise was that the closer the food is to its natural state, and the less adulterated it and its packaging is, the better it is for you and the planet.

I believe future food delivery services and apps will have the ability to plan meals which are tailored to your family's health needs (ie pre-natal, flu-season), and select recipes around your cooking style and ability preferences.

These apps will have the ability to inform an automated home-delivery system to supply your household with dormant and raw bulk goods, while hydroponic refrigeration appliances will facilitate the in-home growing of living vegetables and herbs.

In the future, plastics, coated metals, and other packaging that can be toxic



A central island acts as a food preparation area for multiple people

I've used my own life as a living lab to study the hurdles from a busy career mom's perspective

or wasteful will be replaced. Cupboards, pantries, and refrigerators as we know them will become a thing of the past, and in their place will be temperature- and humidity-controlled storage, with glass fronts, keeping food alive and fresh, while visually tempting us to consume produce before it goes bad.

#### Frozen waste

One of the most exciting innovations in this field is the FroPost™, an appliance which is designed to conveniently freeze and compact cubes of compost.

Why compact trash to send more waste to a landfill, when we can replenish the Earth's topsoil with leftover nutrients in the stems and by-products of a biodynamic diet?

Moreover, why send precious organic matter to the landfill, only to then fertilise soil with synthetic chemicals?

#### Living lab

I've used my own life as a living lab to study the hurdles of reality from a busy career-mom's perspective - one who doesn't take naturally to planning or cooking meals, and who even saw such tasks as a burdensome and time-consuming duty.

I've noted my struggles, and how and where nudge psychology and design can help alter my preconceptions and

## AREAS OF INNOVATION

CONVENTIONAL	VS	WELLNESS
<p>Groceries are packaged in various paper, aluminium, and plastic products. Toxins leach into your foods and beverages from these materials - further adulterating edible goods already laden with preservatives and synthetic colourants.</p> <p>Food storage is limited and either at or near freezing temperatures, or room temperature, all of which is behind closed doors, allowing food to be easily forgotten about for weeks or even years.</p> <p>Pre-made, pre-mixed, and 'helper' meals come in excessive packaging and require little to no preparation, thereby negatively impacting health and family collaboration.</p> <p>Since the dawn of the TV dinner, microwaves have become a staple to not only reheat, but also thaw and cook main dishes.</p>	<p><b>1</b> DELIVERY</p> <p><b>2</b> STORAGE</p> <p><b>3</b> PREPARATION</p> <p><b>4</b> COOKING</p>	<p>Convenience is key. Fresh food is harvested from indoor gardens or purchased from local farmers' markets; organic home delivery services are automated online; and bulk goods are a staple.</p> <p>Variou temperature and humidity controlled environments ensure fresh food is stored properly. Cupboards come complete with running water and glass display doors or cellar-like bins.</p> <p>Fresh food means little packaging and hands-on prep work. The island is re-designed to accommodate multiple work stations and a central trough drain allowing for easy clean up.</p> <p>Diverse cooking sources (range, oven, open fire, etc) provide a wide range of temperatures, while simultaneously offering new ways to maintain nutrients, enhance natural flavours, and broaden culinary influences.</p>
<p>Formal dining traditions designed the kitchen for women or the help to prepare food in isolation before serving the dishes in a separate space, removing our collective relationship with food.</p> <p>Fast, unconscious eating habits lead to an increase in the proportion of food that lack nutrients. Harmful additives that provide convenience and a long shelf-life are readily consumed.</p> <p>Packaging waste and food waste are put in the trash and sent to landfill. Only some packaging materials are recycled.</p>	<p><b>5</b> SOCIAL ACTIVITY</p> <p><b>6</b> CONSUMPTION</p> <p><b>7</b> DISPOSAL</p>	<p>The kitchen is the true heart of the home. Designing this space to comfortably gather, entertain, and nourish one another with multiple workstations and seating areas empowers our relationships with others and with food.</p> <p>Digestion begins with the eyes, so visible food is prominent. Transparent food storage tempts and encourages consumption. Food preparation techniques allow us to harness more energy from our food and regulate portions.</p> <p>Unpackaged fresh food and re-usable containers keep trash to a minimum, while compost collection is made easy, allowing all organic matter to go back into the soil.</p>

behaviour pattern - from budgeting for high-quality food to seeing a more playful and meditative side of food preparation, turning daily habits into joyful rituals.

Our goal at Vera Iconica Kitchen is to bolster healthy movements in the food industry with designs and experiences that empower and inspire holistic, and realistic, eating habits. We want to hear from you, and share success stories and real-world examples, from the tiniest behaviour change to full-blown kitchen remodels. Together, we can nourish our families while enhancing planetary health.





## CONVENTIONAL KITCHEN

- 1 Heavy packaging on grocery items (ie shrink-wrap plastics, plastic containers/ bottles/jugs, plastic lined tin cans) ends up in landfills.
- 2 Harmful chemicals from food packaging leach into food and we then ingest these.
- 3 Many packaged foods have been chemically altered to 'last' (preservatives) and have 'colour' by the addition of synthetic, harmful additives, so that they appear to be in good condition. This can include irradiation.
- 4 Refrigerator/freezer keeps food extremely cold, either at or near freezing temperatures, and rapidly dehydrates fresh fruits and vegetables.
- 5 The pantry is designed for canned (non-perishable) and boxed foods which are stored at warm, room temperatures.
- 6 Large, deep refrigerators hide foods from view. Food is forgotten, left to degrade and expires before it's consumed.
- 7 Upper storage cabinetry is visually and psychologically heavy.
- 8 All organisation is behind closed doors. Dishware, glassware, flatware, and food locations are a mystery to visitors, aiding in cognitive confusion. Also, dishes are commonly stored in upper cabinets, causing unnecessary strain through repetitive lifting, because lower cabinets do not typically have drawers for easy access and use.
- 9 Excessive garbage has created the need for trash compactors. Trash and recycling centres handle large amounts of waste that mostly goes to landfill, while only a small portion can be truly recycled.
- 10 Secondary, smaller sinks are common and often placed in the island only a few feet from the main sink.
- 11 Kitchens are typically designed for one cook, despite trends of social cooking and its benefits for families and communities.
- 12 No filtered water at sinks. Contaminant-laden water available for easy drinking.
- 13 Since the dawn of the TV dinner, microwaves are often used more frequently than ranges. Microwaves have been known to alter our food, and its molecular structure, due to radiation.
- 14 Range vents (commonly found above range microwaves) recirculate air contaminants because many (surprisingly, most) are not vented to the exterior.
- 15 Appliances often accumulate and are left to clutter valuable counter space. Or, appliances are stored in inconvenient, hard to access areas, making them less desirable to use.
- 16 There is little or no natural daylight.
- 17 Woman/women (or help) prepare the food in isolation, before serving the dishes in a separate space.
- 18 Not designed to function well as a gathering space.



## WELLNESS KITCHEN

- 1 Farm-fresh produce and home-grown food (ie in window gardens) have no packaging to contribute to landfills. No packaging means no harmful toxins infiltrating our food supply. Reusable containers for bulk goods, as well as home delivery services, reduce packaging waste that would otherwise go to landfill.
- 2 Fresh, natural food has little to no preservatives, thereby ensuring vitality and promoting good health. Harvesting and producing food products at home is possible and has a positive impact.
- 3 Temperature- and humidity-controlled cabinets with running water keep fresh food alive and nutrient-rich.
- 4 Cellar-like storage (dark and cool) for root vegetables, apples and other harvest produce, allows goods to last well throughout the coming seasons.
- 5 Visually seeing available, healthy foods tempts you to eat the fresh, nutritious options before they perish.
- 6 Upper organisation designed to feel beautiful and open above the counter so perishable foods are easily visible.
- 7 Organisation for dishwater, flatware, and utensils is below the counter in well-organised drawers designed thoughtfully, taking into account proper ergonomics for moving heavy items and having efficient access.
- 8 Vegetable-rich diets and meals that utilise bulk ingredients lead to less waste. The trash compactor is replaced by a Fro-Post™ compacting composter that freezes food waste, mitigating unpleasant scents and encouraging cellular breakdown for easy return to the soil via backyard or community/composting organisations.
- 9 Island is now a large prep station for multiple people where food can be prepared directly on the surface. Surface can be hosed down easily, and features a central trench drain and smart-edge gutters that allow for easy, quick clean up.
- 10 An added health benefit comes through more conscious connections to our food.
- 11 Digestion begins with the eyes, and social connection is enhanced through collaborative food preparation.
- 12 Water filtration system is integrated with the primary water tap/faucet for easy access to healthy drinking water.
- 13 Multiple cooking methods are nurtured and encouraged. Fire, water and range-type cooking are within reach, for added flavour, nutrients and cultural influence.
- 14 Range hood vents to the exterior.
- 15 An appliance garage conceals but maintains easy access, thereby keeping surfaces uncluttered. Juicers, a Vitamix and high-powered mixers aid in food prep without killing valuable enzymes.
- 16 Lots of natural daylight filters into the space through many windows, ideal for supporting window garden systems and healthy circadian rhythms.
- 17 Everyone's a chef and everyone contributes to meal preparation and serving.
- 18 As the heart of the home, multiple seating options, including casual seating by the fire, encourages gathering. ●

# FROM DELICIOUSLY ELLA WITH LOVE

Food writer, blogger and vegan restaurant entrepreneur Ella Mills – better known as Deliciously Ella – has earned a world-class reputation for her plant-based cooking. As her latest cookery book is published, she shares some of her new recipes with *Well Home*



## About The Plant Based Cookbook

In addition to over 100 plant-based recipes, readers are treated to a personal insight into Ella's journey – how she grew her blog, which she began writing to help get herself well while suffering from illness, into a wellbeing brand – and all she's learned along the way, as well as what drives the Deliciously Ella philosophy and her team's passion for creating delicious healthy food.



## YELLOW THAI CURRY

Aubergines are one of my favourite ingredients to use in a curry as they soak up all of the flavours like a sponge. I've lost count of how many bowls of this curry I've eaten in the last few years. When I'm having a busy week I pop into the deli and devour a bowl with brown rice – it's warming, hearty and always keeps me going for hours. This recipe also happens to be one of my husband Matt's favourites too.

SERVES 4

### For the curry paste

½ large onion, roughly chopped  
1 red chilli, roughly chopped  
1 garlic clove, roughly chopped  
1 thumb-sized piece of ginger, peeled and roughly chopped  
1 teaspoon ground coriander  
1 teaspoon ground cumin  
1 teaspoon ground turmeric  
1 lemongrass stalk, bashed and roughly chopped  
1 lime leaf  
3½ tablespoons coconut oil

### For the curry

2 red peppers, deseeded and cut into bite-sized chunks  
1 large aubergine, cut into bite-sized pieces  
100g button mushrooms  
100g baby corn, cut in half  
Olive oil  
1 tablespoon coconut oil  
2 x 400g tins of coconut milk  
1 tablespoon tamari  
Handful of Thai basil, roughly chopped  
Salt



Preheat the oven to 240°C (fan 220°C).

Place all the paste ingredients in a food processor and blitz until smooth.

Place the peppers, aubergine, mushrooms and baby corn in a baking tray with a little olive oil and salt. Roast in the oven for 10–15 minutes, so that they take on a bit of colour, then remove and leave to one side.

Next, place the coconut oil in a heavy-based pan over a medium heat. Once hot, add the curry paste and cook for 5 minutes until soft. Add the coconut milk

and tamari and bring to the boil – then lower the heat and simmer for 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and blitz using a hand blender, then pass through a sieve to remove any unwanted bits (if needed). Place back on to a medium heat and add the roasted vegetables, then cook for a final 5 minutes. Try not to overcook this curry – the sauce only needs this short cooking time and there's a chance it could form a layer of oil on top if you cook it for longer and reduce it too much.

Once everything is cooked through, sprinkle with a handful of chopped Thai basil, serve and enjoy.

## TIP

You could make a double batch of this curry and freeze half for another day. It freezes so well and is really easy to cook straight from the freezer – just place it into an oven set at 200°C (fan 180°C) for 20–25 minutes until cooked through.



## FUDGY BROWNIES

I've been so excited to share this recipe with you, it's our all-time favourite and probably the most popular sweet recipe we've ever had at the Deliciously Ella deli!

The brownies are so gooey and fudgy and I love the crunchy bites of walnuts on top. I often make these for friends, serving them hot out of the oven with a scoop of coconut ice cream on top.

### MAKES 15

1 tablespoon chia seeds  
250g buckwheat flour  
1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda  
Pinch of sea salt  
60g cacao powder  
330g coconut sugar  
100ml almond milk  
130g coconut oil, melted  
Handful of walnuts, chopped

Preheat the oven to 190°C (fan 170°C). Line a 25cm x 18cm x 4cm baking tin with baking parchment.

Place the chia seeds in a bowl with 4 tablespoons water, mix well then leave to one side for 10 minutes to thicken up.

Place the flour, bicarb, salt, cacao powder and coconut sugar into a large bowl and mix well to remove any lumps. Next, add the almond milk, chia mixture and melted coconut oil and mix well for 5–6 minutes to ensure everything is well combined.

Pour the mixture into the lined tin and sprinkle with the walnuts.

Bake for 25–30 minutes, until cooked through but still a little fudgy in the middle. Leave to cool in the tin for 10 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack, before cutting into brownies.



### TIP

In the deli we bake these brownies in individual moulds, which gives them a crusty edge, but here we've suggested baking them in one large tray as it's easier and makes them extra gooey.

# FIVE-BEAN CHILLI WITH CORN BREAD

I think this has been one of our most requested recipes. I can't begin to count the number of emails I've had asking for it, so I'm really excited to finally share it with you.

Both the chilli and the corn bread are surprisingly easy to make and they taste so incredibly good!

The chilli is really hearty and I love the texture combination of the beans in the chilli and the crispy crust of the golden corn bread. If you're going to make one recipe then make this!

THE CHILLI SERVES 4; THE CORN BREAD MAKES ENOUGH FOR 10

## For the corn bread

750g drained tinned sweetcorn  
(3–4 tins depending on size)  
450ml almond milk  
150ml sunflower, rapeseed  
or vegetable oil  
1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar  
25g coriander, chopped  
1 x 400g tin of black beans,  
drained and rinsed  
2 red chillies, deseeded  
and finely chopped  
1 tablespoon sea salt flakes  
Pinch of pepper

## For the dry ingredients

60g plain flour (we use a gluten free one)  
30g rice flour  
400g polenta  
1 tablespoon corn flour  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
2 teaspoons bicarbonate of soda

## For the five-bean chilli

Olive oil  
1 onion, chopped  
1 celery stalk, finely chopped  
2 garlic cloves, chopped  
1 red chilli, deseeded and chopped  
1 teaspoon dried rosemary  
1 teaspoon dried thyme  
3 tablespoons tomato puree  
2 x 400g tins of mixed beans  
1 x 400g tin of tomatoes  
1 tablespoon maple syrup

## To serve

2 red chillies, sliced  
handful of sliced spring onions



Start by making the corn bread.

Preheat the oven to 200°C (fan 180°C). Line a deep 35cm x 25cm baking tin with baking parchment. Place three quarters of the sweetcorn in a food processor and pulse until smooth. Once smooth, mix together with the rest of the whole sweetcorn kernels.

Place all the dry ingredients in a large mixing bowl and stir well. Once mixed, add the almond milk, oil and apple cider vinegar and give everything another really good stir until well combined. Next, add the coriander, black beans, chilli, salt, pepper and sweetcorn, giving it all one final mix.

Once the mixture has come together, pour into the lined baking tin and bake in the oven for 50–55 minutes until golden and cooked through. To test if it's cooked,

insert a knife into the corn bread, it should come out clean. If not, place back in the oven for 5 more minutes to cook through.

While the corn bread is baking, prepare the chilli. Place a large saucepan over a medium heat and add a drizzle of olive oil, the onion, celery, garlic and a pinch of salt and cook until soft, about 5–10 minutes.

Now add the chilli, rosemary, thyme and tomato puree and cook for another 5 minutes. Add the beans, tomatoes, 150ml water, maple syrup and some pepper and bring to the boil, then lower the heat and leave to simmer for 25–30 minutes, at which point it should have a thick consistency.

When you are ready to serve, sprinkle the chillies and spring onion over the top and enjoy with the corn bread.

## TIPS

The corn bread is best eaten fresh, especially when it's warm out of the oven, but the chilli tastes even better the next day, so keep any extras in the fridge to take to work as a packed lunch or pop it in the freezer if you want it to last longer. If you do have leftovers of the corn bread, however, you can store it in an airtight container and enjoy it the next day.

For the mixed beans, we buy tins made up of red kidney beans, black-eyed beans, borlotti beans, lima beans and pea navy beans, but there are different kinds available so just use what you like. ●

AIR  
WATER  
NOURISHMENT  
LIGHT  
MOVEMENT  
THERMAL COMFORT  
SOUND  
MATERIALS  
MIND  
COMMUNITY  
**WELL.**

The WELL Building Standard™ sits at the heart of health and design.

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Father and daughter John and Elora Hardy in Bali



**We want people to  
feel there's hope  
and possibility and  
magic in the world**

The creator of the Green Village in Bali and his daughter tell  
Magali Robathan how their bamboo, nature-inspired homes  
are changing the way we view the places we live

**JOHN & ELORA HARDY**  
**IBUKU**

Ananda House at the Green Village, Bali is a magical and whimsical construction







## You wake up in our homes and you just feel happy



PHOTO: BIRMANJO HELIAN

River House at the Green Village is filled with cosy corners for nesting and relaxing

**F**ather and daughter bamboo builders Elora and John Hardy believe feeling happy and healthy in your home boils down to just one thing: being as close to nature as possible.

The pair, along with a team of designers, architects and craftspeople based in Bali, conceive and create beautiful, fantastical homes from bamboo that are about as far from most modern houses as it's possible to be.

Their business, called Ibuku, makes homes which are curved, whimsical, tactile and often partly open to the elements. They're also highly sustainable and each one is unique in design and inspired by the natural world.

"Living in a box is death to the people," says John Hardy, speaking from his home in Bali. "We evolved to walk on the earth, not on perfectly flat, industrial floors. Modern homes are full of right angles – they're not life enhancing. Look at the beauty in the world. There are no right angles.

"And the toxic crap in so many of our homes," he continues. "What are we doing to ourselves and the planet?"

"We don't use right angles in the homes we build. We takes our cues from nature and traditional indigenous buildings. The floors in our homes are often slightly ridged – they're amazing. You wake up and you just feel happy."

"The experience that people have in a building is much more important than what it looks like," adds Elora Hardy. "The most powerful thing for people to get from the spaces we build is a feeling of optimism, that there's hope and possibility and magic in the world."

### GREEN VISIONARIES

In 2007, Canadian jewellery designer John Hardy and his wife Cynthia founded Bali's Green School – a pioneering, open air school built from locally sourced bamboo, that teaches sustainability alongside a traditional curriculum,





Leaf House at the Green Village Bali, is a welcoming family home







PHOTO: BAMBUNILINA V.A.SODIA

Top and bottom left, Cacao House at the Green Village, Bali. Bottom right, River House, which is on the lower slopes, overlooking the rushing water



PHOTO: BAMBUNILINA V.A.SODIA



PHOTO: BAMBUNILINA V.A.SODIA

with the aim of inspiring the green leaders of the future and educating them in the latest environmental thinking.

Together with daughter Elora and a team of talented architects and craftspeople, John and Cynthia then built the Green Village, a community of 12 unique (and very beautiful) private bamboo homes, surrounded by the lush Balinese forest and within walking distance of the Green School.

Today, they're building the final three homes that will complete the Green Village development, and are looking for the right people to invest in a very different kind of home.

#### HOW IT BEGAN

John Hardy moved to Bali in 1975, where Irish artist and designer Linda Garland introduced him to bamboo as a building material. Impressed, Hardy decided that bamboo

was the future of sustainable building, and vowed never to build with concrete or brick ever again.

Bamboo is flexible, light and strong, with the compressive force of concrete and the same strength-to-weight ratio as steel. It can also regenerate itself in just a few years, and absorbs more carbon dioxide than softwood trees.

"Bamboo is one of the only sustainable materials in the world that's so prolific that we can promise it to everybody," says John Hardy. "We certainly can't promise everyone pine trees, the rainforest is gone, and cement is destroying the planet, but bamboo we can promise."

John Hardy spent the next three decades building his jewellery business (to see it today, go to [johnhardy.com](http://johnhardy.com)), while also creating a number of buildings from bamboo, including his jewellery workshop and showroom.



Family space at Leaf House,  
the Green Village Bali.  
The architects found a way to  
preserve bamboo using Borax





Anarida House at the Green Village is high up on the site, overlooking the river

PHOTO © MUSEUM/STEFEN JOHNSON



PHOTO © BILALINO HELMA

River House at the Green Village was designed by the team at IBUKU



## THE FINAL THREE RESIDENCES AT THE GREEN VILLAGE

### ECLIPSE HOUSE

Eclipse has two dwellings, each with two bedrooms and two bathrooms. It also has a swimming pool, nestled in the lush garden next to the Ayung river

**Price:** by application

**Status:** Guest house 100% complete. Master house 90% complete.

### ECHO HOUSE

Four bedroom house, consisting of a master house and guest house. The property has two swimming pools and an exotic garden overlooking the river valley

**Price:** sale pending

**Status:** Guest house 100% complete. Master house yet to begin.

### AURA HOUSE

Set among giant black palm trees, this intricately woven, two-bedroom house is ideal for one family. The land area for Aura is 465.82sq m.

**Price:** by application

**Status:** 100% per cent complete



The final three houses will complete the build at the Green Village in Bali

## The Green School came from the idea of giving something back

In 2006, he watched Al Gore's environmental documentary *An Inconvenient Truth*, and was shocked into action.

Hardy decided he needed to be part of the movement spreading the word about climate change, and that education was a key starting point, so the following year, he and Cynthia sold their jewellery-making business, gathered the team and created the Green School.

"I realised that with four children, retiring and playing golf was no longer an option. I had to do something," says Hardy. "The school came from the idea of giving something back."

At the time, Elora was working for designer Donna Karan in New York. On a trip home, she visited the Green School and was impressed by what she saw. "I needed to be part of something sustainable. It really came down to that," she says.

Elora moved back to Bali to lead the team of designers and makers responsible for creating the Green School and later the Green Village. The team became Ibuku – which translates to Mother Earth – a design and architecture practice that has created hundreds of bamboo structures, including private homes, a private spa on Bali, a restaurant in Hong Kong and an expansion of the Bambu Indah boutique resort in Ubud, Bali, which is owned by John and Cynthia.



Children who study at the Green School in Bali follow both conventional and environmental curricula and learn about nature in a hands on way





The Ananda House at  
the Green Village, Bali



PHOTO: IBUKU/STYLISM

Leaf House (left). IBUKU build all elements of a house by hand from bamboo. Below, Eclipse House, one of the last three homes built this year to complete the Green Village

## THE GREEN VILLAGE

The Green Village consists of 12 luxurious bamboo homes, with a further three under construction. These final three homes will complete the community, and the developers are currently advertising for 'property owners, renters, investors, and environmentally-conscious businesses to become a part of our Green Village community'.

What kind of person buys a home in the Green Village? "Really amazing, adventurous people," says Elora. "The kind of person who's seen it all – who's experienced so many interesting, beautiful things, and is looking for something that feels authentic. People say they can really connect to nature in our spaces – to something deeper.

"People talk very passionately about the houses we build, whether they live in them or visit them," she continues. "There's a sense that this is the right way to live, that it's natural and people just feel good in them."

The latest property being built is called Eclipse and it should be complete by the end of 2018. It's a four bedroom property, split across two buildings – the main house and the guest house – each with two bedrooms and two bathrooms.

"The house is built primarily from black bamboo, which is rare and beautiful," says Elora Hardy. "It's nestled among the black palms, and it feels a little moonlit and otherworldly."

Inside the guest house, moon motifs have been used throughout. "It was a fun opportunity to take the design a little bit away from the more natural, rustic style to something more contemporary and graphic," she adds.

## INSPIRATION

For Elora and the team at Ibuku, the starting point when designing a home is thinking about the feeling they want to create. "We think about the natural spaces that make us feel safest and calmest and happiest – a beautiful grove of trees



PHOTO: IBUKU/TOMASO RIVA

may be the most conducive space for feeling well," she says. "When we design, we take inspiration from nature – from caves and nests. There's a lot to be drawn from the human body as well, from its curves and forms; the way we like to lean or stretch or curl up when we're resting.

"If you're building a yoga space in a home, for example, you want to feel as though you can stretch as far as possible, but you also want to feel grounded and protected. We try to think about how we can create a space to encourage that."

She believes the materials we surround ourselves with are vital to our wellbeing. "For millions of years, we've become used to relating to organic forms and irregularities," she says. "They're reassuring and comforting for us."

"You can go for a walk in nature, or see a beautiful picture of it. But to actually be immersed in it and to be able to sleep in it. What could be more luxurious than that?" ●



# TRAVEL TO HEAL






Anne Biging, CEO and founder,  
Healing Hotels of the World



Dr. Elisabeth Ixmeier, CCO and founder,  
Healing Hotels of the World

## All our hotels inspire personal transformation

The journey to creating Healing Hotels of the World began simply with intuition – the deep inner wisdom that whispered to us that creating partnerships with hotels for this very purpose and establishing healing criteria to define and ensure quality were important ideas.

Then it continued with belief that there are indeed places in the world that provide opportunities for travellers to begin a journey of deep personal transformation.

Finally, the journey ended with knowing that there is an absolute need for people to learn to live life in a more fulfilled way and to begin that process by finding a Healing Hotel that is a perfect fit for their personal needs.

With these three vital elements, we founded Healing Hotels of the World, the only global hospitality brand with member hotels located on all continents, which are dedicated

specially to holistic health and healing.

Our partners adhere to our healing criteria and provide ways for travellers to learn how to become whole in body, mind and spirit.


More than just a beautiful hotel or resort with a spa attached, each Healing Hotel is a world class business offering various ways to begin approaching life in a more profound way.

Whatever the reason for each individual, the idea of traveling to heal resonates for so many people, in all corners of the globe.

Our world has created breathlessness due to over-work, incredible stress and a feeling that we are always running behind.

What if, instead, we are rendered breathless from experiencing the power of good health, breathless from the peace of serenity and breathless from the grace of natural beauty?

So now we pose these questions to you: which kind of breathless would you prefer, and how do you wish to change your lifestyle?



[healinghotelsoftheworld.com](http://healinghotelsoftheworld.com)

# PLAYFUL

A curving slide offers an alternative way for the children to get downstairs



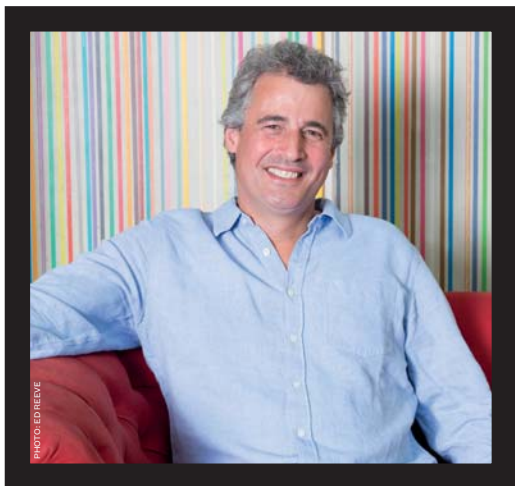
# LIVING

With seven children, architect Alex Michaelis and his partner knew they wanted their home to be as playful as possible. A slide, swimming pool, cinema room and firefighter's pole help to keep the family active, connected and happy, as he explains



The outdoor lap pool is heated and used by the family throughout the year





Alex Michaelis' design firm has a strong portfolio of luxury residential properties. This time, he used his professional skills to build a healthy house of fun for his family

#### **Has living in the house changed your lives in terms of the family's wellbeing?**

The house is incredibly calm and I think a lot of that has to do with the fact that it's a home where you can find space either to be alone or with other people. We have two roof terraces which are quiet, contemplative spaces at the top of the house, and we also have large communal areas such as the kitchen, living room and the swimming pool courtyard, which are always hives of activity and fun.

#### **Was the whole family involved in making design decisions?**

Thankfully not! With seven children, there would have been no decisions made at all. However, the house was designed with them fully in mind, making sure that fun elements such as a fireman's pole, a slide and a cinema room would be key parts of the house, while also ensuring they each had individual bedrooms for privacy.

#### **Do you think family houses need to have more playful elements and how do these change family culture?**

I firmly believe that homes are for children as much as they are for adults.

Having playful elements incorporated into the family home helps children to be creative and physical, which is important in today's iPad-centric world. Communal spaces encourage interactions and conversation, which is so important to family culture.

## **I firmly believe that homes are for children as much as they are for adults**

#### **How much do you use the pool?**

The pool is used most days, especially by the younger children. It's super insulated and heated to 30 degrees, so that even in the depths of winter we still come out and swim lengths – the only problem is keeping our Labrador, Seal, out!

#### **Has having the pool led to you being fitter?**

I hope so. I look forward to swimming in the mornings – it helps both body and mind. I spend a lot of time on planes, so I try and take the opportunity whenever I can to be as active as possible.

#### **How have the children responded to the house?**

The children love the house, it's great to see them being active and using the swimming pool and the slide, and climbing up the stairs and then sliding down the pole. It's great exercise. Even the grown-ups can't resist a go...



"Even the adults can't resist a go"... A firefighter's pole connects the ground and first floor (above). A sliding door opens out onto a courtyard and the lap pool. The home also features two curved towers, which house the bedrooms and a play area for the children



The house was built on the site of an old garage in a residential area of west London





Maximising light with skylights and large windows was key, says Michaelis. The house features a pool table and a cinema room, to keep both the adults and children connected. Large communal areas such as the living room, kitchen and courtyard bring the family together

## ABOUT MICHAELIS BOYD

Michaelis Boyd is an international architecture studio with offices in London and New York.

Founded in 1995 by Alex Michaelis and Tim Boyd, their portfolio encompasses high-end residential and commercial projects ranging from new-build urban sites and the renovation of heritage buildings, to luxury hotels, resorts, private members' clubs, restaurants and bars.

### Residential

New-build residential projects include La Croix Val Mer, an expansive family home with views spanning Cap Lardier National Park in France and Arijui, a private residence in the Borana Conservancy in Kenya.



Other larger-scale residential developments include the luxury Otium resort in Thailand and the interior design of 254 luxury loft apartments within Battersea Power Station in London.

Most recently, Michaelis Boyd have designed five new residences at the Sugar Beach Resort in St Lucia; Clubhouse by

ZO – a co-working, wellness and lifestyle concept in the Rockefeller Center, New York; and the RYSE Hotel in Hongdae, Seoul.

Other recent hotel projects include The Williamsburg Hotel in Brooklyn, New York; the Kimpton De Witt Hotel in the heart of Amsterdam; work for Soho House and Sandibe, a

sustainable safari lodge in the Okavango Delta, Botswana.

Recent restaurants by the practice include an outpost of the Michelin-starred Hong Kong restaurant Duddell's, set within the historic St Thomas Church, London; and Sabor, a new Spanish restaurant for chef Nieves Barragán Mohacho. ●



# Enjoy your wellness experience





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**The Wellness Company**

# Delos launches Darwin home wellness system

Home automation can now improve  
your family's health, with the launch of  
technology which controls environments



The Darwin Tablet  
controls air filtering,  
water purification  
and circadian lighting





**L**iving a well life depends on getting the fundamentals in place, such as clean air and water and healthy sleep.

In response to this need, wellness innovator Delos has launched the Darwin Home Wellness Intelligence Platform – a digital home management system.

#### INDOOR LIVING

We spend more than 90 per cent of our time indoors, but indoor air quality can be up to five times worse than outdoors and even with advanced water treatment, it can be a challenge to ensure our drinking water is free from contaminants.

Darwin adjusts ventilation and helps remove allergens and pollution from the air, while a three-stage filtration system helps clean the water going to every tap and showerhead.

Indoor living can be responsible for disrupting our natural circadian rhythm – the 24-hour biological process that dictates our sleep-wake cycle and underpins our health.

Darwin is 'always on' and calibrates the environment in the home, utilising specially designed sensors to respond to changing conditions

The system controls circadian lighting within the home, in a way which is designed to mimic the properties of natural light.

This minimises environmental disturbances and helps improve quality of sleep, energy levels and mental health.

Darwin is 'always on', calibrating the environment in the home, utilising specially-designed sensors to respond to changing conditions and adjust systems accordingly.

#### FOR ALL PRICE POINTS

The system can be purchased at a range of different price points through HTSA Network-accredited dealers in the US. It will also be at the Consumer Electronics Show this year in partnership with KB Homes.

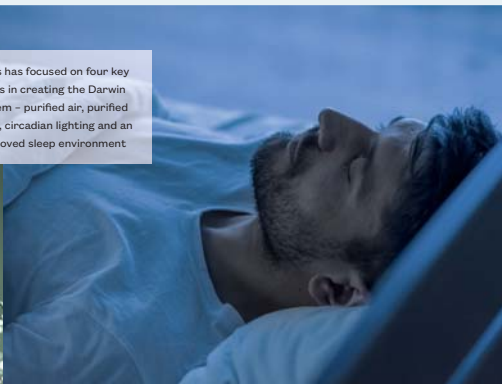
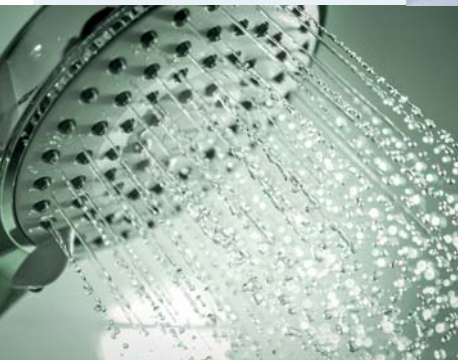
Darwin has been installed by KB Home in the US and Simonds Homes and Lateral Estate in Australia, as well as in luxury residences at 1371 Summitridge Drive and 521 North Cannon Drive in Beverly Hills, US.



Home builders around the world are collaborating with Delos, on properties from entry-level to super luxe



Delos has focused on four key areas in creating the Darwin system – purified air, purified water, circadian lighting and an improved sleep environment





Delos has installed Darwin in a new luxury residence, 371 Summitridge Drive in Beverly Hills



Paul Scialla is founder and CEO of Delos, the company behind Darwin. He set up the business after 18 years on Wall Street, due to his interest in sustainability and altruistic capital

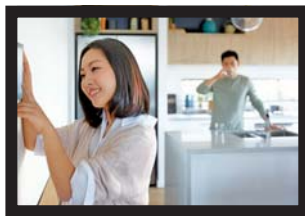
#### About Delos

Delos is the creator of the Wellness Real Estate concept and has fostered research collaborations to create wellness standards, programmes and solutions for the built environment.

For example, Delos and the Mayo Clinic collaborated to form the Well Living Lab, the world's first research centre which is committed to investigating the real-world impacts of indoor environments on human health and performance.

The driving force behind the establishment of the International Well Building Institute and its Well Building Standard, Delos has also been responsible for the adoption of wellness real estate programmes across the commercial real estate market, with nearly 1,000 projects already delivered in 35 countries.

The launch of the Darwin Home Wellness Intelligence platform marks the company's first expansion into the residential smart-home market.



Simonds Homes Australia is a Delos partner

#### THE AUSSIES ADOPT DARWIN

Delos is working with Simonds Homes in Australia to integrate the Darwin Home Wellness Intelligence platform into its building construction process.

The collaboration makes Simonds the first volume house builder in the world to incorporate the system into its homes.

The first-tier Darwin option will be included as part of Simonds' package in new-build homes in the Victoria market, with paid upgrades available.

Simonds is also organising a series of wellness activities in its display homes, with sessions available on healthy eating, exercise and sport and family connections.

CEO Kelvin Ryan says: "Our design philosophy focuses on delivering spaces that encourage healthy living, from everyday activities to sharing memorable celebrations that contribute to wellbeing."

Simonds is a Global Wellness Institute Ambassador.

● Australian house builder Lateral Estate has also announced Darwin will go into its Parc Blakehurst apartment development in Sydney.



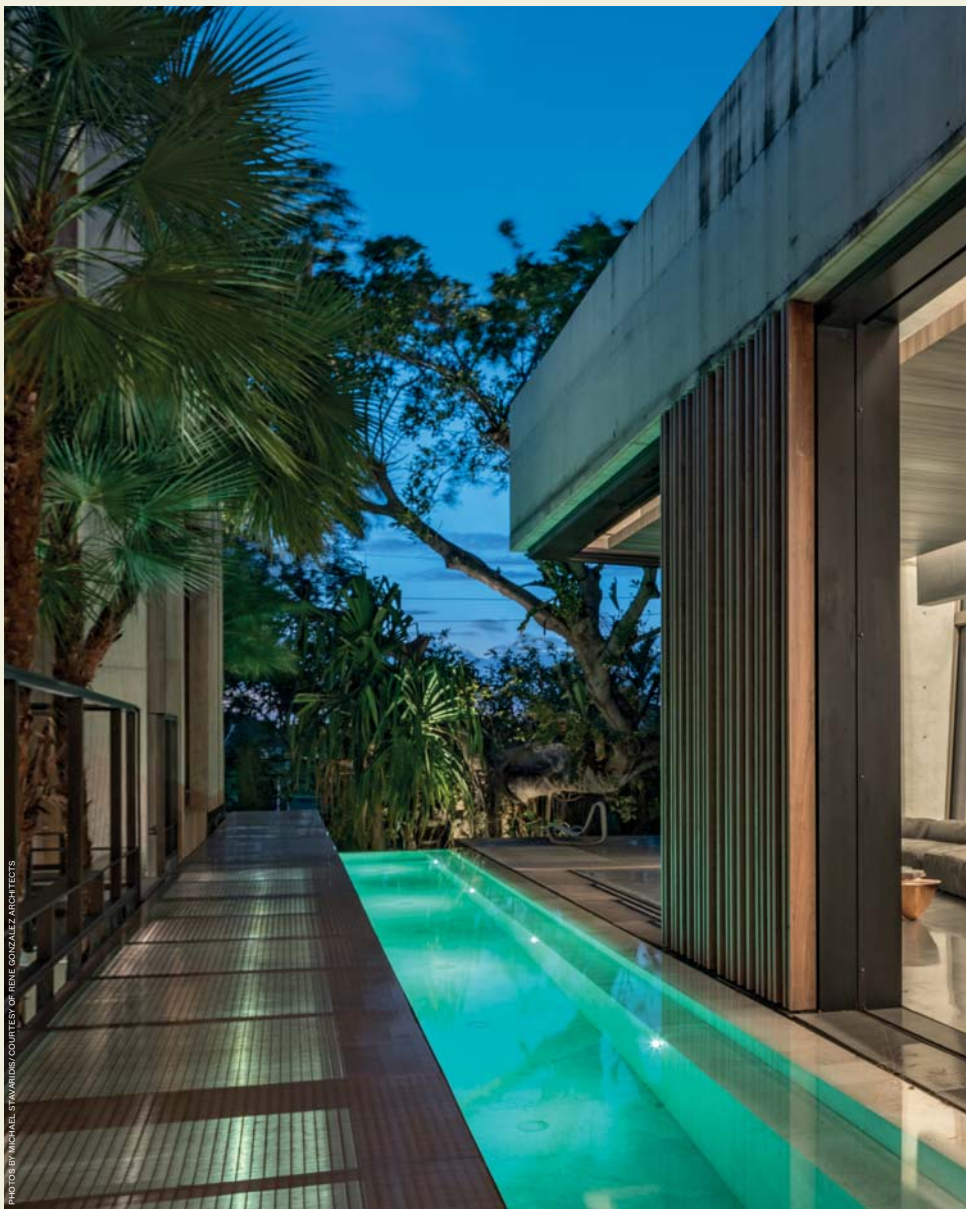


PHOTO BY MICHAEL SPANAKIS / COURTESY OF RENE GONZALEZ ARCHITECTS



# The High Life

It's time to rethink the way we're living in response to climate change, says architect Rene Gonzalez.

Built on stilts to withstand sea level rises, this Miami home turns its elevated position into an asset, with bags of natural light, living trees growing throughout and a raised outdoor lap pool

The home's elevated position makes it feel like a calm haven away from the bustle and urban activity of the neighbourhood





Rene Gonzalez has a special interest in elevated living



The raised design protects from flooding and allows air to circulate underneath

## Even brushing your teeth in the right space can elevate a daily routine into a ritual

### Architect Rene Gonzalez tells us what makes Prairie Avenue Residence special

What are the stand-out wellness features of this home?

The Prairie Avenue Residence's primary wellness feature is its harmonious connection to the environment.

Raised on stilts in response to the acute risks of sea-level rise, the house features an undulating landscape at ground level that allows for lush vegetation and natural drainage. Overflow of water from the elevated lap pool creates a soothing aural quality and gives a sense of coolness. At the upper level of the house, glass floor-to-ceiling pocket doors and permeable, grated walkways provide cross ventilation and filter the natural light.

The uppermost level of the house has a green roof planted with natural grasses, as well as an open-air hot tub, all contributing to a sense of peace and tranquility.

Do you foresee more people choosing to include wellness elements in residential developments?

Yes I do. With the frenetic pace of most people's lives today, residential clients are looking for a sanctuary and a place to recharge their batteries.

We're seeing wellness elements that create or highlight a connection to the natural environment having the most impact. These include integrating interior and exterior living spaces, including water elements when possible, providing meditative spaces, and understanding how architecture – the manipulation of light and space – can improve the daily moments of life. Even brushing your teeth in the right space – with consideration given to elements such as light, air, and materials – can elevate a daily routine into a ritual.



Floor to ceiling windows let in natural light and offer views of the vegetation. The pool provides a sense of coolness



The bedrooms have been designed as sanctuaries, with lots of natural light



The lap pool acts as a central spine for four 'floating' pavilions housing the living/dining/kitchen area (above), the master bedroom suite (left) and two guest cottages

#### Does adding wellness elements increase the value of properties?

Wellness elements are timeless and universally appealing, so investing in them will always add value.

Details like spas and pools or a living wall may seem an extravagance, but ultimately they add a dimension to a home that's more soulful and sustains the spirit.

#### If you were designing the perfect wellness home, what would it be like?

As with any of our projects, we'd first start with the site and understanding the needs of the client. We would look for ways to integrate interiors and landscape and to create a retreat, considering how each of the senses might be affected by the design.

#### What wellness elements should be included in properties being designed for the mass market?

Natural light is essential and it can be amplified or reflected in various ways to bring it into the home.

For concentrated living environments where space is limited, the creation of small areas for quiet – such as a small terrace garden or an interior courtyard – can make a big difference.

**Wellness elements are timeless and universally appealing so investing in them will always add value**



The retractable staircase lifts into the belly of the house when not in use





The house is elevated above a sculptural garden.



The lap pool runs through the centre of the residence

## ABOUT THE PRAIRIE AVENUE RESIDENCE

In 2017, RGA completed the first in a series of elevated residences in the city of Miami Beach, which specifically addresses the serious challenge of sea-level rise. The threat of this condition has grown exponentially, from a water level rise of 8 inches since 1880 to a projected rise of 3 to 4 feet by the end of the century.

The city is actively responding by elevating streets and is spending US\$500m on pump stations to mitigate the situation. On private properties, new requirements are now being imposed that require houses to be at higher ground and seawalls to be raised.

Situated in Miami Beach, the Prairie Avenue Residence is elevated on stilts as a response to this acute risk, with a design that both acknowledges traditional precedents and is adapted to contemporary living in harmony

**Like the mangrove forests which protect coastal zones, this house touches the ground very lightly**

with the changing environment and the challenges we face.

Like the indigenous mangrove forests found in tropical and subtropical tidal areas, which protect coastal zones from erosion, storm surge and hurricanes, the house touches the ground very lightly.

### Safe haven

Elevated on columns, it has gardens, parking and storage at ground level, and provides a safe haven for the inhabitants during hurricanes and flooding, while having the feeling of being removed from urban activity and the surrounding South Beach neighbourhood.

The Florida Seminole Indians used similar methods elevating their Chickee huts in the early 1800s to provide protection from wet ground and vermin, and to allow breezes to flow under the house for ventilation.

Later in the 1930s and 40s, a community of houses named Stiltsville was built over the water in Miami's Biscayne Bay as a decadent refuge to which Miamians could escape. By capturing the essence of these varied sources of inspiration, the project embodies the qualities of its place and embraces a relevant and creative design solution.

The elevated living areas hover over a sculptural garden

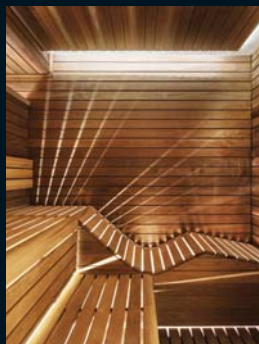
of rolling tropical vegetation, which provides drainage and is a changing, organic element viewed differently depending on the fluctuating levels of the water below.

The house is accessed by a retractable bronze staircase.

The surrounding areas are accessed through grated metal catwalks that emphasize the delicate connection between the ground and living spaces.

Designed as a holiday home, the residence is entwined with the tropical landscape.

Surrounded with glass along its edges, tilted concrete walls appear to float and allow light to spill into the house. The floor and ceiling planes are treated as independent elements, giving the feeling of being inside a sequence of floating planes elevated from the ground and orientated to the sky. ●





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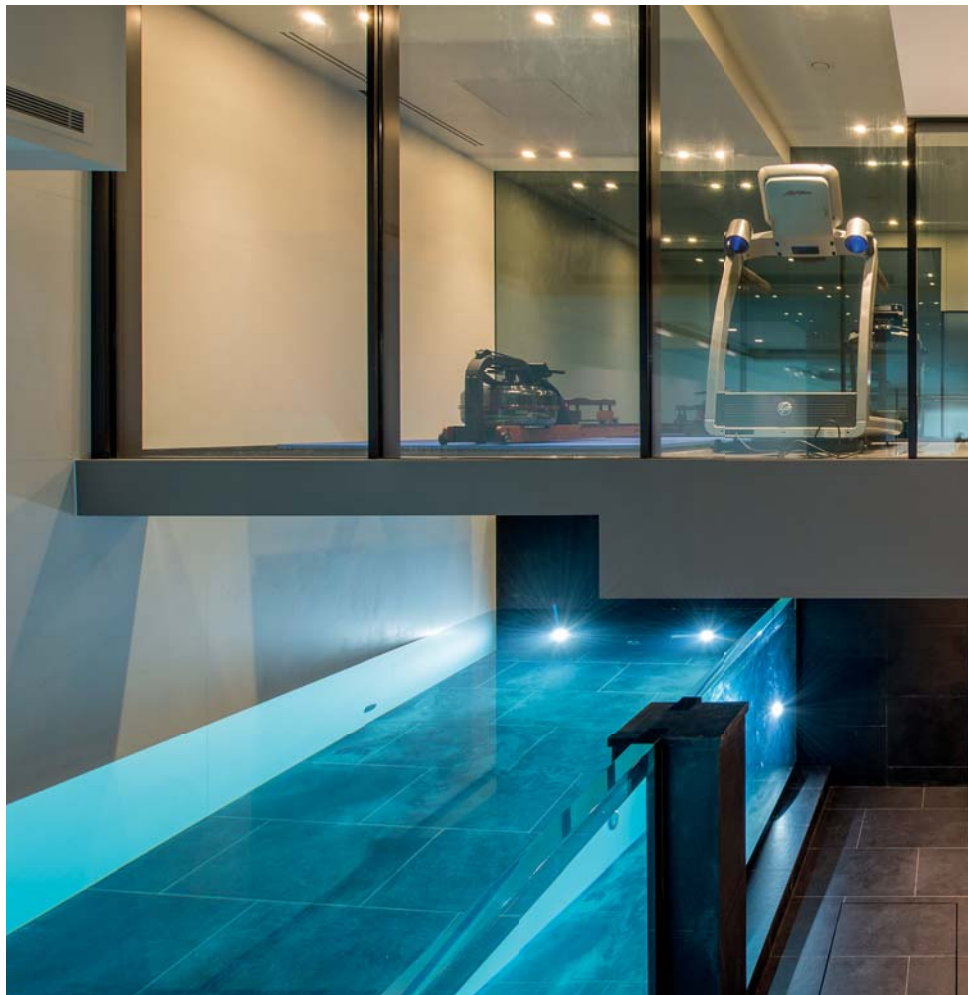
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# The Hidden House



The developers dreamed of a home to support a healthy lifestyle and TF Architecture have delivered this home in West London with beautifully integrated health and wellness features



The gym sits on a glass floor over the lap pool, giving great views while working out

## The Hidden House's health and wellness offering remains a key USP and a central feature to the remarkable property



Kenham Building took over two years to carry out the sensitive renovation

**T**he city of London is no stranger to super-homes and in a competitive housing market, those at the centre of premium property development continue to seek new ways in which to differentiate the buildings they're marketing to high-end buyers.

Tucked away in the heart of London's Notting Hill, the Hidden House was designed by TF Architecture, with construction work by Kenham Building.

Sold privately in 2017, the five-bed home offers 9,000sq ft (836sq m) of living space across three floors and – tapping into an increasingly popular trend – its wellness offering is a central feature of this remarkable property.

### A wellness hub in the heart of the home

Ranged around a large central courtyard with indoor/outdoor living, the property has extensive family and entertaining spaces and an abundance of plantings and gardens, creating a tranquil oasis in this busy part of London.

Substantial living walls and large light-wells continue the green theme, bringing daylight, oxygen and nature's abundance into the heart of the home and helping to moderate the temperature and humidity.

One of the outstanding areas of the Hidden House is the property's basement level, which is home to a swimming pool and a gym with shower and changing facilities, as well as a media centre, family social space and wine store.

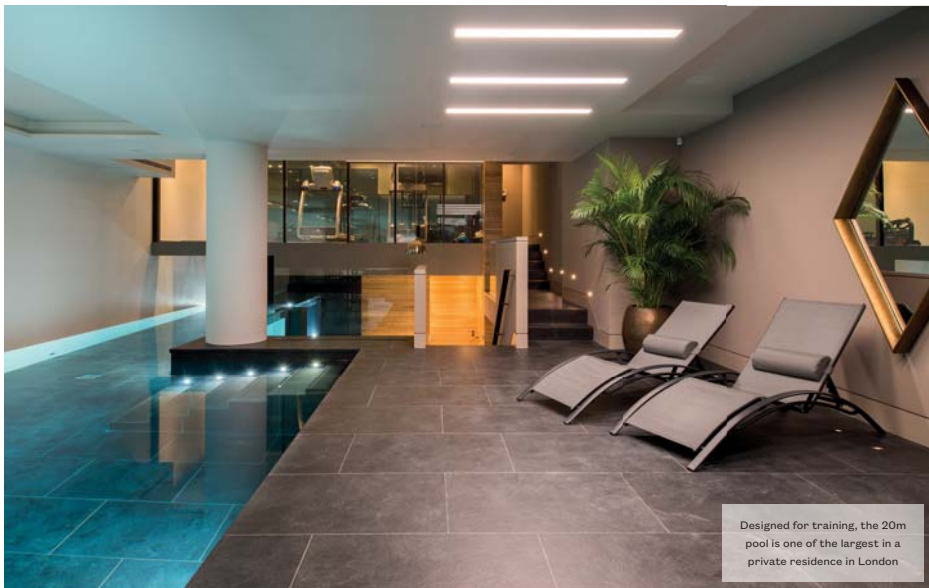
At 20 metres, the pool is one of the longest in a private home in London, yet its original design looked somewhat different, with the proposed pool being far smaller and the space adjacent to it being taken up by a relaxation area.

The indoor/outdoor reception spaces bring planting and fresh air into the heart of the home

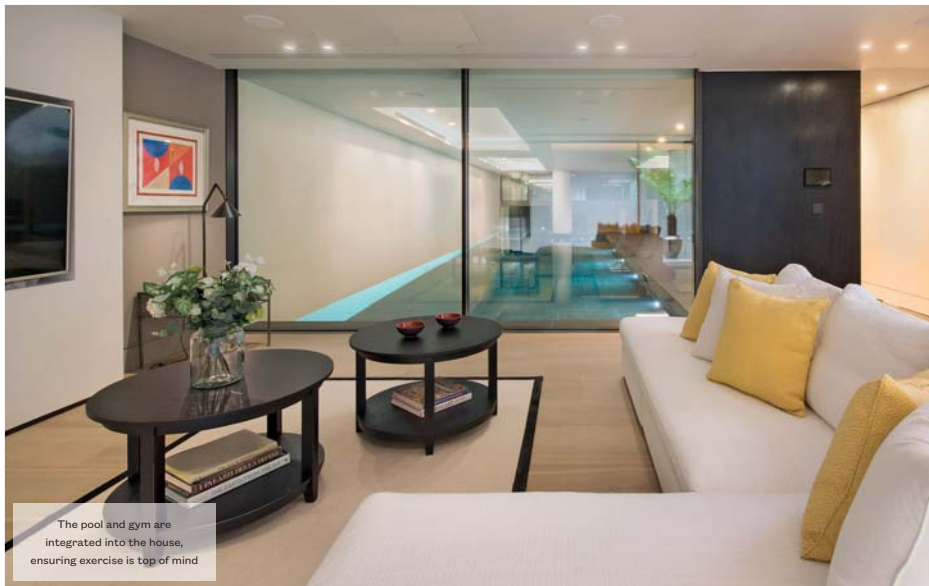








Designed for training, the 20m pool is one of the largest in a private residence in London



The pool and gym are integrated into the house, ensuring exercise is top of mind

A glass floor and walls in the gym allow for uninterrupted views, while the design creates the illusion of the space floating above the pool below

The decision was made to remove the relaxation area from the plan and instead to allocate this floor area to building a bigger pool to deliver a more conventional swimming space which was clear of distractions and obstructions, as Kenham's Joshua Schumann explains: "Although the pool was originally much smaller, in the end, less of a focus was put on creating a pool for play or leisure, and more on designing an area which supports a healthy, active lifestyle."

The gym is positioned at the back of the pool area and has a glass floor and walls, allowing for uninterrupted views. With all this glass, it appears to float above the pool below.

The basement's configuration is in tune with the masterplan for the entire property, which been planned to create a seamless flow and uncomplicated simplicity.

### Training choices

The gym equipment, which was originally loaned to showcase the health and wellness offering to prospective buyers before being sold as part of the house purchase, was supplied by Life Fitness, a regular collaborator of Kenham.

The gym – with a budget of £400,000 – was designed with a focus on cardiovascular exercise, with a matted area added for bodyweight training and stretching.

With space available for three machines, careful consideration had to be put into the equipment selection; not only to maximise workout options, but to also ensure that the chosen equipment was aligned with the modern design of the training area to avoid it looking cluttered.

"The requirements for a home gym are often dictated by available space," explains Chris Webb from Life Fitness UK, "but in this instance, a great deal of thought also went into the aesthetics of the equipment, to ensure the gym fitted with the modern styling of the house, without compromising on quality or the range of exercise options on offer."



A water resistance rower, on a glass floor, over water – the closest you'll get to the real thing

## What do you need when considering a home gym?

By Joshua Schumann

Ironman Triathlete and GM at Kenham Building

**Space:** Even with a space as small as 10sqm you could create a pretty awesome gym, however, be careful with low ceilings! Remember treadmills and bikes often surprise you with their required useable height once installed and in-use.

**Budget:** This can literally be as much as you're willing to spend – if you can only afford one piece of equipment to begin with then that's a start. The budget for the Hidden House gym (£400,000) allowed us to create something amazing.

**Flooring:** It needs to be easy to wash and able to withstand a lot of use – think vinyl or resin flooring. There are some fantastic materials around, and I am a big fan of 'Bolon Flooring,' which is a designer style vinyl floor and great for adding a bit of colour.

**Finishes:** Mirrors are an easy way to create an illusion of more space, as well as

ensuring you're maintaining the correct form when exercising. Add a smoked tint to create a really cool effect. And a TV or screen is a must.

**Lighting:** You can use lighting to transform your home gym from drab to fab by installing mood lighting which can be adjusted to suit the time of day and your energy levels. If your gym is doubling up as a yoga studio, then dimmable lighting is a must.

**Cooling:** If budget allows, get the specialists on board and go for an air conditioning system. When you're halfway through your workout that cool air will feel amazing and let you push that little bit harder.

**Music system:** Control 4 is a great gadget. You can link all your sound requirements, be it phone, tablet, computer, or TV. Hide some speakers in the ceiling and a sub in the corner and you're ready to go.

## About the Hidden House

Location: Westbourne Grove, Notting Hill, London

### BASEMENT

- 20m indoor pool with gym, shower and changing facilities
- Media room
- Wine store

### GROUND FLOOR

- Large open plan kitchen linking through to a study / TV area
- Open plan living space with automated sliding doors into a private outdoor courtyard
- Double garage

### FIRST FLOOR

- Master bedroom with twin en-suites and dressing areas
- Large guest bedroom with en-suite
- Three additional bedrooms with en-suites

**Total floor area**  
9,000sq ft / 836sq m

**Years of build/  
renovation**  
Q4 2014 – Q2 2017

**Architect**  
TF Architecture

**Builder**  
Kenham Building

**Overall budget**  
£5,400,000

**Gym budget**  
£400,000



The original windows bring charm to the master bedroom (top), while the reception rooms have more modern styling

"It was also essential that each piece was accessible and able to support the training needs of any user, to ensure the gym could cater for a wide range of abilities, so that it could be used by everyone in the family and also guests and relatives who might want to use the space," adds Chris.

### The kit selected

The first choice made was for the Life Fitness T5 Treadmill and Track Connect Console, which offers three different running surface settings, as well as walk, jog and run speeds and up to four user profiles for personalised workouts.

Secondly, the Life Fitness FS4 Elliptical was picked for its three-in-one exercise offering within a compact footprint.

A cross trainer – the FS4 – has attachment points for the use of resistance bands to increase the number of workout options available, plus platforms on each side to facilitate upper body workouts. Its touchscreen console also interacts with popular fitness apps and wearables, while users can access new workout uploads on screen, via the console's wireless internet connection.

The Row HX Trainer completes the gym's equipment range. Manufactured from natural wood and tempered steel, the Row HX utilises fluid technology resistance, to create a low-impact, total-body workout which is suitable for a wide range of users. Its small footprint and ability to be moved and stored with ease made it a suitable choice, while exercising on a water rower on a glass floor over water was a fun touch.

### Setting up your own gym

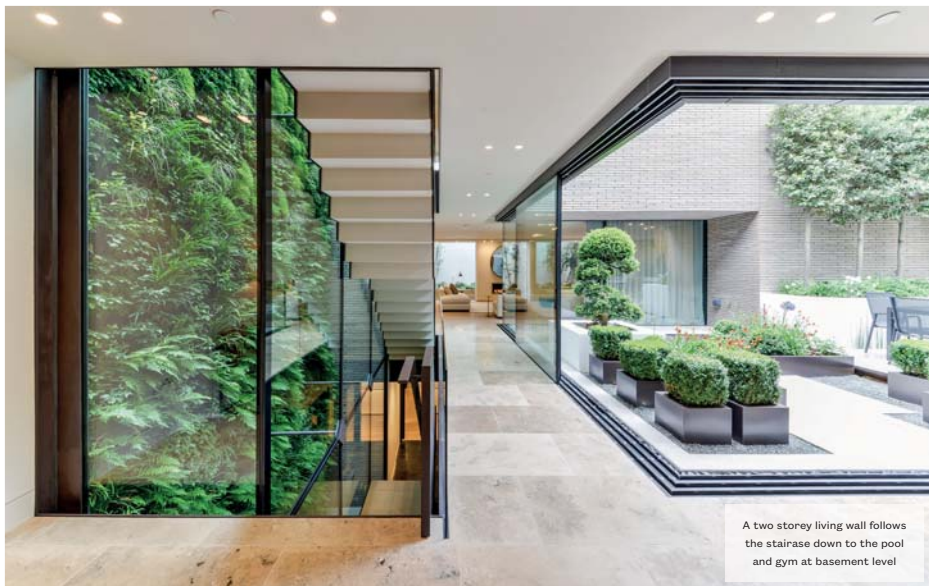
"Every gym is unique and needs to cater for the specific needs of the owner and yet when it comes to designing any training space, the practical challenges faced are often very similar," says Joshua Schumann.

A living wall and large light wells bring oxygen, daylight and nature's abundance into the heart of the home to create a calming effect

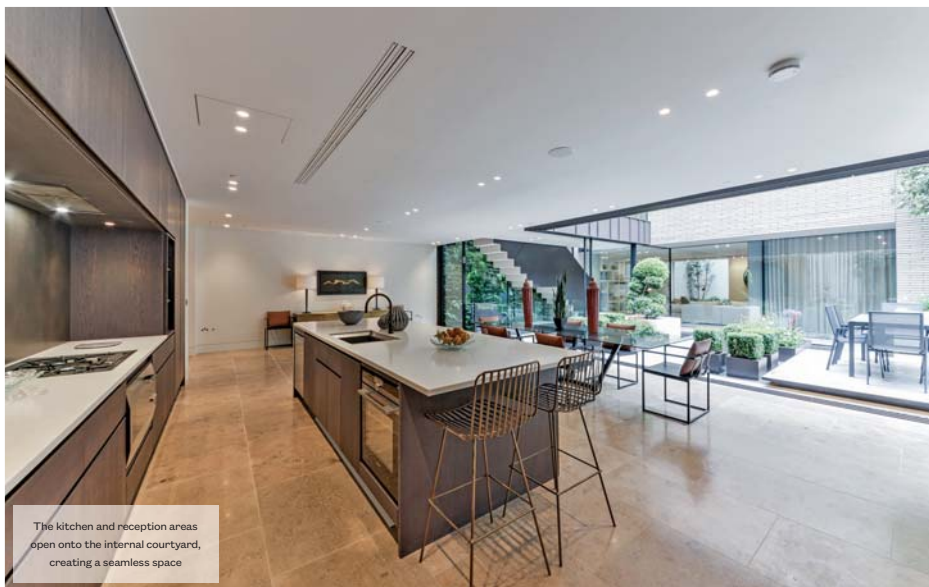
"When setting up your home gym, think of the areas that you like to train in most – if you're a cyclist, you might want to do more leg work, or invest in a great bike, for example. It's better to spend more money on one high-spec piece of equipment that you love and will use every day, than going for more volume and buying two machines which take up more space and may not get as much use.

"A flexible design and layout is also important: Ideally home gyms will be designed so you can switch the gym around should you choose to. Think about things like access to electric sockets, lighting and safety in terms of cables and clearance on machines and also how adaptable the equipment will be to a different layout if you get bored.

"It sounds simple, but it's all about ensuring the space as a whole delivers on its requirements and offers you a comfortable and engaging place in which to train." ●



A two storey living wall follows the staircase down to the pool and gym at basement level



The kitchen and reception areas open onto the internal courtyard, creating a seamless space





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Brothers Calvin and  
Frederick Tsao (below)  
set up Octave Living  
with Zack McKown



## A SENSE OF BALANCE

Combining Chinese and Western approaches to wellbeing, Octave Living aims to support a healthier, saner lifestyle, and balance profit with giving back.

Christopher DeWolf finds out about the team behind the brand



The Living Room urban wellness centre in Shanghai was Octave Living's first project

Calvin Tsao and his brother Frederick are American, but they were both drawn to China from an early age. “Even though we’re immigrants, our parents had us steeped in Chinese culture,” says Calvin Tsao. After growing up in California, he made his way across the Pacific to work on I.M. Pei’s groundbreaking Suzhou Museum, the first foreign-designed project in a country that had just opened up after decades of isolation. His brother began to establish business links with the country of their ancestors.

Tsao eventually returned to the United States, where he founded an architecture firm, Tsao & McKown, with partner Zack McKown. Meanwhile, China transformed itself from one of the world’s poorest countries into one of its most powerful, but Tsao saw something was amiss. “I have a long view, having experienced the evolution of China over the last 30 years,” he says. “And while its economic and political presence and authority in the world is in ascent, their attention to social health has been spotty.”

Tsao was particularly alarmed that China seemed to have lost touch with some of the spiritual and cultural anchors that have held Chinese civilisation firm for centuries. One night, he and McKown pitched Frederick Tsao an idea: start a new company that would develop properties centred around cultural, physical and mental wellbeing. “My brother is an industrialist, he has a lot of resources, both political connections and financial strengths,” says Tsao. “We thought he could help. And indeed he took that idea to heart.”

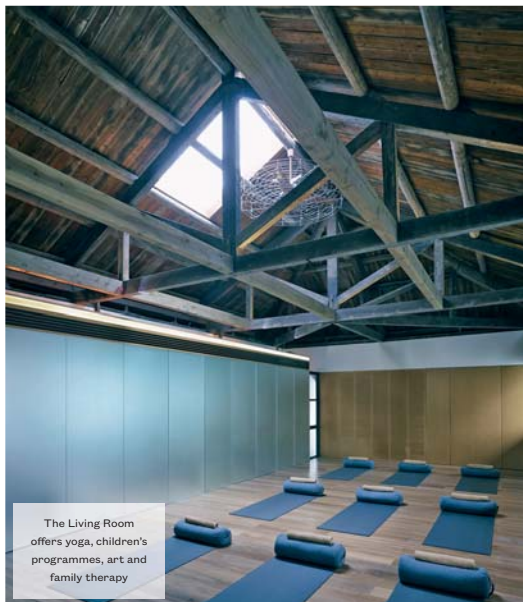


Food comes from a small urban farm

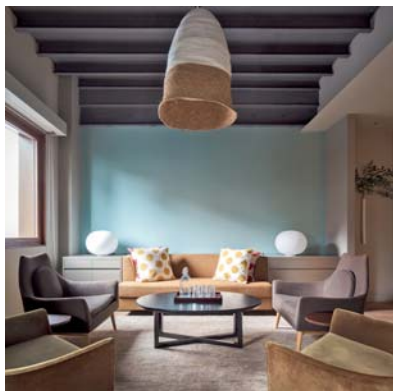
The key to a happy and successful society is a philosophy that places wellness at the heart of everything



Spaces are designed to soothe urban guests with natural materials



The Living Room offers yoga, children's programmes, art and family therapy



The centre is aimed at city dwellers seeking balance

## GIVING BACK

The result is Octave Living, named for the interval between one musical pitch and another, as if to symbolise the switch from profit-focused development to something more enduring. "Can you make a sustainable endeavour that balances profit with giving back?" asks Tsao. "Octave is really about looking at economic models and seeing how we can do something that's good for our society."

Octave Living could provide a reference not only for Chinese development but for cities around the world, believes Tsao. Its message is straightforward: the key to a happy and successful society is not only more growth and more money, but a kind of personal and social equilibrium. It's a philosophy to design and development that places wellness at the heart of everything.

With the help of Frederick Tsao, Tsao and McKown were able to launch Octave Living's first project in 2016. The Living Room is a 'holistic urban wellness centre' located in a historic compound in Shanghai's Former French Concession, a handsome district of streets lined by plane trees. Spanning 21,500 square feet, the centre includes space for early childhood development programmes, family therapy, art therapy, yoga, a restaurant and a small urban farm.

The architecture seems designed to soothe. Serenely minimal passages lead to spaces filled with natural materials like wood.



The building, with its urban farm, is nestled into a popular residential area of Shanghai





When guests check into the hotel, they're given a medical exam and greeted by a personal wellness coach



PHOTO: LACOMBE

Calvin Tsao (left) and Zack McKown launched Tsao & McKown in 1985

## WELLNESS RESORT

The next project from Octave Living, which opened last year, is much larger and more ambitious. Sangha is a wellness resort located in Suzhou, a city west of Shanghai famous for its classical Chinese gardens.

Rising over one million square feet on the shores of Yangcheng Lake, the complex includes an event space, a chapel, educational facilities, a 75-room hotel, a spa, and a wellness centre with meditation rooms and a clinic that integrates Chinese and Western medicine. It's a space not so much for a holiday as for a period of self-improvement. When guests check into the hotel, they're given a medical exam and greeted by a personal wellness coach.

## LIVING THE EXPERIENCE

It's an experience that some will enjoy full-time. Sangha includes 109 single-family houses and 89 flats, whose construction were required by the local government. Tsao says he and his brother never wanted to include free-standing houses, since they find them unsustainable by nature, but they soon realised that the profits from selling the residential units would help fund the rest of Sangha's programme.

And it's the programme that led the design, not the other way around. "Living Room and Sangha have different proportions of programmes," says Tsao. "But the gist of it





Sangha encompasses a range of homes as well as a retreat, a boutique hotel and learning spaces







We want to show people what can be done. It's a new way of developing our cities and our world

is mind-body wellness, which means healthy mind, healthy body." In terms of design, "it means capturing natural conditions like light, breeze and temperature in the man-made design," he says. One example is the Living Room's farm.

"When you look down from the higher buildings on the complex you see this greenery, which we use to produce ingredients for our eateries," explains Tsao. A number of studies have shown that even a glimpse of greenery has important psychological benefits.

Another example is the way both Sangha and the Living Room deal with internal circulation. "We put in a lot of stairs and corridors and internal bridges that make you perceive the spaces both orthogonally and diagonally," says Tsao. "You're always changing your point of view. It addresses qualities of navigation and wayfinding – engaging your senses about where you're going, where you're coming from, what you see along the way."



Natural tones and materials were used throughout to create a calming atmosphere

PHOTO: RICHARD BRYANT

The Sangha Retreat was built on the shores of Yangcheng Lake in China's Jiangsu Province



PHOTO: SETH POWERS

Tsao & McKown led the design for Sangha, but they also invited two other architects to take part: Yung Ho Chang of Beijing's Atelier FCJZ and Lyndon Neri of Shanghai-based Neri & Hu. "We had an agreement that they had to conform to certain basics – grey, white and earth tones," says Tsao. All materials are sustainable, in order to keep the project's carbon footprint as low as possible. "We don't use any quarried stone," says Tsao by way of example.

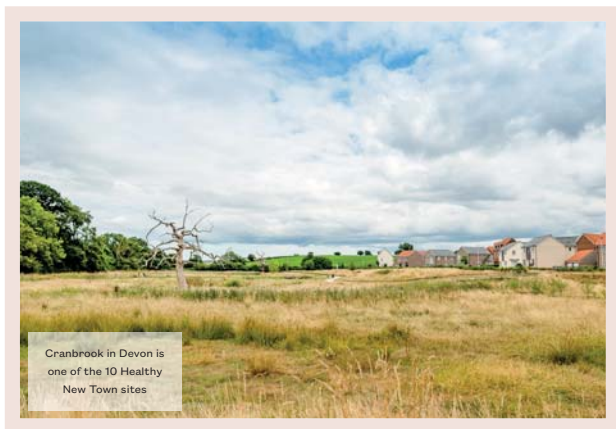
The invited architects were allowed one special material of their own. Chang chose a kind of rough terrazzo that was popular in Shanghai in the 1930s. Neri chose a grey brick tile that evokes the kind of brick used in Suzhou's gardens. "There's a series of walls he designed called the sanctuary that creates shadows. It's very beautiful," says Tsao.

#### THE BIGGER PICTURE

It all adds up to an eye-catching setting, but Tsao says aesthetics are only part of the picture. "The buildings are just containers for content," he says. "And it's the content in which the revenue will finally come." In a country that has changed so quickly and so thoroughly, Tsao is banking on the need for a pause – and a new kind of architecture that encourages reflection, health and well-being. "We want to let people know that this can be done," he says. "It's a new way to develop our cities and our world." ●



Sangha features an indoor and an outdoor pool. Guests are given personalised programmes



# Prescribing Wellbeing

We know the places we live affect how healthily we live, but never before have they been prescribed quite like this. Stu Robarts walks the streets of the Healthy New Towns initiative to find out more about its prognosis

**I**t's perhaps unsurprising that the National Health Service (NHS), the UK Government's health and medical agency, has never got involved with building a town before. Coughs and colds have naturally taken precedence over homes and roads.

But there's an increasing recognition that fixing people can only go so far in progressing public health. Instead, the NHS is seeking a more proactive approach to healthcare. The thinking goes that fewer people will need fixing if health is embedded more fundamentally into our lifestyles. And where better to embed it than the places we live?

The Healthy New Towns initiative which is being driven by the NHS seeks to do exactly that. It will see 10 new towns built with the healthy lifestyles of residents central to their designs.

The scheme has been built on the foundations of the NHS 2014 *Five-Year Forward View* strategy, which recognised that there was a greater strain than ever being put on the health service. It proposed that tackling this means giving people greater control of their own care, breaking down barriers to

how this is provided and developing innovative new ways to promote and deliver healthcare and wellbeing in the home.

One such innovative approach was rethinking how new housing developments and towns can be designed to promote healthier living. This, coupled with the other measures, is the basis for the Healthy New Towns initiative.

But it's about more than building healthy places to live. It's a grand experiment exploring how the design of the places we live can improve the health of populations.

In addition to finding out which elements of town design can improve public health, the initiative is also aiming to develop new models of care, rethink how health and care services can be provided and draw up new best practice approaches.

## MAKING HEALTH A LOCAL BUSINESS

The Healthy New Towns scheme was launched in March 2016, with NHS chief executive Simon Stevens talking of an opportunity to 'design out' obesogenic environments, and 'design in' health and wellbeing." Expressions of interest had



PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES

The Healthy New  
Towns have bike trails,  
bike lockers and cycle  
to school routes

“ The Healthy New Towns initiative aims  
to design out ‘obesogenic environments’  
and design in health and wellbeing ”





been sought the previous summer, resulting in a remarkable 114 responses from the likes of local authorities, housing associations and developers who wanted to get involved.

Responses were whittled down to 10 and “demonstrator sites” were chosen to be built across the country.

The developments range in size from 800 to 15,000 homes and there was no blueprint provided as to how they should be built. The developers of each simply had to show an understanding of their own wellness priorities and provide rationales for radical new approaches to address them.

Halton Lea in Runcorn is the smallest development, followed by Barton in Oxford with 885 homes. Whyndyke Garden Village in Fylde, Darlington in County Durham and Whitehill and Bordon in Hampshire each have between 1,000 and 4,000 homes planned, while the homes

at Bordon are to be built on land which was previously owned by the government’s Ministry of Defence (MoD).

Bicester in Oxfordshire has 6,000 homes in the works and Cranbrook in Devon 8,000. The three biggest sites are Northstowe in Cambridgeshire (also former MoD land), Barking Riverside in London and Ebbsfleet Garden City in Kent with 10,000, 10,800 and 15,000 homes, respectively.

#### IDEAS TO SPARK WELLBEING

The proposed ideas for promoting healthy lifestyles at the various sites range from the obvious and practical, like the provision of ample green space, to the more considered and involved, like building multidisciplinary health and wellness centres and designing their operations from the ground up to ensure people can be seen for multiple different but related



Barking Riverside will see 10,800 homes built on London's biggest brownfield site by the River Thames

Ideas for promoting healthy lifestyles range from the provision of greenspace, to the creation of health hubs for exercise prescription



Elmsbrook Healthy New Town in Bicester, Oxfordshire has extensive wellness offerings and is also a UK government Eco Town, promoting sustainability



Proposals include an educational wildlife trail, a landscape which blends play, workspace and recreation and accessible green routes for everyday journeys



PHOTO: MIKE ELLIENHE ENGLAND

The Runnyhones is a running group based in the Healthy New Town of Bordon in Hampshire and two other locations

appointments all on the same day, to enable people to see a doctor, for example, and then to get exercise prescription.

Other features include infrastructure for children to walk or cycle to school and to play along the way, fast-food-free zones near schools and dementia-friendly street design. Each set of features reflects the unique health and wellness challenges that the different sites will be tackling.

#### HEALTHY PLACE PLANS

Perhaps the most notable of the demonstrator sites is Halton Lea – the first location to be chosen. Because it was at the very beginning of the process, it had the most scope for what the NHS has called “bold new ideas”. For that reason, it was afforded its own design challenge. There were 34 bids, with London-based firm Citiesmode ultimately triumphing.

Its “Halton Connected” concept will see health-focused ideas baked into the new development with a view to supporting people of all ages. Amongst them are a mobile app that will reward users for walking, by giving discounts at local shops, an urban obstacle course connecting sports facilities around the town and free bikes at new housing developments.

A community kitchen will serve local schools and hospitals, as well as offering healthy cooking lessons for all residents. Universal WiFi, meanwhile, will ensure that all residents have easy access to health services.

The site that has attracted the most attention is Ebbsfleet. It hit the news this summer as the shortlist for its design competition was announced. Between them, the five finalists proposed an educational wildlife trail, a landscape blending “land, play, workspace and recreation”, accessible green routes for everyday journeys, a web of integrated services and a plan to regenerate, repair and rejuvenate the local area.

#### BUILDING A LEGACY

Buoyed by the positive response to Healthy New Towns, the NHS is laying the groundwork for the scheme’s legacy and in the belief that housing developers and associations have a big part to play in shaping the health of new communities, it has assembled a network of 12 organisations to implement and promote the principles on which it is based. As the network grows, it’s hoped that the approach to building healthy new towns becomes a healthy habit within the industry. ●



4

Barking Riverside in London will get 10,800 healthy new homes



6

The health and wellbeing centre at Halton Lea



7

Elmsbrook Bicester will have 6,000 well homes when complete



9

Ebbsfleet in Kent, the biggest of the new developments

10

## HEALTHY NEW TOWNS

The NHS is working with 10 housing developments across England to shape the health of communities and rethink how health and care services can be delivered

### DEMONSTRATOR SITES

- 1 **Whitehill and Bordon, Hampshire**  
3,350 new homes on former Ministry of Defence land
- 2 **Cranbrook, Devon**  
8,000 new residential units
- 3 **Darlington, County Durham**  
2,500 residential units across three linked sites in the Eastern Growth Zone
- 4 **Barking Riverside, London**  
10,800 residential units on London's largest brownfield site
- 5 **Whyndyke Garden Village, Fylde, Lancashire**  
1,400 residential units
- 6 **Halton Lea, Runcorn**  
800 residential units
- 7 **Bicester, Oxfordshire**  
6,000 homes in North West Bicester, 13,000 for Bicester in total
- 8 **Northstowe, Cambridgeshire**  
10,000 homes on former Ministry of Defence land
- 9 **Ebbsfleet Garden City, Kent**  
Up to 15,000 new homes in the first garden city for 100 years
- 10 **Barton, Oxford**  
885 residential units



# RESILIENT DESIGN

Designer Adria Lake delves into her personal experiences of building a new home and company headquarters to explain her thinking on how resilient design can help us assimilate disruptions, unpredictability, and instability into our lives... and thrive

**W**e spend most of our time in built environments. Our homes, places of work, public spaces – even parks and outdoor spaces we retreat or escape to – are designed and built for our comfort and safety.

Yet the rise of auto-immune and lifestyle diseases and sick building syndrome indicate that we're not built for the constant homeostasis of modern living. Our muscles, heart, lungs and immune system evolved to respond and adapt to internal and external threats and changes. While we may prefer comfort and stability, our biological systems require a degree of unpredictability or stress to remain healthy and strong.

Resilience is hard wired in all of us and bolstering our resilience – the ability to adapt and thrive in any environment – is the aim of Resilience-based Wellness® (RbW®), a concept and approach we launched in 2016.

Discovering ways to define and apply resilience in our design and lives became the driving force behind the creation of our new home and company headquarters. This is our story ...

## LEARNING TO ADAPT

Building on a mountain peak in northern Colorado was never originally on the agenda. But now that we're here, there's no other place in the world we'd rather be.

Looking out of the panoramic windows of our home and taking in the unobstructed views of the majestic Rocky mountains reminds us that we're but a small, insignificant speck on this vast landscape.

How we designed and built our home and headquarters made a huge difference to the way we live and work (See Living with Resilient Design on page 139).

Marc Gerritsen, my partner and principal architect of MAAD Design, explains: "Finding a suitable location on which to build was a challenge, as the steep, rocky mountain slope offered limited construction space.

"There were many factors to consider. The building site we chose, while sheltered on the north side, is exposed to high winds, hail and snow storms on the other three, and is also vulnerable to wild fire, water shortages, intense year-round sun exposure and massive snow loads in winter."

Safeguarding the buildings from all unpredictable conditions and threats in such a location would have been impossible. Instead, Marc designed robust structures that adapt to their surrounding and will continue to function in the face of all types of disruptions.

Take the monolithic, ark-like shape of the main building, for example. "Having spent time in the Alps, I knew a massive slanted wall with large panoramic windows would allow the sunlight to heat the building in the winter and give it an aerodynamic form that allowed 150 mile-an-hour winds to glide over it," he says.

Adaptability also meant choosing durable materials for the build, such as copper, raw untreated steel and hardwood, which require low maintenance and will age beautifully when exposed to extreme weather. Marc also used a hybrid construction method and installed both simple and redundant systems to supply heat, water, and power to the site (See Resilient Methods on page 141).



We're not built for constant comfort. When we live in spaces that connect us to our surroundings, we feel better, stronger and happier – and that is the very definition of being well



Adria Lake and her partner Marc Gerritsen, photographed at their home in Colorado for Well Home. September 2018

The slanted wall of the main building allows 150 mile-an-hour winds to glide over it



Far from taming the forces of nature or mitigating disasters, Resilient Design is about understanding, working with, and utilising what we cannot predict or control to create diverse, dynamic environments which accommodate nature and in which we can thrive.

The common misconception that resilient design is about being 'indestructible' has led to the proliferation of products made of materials that will outlast us and continue to pollute and poison the planet.

An important aspect of resilient design is understanding the brevity of our existence and our part in the endless cycle of life all around us.

We recognise that the structures we built will one day outlast their use and for that reason, we built the entire complex using the deconstruction method (See Resilient Methods and Materials on page 141) so one day, the buildings can be removed from the site completely, to allow total regeneration to take place, or for something else to take its place.

Eighty-five percent of materials, fixtures and finishes we used can be re-used or repurposed without any additional processing and by using birch plywood to cover 90 per cent of our interior walls, we also eliminated the need to use primer, paint, varnish and other toxic chemicals. We now have walls that can be completely disassembled and re-used in the future if needed.

It's a sobering thought that in the US alone, more than 100 million tons of building-related construction and demolition debris are sent to landfill each year, and most of these materials are difficult or costly to recycle, which

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Adria Lake is owner and MD of AW Lake, a wellness design and consultancy firm that works with some of the world's top hotel brands, designing spa and wellness facilities.

The company – which has been based in Asia for 20 years – relocated to the US in 2017 to a new base in Colorado.

Lake plans to offer the Resilience Living programme, which exposes participants to unfamiliar situations in order to strengthen body and mind.

She says: "With our move to Colorado, we're exploring a different approach to wellness. We believe creating places and experiences that strengthen our resilience and liberate our imagination, creativity and curiosity will have a greater and more lasting impact on our wellbeing and the future of our species – as well as our planet."

She became interested in the idea of resiliency after being diagnosed with early onset MS in 2014.

"As someone who has been extremely active and physical my whole life, the possibility of losing my mobility and

neurological functions was unthinkable," says Lake. She took a six-month break from work, and headed to southern Chile in the dead of winter to see how her body would cope with the harsh Patagonian winter and the extreme heat and dryness of the Atacama Desert.

"My exposure to extreme cold, heat and isolation and unfamiliar surroundings, strengthened my nervous system, re-calibrated my immune system, and restored my health," she says.

"Our wellbeing is encoded in our DNA and we are inherently resilient, but our dependence on modern comforts has weakened our immune systems, undermined our vitality and – frankly – made us fat and lazy."

"When we expose ourselves to varying conditions and live in spaces that connect us to, rather than insulate us from, our surroundings, we feel stronger and happier, and that is the very definition of being well."

Lake also plans to launch a plant-based ketogenic functional food range under the brand S.M.R.T. Body Fuel.

## LIVING WITH RESILIENT DESIGN



Adria Lake was diagnosed with early-onset MS and turned to the philosophy of resilience to heal



What is it like to live and work in a resilient designed building? You stay alert and engaged, as the same approach we use in our design – adaptability to unpredictable conditions and disruptions – applies to how we live and work. A few examples:

■ Our sunset deck features a 'Cold Exposure Circuit', consisting of a steel and glass enclosed wood-fired steam/sauna, a polar plunge pool and an Artic hydro-jet shower, equipped with its own recyclable water system.

■ A bridge from our second floor offices provides direct access to decks that are used as outdoor work and meeting spaces.

■ We have a makers' studio equipped to enable people to produce prototypes,

The makers' studio is equipped to enable people who attend the Resilience-based Wellness courses to create and innovate

create works of art, or learn simple woodworking and welding techniques.

■ Everyone who visits for our Resilient Living Program will be encouraged to acquire new skills. To cultivate curiosity, for example, we have a professional kitchen, where cooking classes are conducted and everyone is expected to participate in meal preparation.

■ Instead of air-conditioning, we opted for windows and doors for ventilation.

■ Hydronic radiant floor heating is set at 50 degrees Fahrenheit or 10 degrees Celsius in the winter, when the outside temperature often drops below zero.

■ A wood-fired stove and fireplaces provide additional warmth, using kindling and wood gathered from fallen trees on the property.

■ With vast swathes of forest land and

the Rocky Mountain wilderness on our doorstep, miles of walking and foraging trails offer daily adventure and exploration, both for ourselves and for our guests.

■ And soon, we will also complete our Resilient Living and Wilderness Camp which will have access to more than 350 miles of hiking trails, white water rafting, canoeing, skiing, snowboarding, swimming, rock climbing, fishing, forest foraging, and wildlife tracking.





Marc Gernitsen:  
"Resilient Design  
acknowledges we have  
finite resources, but  
also recognises we're  
infinitely adaptable."

is why they make up about 40 per cent of the overall waste stream generated in the US every year.

The deconstruction method avoids costly demolition or building removal that further damages the environment.

### THE LATEST BUZZWORD

The words 'resilient design' are more likely to conjure up images of underground bunkers than beautiful design, and lack the sex appeal of organic architecture, with its curvaceous forms. Also, unlike their eco-driven counterparts, resilient buildings forgo the glowing halo.

But increasingly unpredictable weather patterns as a result of climate change are compelling architects to create structures that can withstand extreme conditions.

In his recent article 'The race to codify resilience design', John Caulfield, senior editor of *Building Design + Construction*, noted that just about everyone in the industry is adding a resilience component to their standards. This includes the International Code Council, BREEAM, the Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure, American Society of Civil Engineers, IBHS and the US Green Building Council.

Suddenly, resilience is becoming the latest buzzword, but resilient design isn't new – as nature's own blueprint,

it's found everywhere, including the structural design of all living things. Resilience is nature's answer to entropy: ice melts, iron rusts and we age, but although entropy is universal and irreversible, nature has found ways to adapt and flourish by using chaos as a building block and throughout 4.5 billion years of evolution, living things have adapted and survived in the face of disorder.

"There is no better designer than nature," said Alexander McQueen – an observation that has been echoed for millennia by artists and architects. But while we're eager to mimic nature's aesthetics using biomimicry, we're less inclined to adapt its methods of assimilating disorder. This is because as humans, we seek to bring order to chaos and to maintain equilibrium as if we were exempt from the most basic laws of the universe.

The truth is that without adaptation, nature's astonishing diversity and beauty would never have emerged and without resilience, life itself would have perished long ago.

Instead, life, in all its splendour, is thriving. This thriving mindset is the foundation of Resilient Design.

Sustainable design focuses on conservation and scarcity, while resilient design is interested in scalability and growth. Sustainability sees a shrinking pie. Resilience learns to bake.

## RESILIENT METHODS AND MATERIALS

While the need for adaptability and reusability shaped our vision, the real challenge was deciding on actual methods and materials. Once we decided on the following three methods, we were off

### 1. Deconstruction method

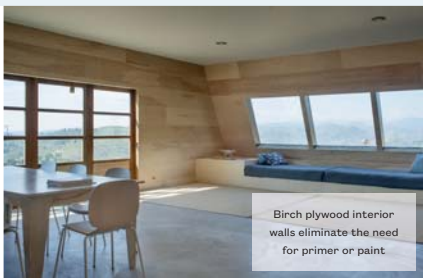
- Use simple, open-span structural systems and standard sizes, modular building components and assemblies.
- We chose wood framing with heavy timbers, beams and stick-by-stick construction.
- Opt for durable materials that can be reused or have high re-sale value, such as hardwood flooring, multi-paned windows, unique doors and custom electrical fixtures.
- Minimise the use of different types of materials, make connections visible and accessible and use mechanical fasteners, such as screws, instead of sealants or adhesives.

### 2. Hybrid construction

- We used a combination of wood framing and metal roofing and cladding for greater protection, longevity, flexibility, efficiency and value.
- This combination of materials has resulted in high levels of thermal insulation that drastically reduce energy consumption, while the metal roof and exterior cladding allow the building to withstand wild fire, high winds, uplift and water penetration.
- Corrugated steel roof and gutter systems provide an impervious, stable surface for collecting rainwater, inhibiting the growth of algae and shedding rain and snow, minimising the risk of moisture damage.

### 3. Simple and redundant systems

- We used an ICF foundation (Insulating Concrete Form), whereby concrete is poured into forms that serve as insulation layers and remain in place as permanent parts of the structure.
- Continuous insulation on both sides of the wall virtually eliminates thermal bridging and energy loss, while an ICF foundation can cut energy bills in half and achieve a HERS index in the 40-50 range. It's 50-60 per cent more efficient than existing standards.
- Rigid foam insulation offers high moisture and heat resistance, as well as protection against mould and pests. It also has a higher R-value than fiberglass or polystyrene.
- We chose redundant heat, water and power sources, including hydronic radiant floor heating, a gas fireplace and a wood burning stove.
- A 200m (680 ft) groundwater well produces two litres of water a minute. A 2,000-gallon underground cistern stores backup water, and the house also has a 1,200-gallon rainwater/snowmelt collection tank.
- Power is provided by gas, solar, electricity and a generator. ●



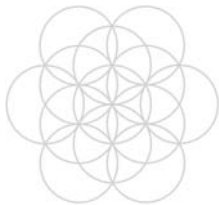
Birch plywood interior walls eliminate the need for primer or paint.



The bridge leads to outdoor meeting and work spaces

# A matter of principle

The principles of Vastu Shastra, the Hindu tradition of architecture, are being used to inform the design of new homes in India. Chris Godfrey of global architecture practice Hirsch Bedner explains the project to Well Home



Chris Godfrey  
heads up the global  
residential business  
at Hirsch Bedner



## What are the principles of Vastu?

Houses are organised around the cardinal compass points. As far as is practicable, spaces are then positioned according to their preferred location, for example, 'water' is located in the south west corner; 'fire' in the north east and 'light/air' at the centre of it all.

As well as defining order and the flow of function, articulation of space and sunlight, Vastu is also deployed as a generator for materials and colour through the design; with colour being used to reflect and promote the spiritual 'elements'.

The relationship of the different functions of each facet – variously framing or enclosing stairs, for example, or galleries, voids and private rooms – are brought together into a holistic installation.

## What are the fundamentals?

In Vastu the centre of the spiritual body is the centre of the house – the Brahman. The

We use the Brahman to link and divide all the various elements of the house – the shared and private zones and the territories of the various generations of family members – and to bring light and air in to the heart of the home.



Vastu can be dated back to at least the 6th century and is deeply rooted in the physical and spiritual fabric of Hindu society

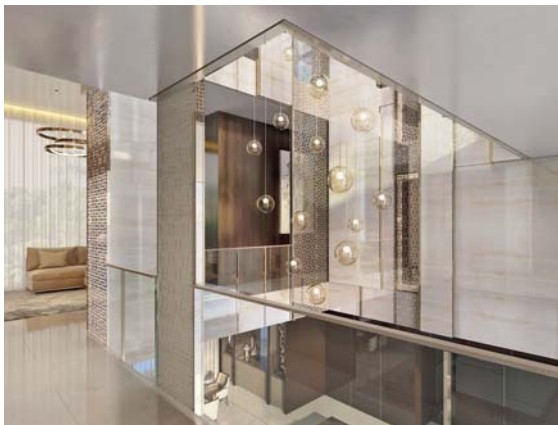
#### What varies?

Central to one of our clients is their art collection; the Brahmanthan in their multi-level home acts as a gallery, where large-scale, playful artworks inhabit the various spaces.

Our interpretations of Vastu are carried through from the first principles of organisation to the small details. We've also developed bespoke patterns based on the client's desire to incorporate natural elements which are central to Hindu culture, such as the Tree of Life, banyan tree, peepal tree, mango tree, marigold, lotus, and frangipani

#### Who decided to build the Mumbai house on Vastu principles?

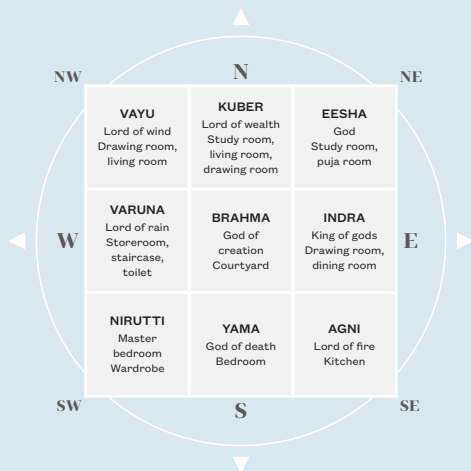
The family is of Hindu tradition, so the application of Vastu was a fundamental request of theirs; although, as is largely the case, the application is to be considered as a 'guidance' and should be moderated with other practical briefing requirements and constraints.



The heart of the home is the Brahmanthan, which can be used in a variety of ways



In this home, all aspects of the lives of the family, including religion, culture and art, have been carefully considered and distilled into something distinct yet harmonised



Water is placed in the home according to Vastu principles

Vastu points to bedrooms which are designed using a brown colour palette



### Which elements bring the home in line with Vastu principles?

Vastu principles are models for the organisation of form and space, sacred geometry, symmetry and directional alignments. They also integrate architecture, nature and the five elements: earth, wind, fire, water and air/light with the body.

Architecturally, we always consider the form, how space and light can instill personal security and wellbeing, regardless of function and changes in aesthetic.

### Do you include any other wellness elements?

When it comes to the provision of facilities, ours is a spiritual and holistic approach and this takes priority over the developments of things like pools, spas and gyms.

We believe that correctly proportioned and naturally lit spaces can, in themselves, promote wellbeing and that the spiritual dimensions are also very powerful.

### Is your choice of materials dictated by Vastu?

Colour and material languages in the home have been subtly developed in line with the Vastu directional chakras.

Brown is a must-have color in the master bedroom, as it represents comfort and stability, for example, while green is an auspicious color for the study room.



**About HBA Residential**  
HBA Residential is an independent division of Hirsch Bedner Associates, which specialises in architecture, interior design and FF&E (furniture, fixtures, and equipment) for luxury private villas, penthouses and homes.

### Do you see a trend in India towards adopting Vastu principles?

In addition to the house in Mumbai, we're also designing a further two residences in India that subscribe to the tenets of Vastu, and have designed several others over the past decade.

However, Vastu is far from a trend – the opposite in fact. It can be dated back to

at least the 6th century and is deeply rooted in the physical and spiritual fabric of Hindu society, where temples, gardens, houses, villages and towns have been laid out in accordance with the principles.

### How did you work with the client on these projects?

The homeowner is highly interested and involved, which means the style of the home is being designed to respond not only to the site's conditions and heritage, but also to his and three generations' personalities and preferences.

In this home, all aspects of the lives of the family, including religion, culture and art, have been carefully considered and distilled into something which is distinct yet also harmonised.

This home will be an important family heirloom, a place that needs to accommodate large functions and also be a private, secure residence to be enjoyed by all the generations.

It's a truly personal response that fits with the physicality and cityscape of Mumbai, while being attuned to the mosaic of religion and family.

### When will the building be completed?

It's currently on site and is scheduled for completion in summer 2019. ●

The entire lower level of the house is dedicated to health and wellbeing. The gym and indoor pool overlook a sunken wellness garden



## DEDICATED TO HEALTH

Architect Robert Henry has created a healthy home to support the wellness of the Kutsak family in Rumson New Jersey.

He talks us through the project



Michael and Michelle Kutsak approached us with the goal of creating a healthy home for them and their three children. As the founder of a successful sleep health company, which he launched in 2008, longevity and wellness is in Michael Kutsak's DNA.

He later sold the business and embarked on a project to create his dream home with his wife, Michelle.

Their goal was a home featuring a range of wellness facilities, including a couple's massage suite, hydrotherapy exercise pool, fitness arena, steam and sauna and the desire to focus firmly on wellness as a lifestyle.

Michael discovered the perfect location, a three-acre parcel of land in New Jersey, with views of the Atlantic.

### Key wellness elements

I asked the couple what healthy habits they practice and how open they are to new modalities that will underpin their family's longevity. They both share a passion for open water – the beaches along the Côte d'Azur and the healing power of the ocean, for example – which led to the integration of both indoor and outdoor salt water pools on the property.

The whole lower level of the house is dedicated to health and relaxation. The indoor pool includes space for an aqua-bike that can be used to increase cardiovascular capacity and we complemented this by adding hydro-jets that massage the calves, thighs and lower back, the muscle groups linked to Michelle's favourite workout.

The couple likes to exercise together, so Michael can be working out in the gym while Michelle exercises in the pool.



ALL RENDERINGS: MOLLY SATTERFIELD

A couple's massage area (above) allows the couple to relax after their workout. The house also includes outdoor pools (above right) and a well equipped fitness room and Pilates studio (right)



Both spaces share a view toward a sunken exterior wellness-garden, which has a 20 ft fire-ribbon hearth so it can be used most of the year for socialising and relaxing.

#### Treatment room and spa bathroom suite

Tired muscles crave massage, so we positioned a couple's massage suite next to the exercise areas, providing the couple with quality time after their workout.

It's important to integrate activities people love into their home, to create a rounded wellness lifestyle and transform the exercise experience from a workout into a bliss-out.

The lower level of the home also includes a family-fun room, with games and pinball machines and a screening room with a large day-bed that cocoons the entire family.

For smaller intimate gatherings, the lower level also has a wine cave and tasting room which is surrounded by thermostatically controlled wine towers.

The upper level of the house has seven bedrooms and a master bedroom spa suite, while a sunlit gallery overlooking the gardens and pools below, links the separate sleeping and bathing areas of the property.

At night, motorised shades provide complete black-out of the sleeping area, promoting deep restful sleep.

Temperature, lighting and window treatments are all operated via smart technology and controlled from the Kutsak's iPhones. In the master bedroom, an oversized fireplace facing the bed creates that sense of tranquility that only a blazing fire can produce and helps the Kutsaks wind down in the evening.

The master bathroom has an 8ft x 8ft experiential couples shower and steamroom built from full-height



'glass and stone slabs. Behind the shower a window provides a dramatic view to the ocean beyond.

A deep double steeping tub sits next to an outdoor garden terrace, with sheer curtains providing privacy. The children's and guest rooms are located in a nearby wing.

The estate's main ground floor is approached along a winding driveway that leads to a porte-cochère which links a guest house to the main residence.

The ground floor features a two-story entrance hall with a sculptural staircase, a formal living space, kitchen with breakfast nook and a formal dining room.

A discreet corridor leads to Michael Kutsak's private office, which adjoins a festive champagne room.

#### Healthy materials

The materials used throughout were natural and sustainable and in addition, all paints, adhesives and other construction products emit low or zero levels of VOC.

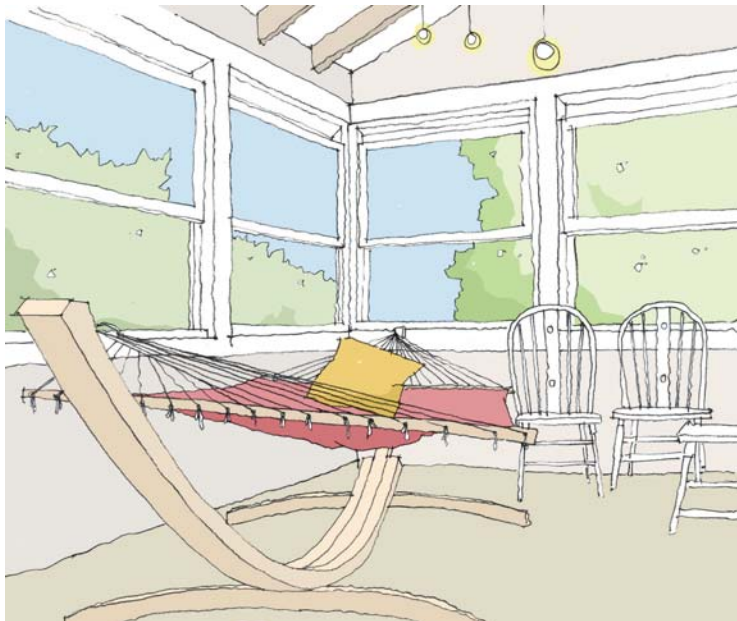
This healthy home is the foundation of a sustainable lifestyle, making it easy for the entire family to work out and relax, while creating a legacy for generations to come. ●



I hope architects gain a genuine understanding of how buildings and spaces affect our mental wellbeing and how their design can be tailored towards making people happier and healthier

# Ben Channon





ILLUSTRATIONS: BEN CHANNON

### Tell us about yourself

First and foremost, I'm an associate and mental wellbeing ambassador at Assael Architecture, where I've worked for six years.

Alongside my day job, I'm also a qualified mental health first aider and an accredited mindfulness practitioner with the Mindfulness Association, running regular mindfulness sessions at Assael for colleagues.

My fascination with the impact the built environment has on our mental health was borne from my own struggles with anxiety during the later stages of my architectural studies.

During this time, I realised that mental health issues can affect anyone – regardless of creed, class or colour – and that the mental wellbeing implications of design were mostly being ignored within the study and practice of architecture.

This galvanised me to pursue what would become the new book, *Happy by Design*, and to research tirelessly to understand how we, as architects, can create buildings that make people happier, simply through living and being in them.

In addition to the design and research work, I founded and now chair the Architect's Mental Wellbeing Foundation, which aims to improve the employment practices of architectural firms in terms of mental health.

Within architecture – and many other sectors – there's an almost masochistic approach to studying and work, where all-nighters and skipped breakfasts are seen as rites of passage

and signs of commitment. Needless to say, this negatively affects our mental health and physical wellbeing, and the Architect's Mental Wellbeing Foundation hopes to eradicate such bad habits through pooling knowledge, researching new approaches and sharing what we've learned.

Ultimately, to better serve the public's mental wellbeing, architects need to think about themselves first.

### Tell us about the book

*Happy by Design* takes a stripped back approach to the intersection between design and mental health. It's all about how buildings affect our moods and minds, and how they can be altered and customised to better serve our collective wellbeing in a very wide range of ways.

I've broken down the big ideas by working in a systematic way, investigating specific, tangible examples, such as lighting, colour, greenery, materials, proportions, and the nuanced, often unexpected ways they impact our brains.

By taking this straightforward approach, I hope the book will be more accessible to all of us, not simply architects.

The lessons and advice inside are applicable to everyone, from big-time property developers to homeowners, interior designers and those interested in wellbeing and happiness.

The tips and tricks outlined in the book are all accompanied by my own personal sketches and hand-drawn diagrams, which bring life to the ideas.

HAPPY  
BY  
DESIGN

A Guide to Architecture  
and Mental Wellbeing

RIBA Publishing

BEN CHANNON

*Happy by Design* has just been published by Ben Channon via the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). All illustrations were hand drawn by Ben

### Why did you write the book?

It started out as a work project for Assael. As a practice, we specialise in residential architecture and had been doing a significant amount of work in the emerging built to rent (BTR) and co-living sectors throughout the UK.

I found that developers and operators were becoming increasingly interested in the wellbeing of their residents – albeit this was mainly physical, rather than mental wellbeing. They'd started requesting dual aspect apartments and things like generous cycle storage, rather than reluctantly providing them, as they had previously, for example.

I wanted to bring my knowledge of mental health and mindfulness to the fore in the design process, helping clients create buildings that would make their users happier and promote wellbeing. This process continued and after a while I realised that this subject had far wider implications than I'd previously imagined, with the potential to improve the day-to-day lives of people around the world, so the process of writing *Happy by Design* began.

### What was the purpose behind the curation of *Happy by Design*? How did you chose the content?

The book started out as a collection of personal observations, which were drawn from my past experience with mental health, the buildings I was working and living in and how they made me feel in terms of my mental wellbeing.

From there, I started the research process to find the facts I needed to substantiate the ideas and claims I was developing, as I felt it was vital to have empirical data for both myself and readers, to ensure I was giving sound advice.

This research covered all the areas people are affected by: space, materials and so on. This then became the basis of the design advice and formed the central chapters. For example, there are chapters on light, comfort and nature, among others.

As I delved deeper, I discovered some surprising things about how we're affected by our surroundings. For example,

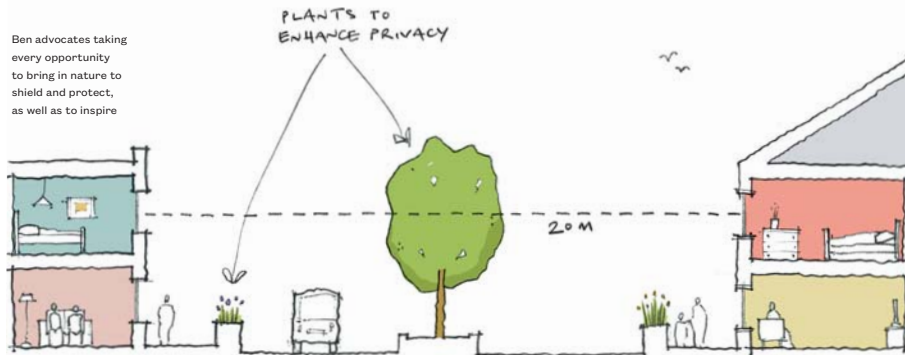
messy homes stimulate the release of stress hormone cortisol. It's not surprising those happy Scandinavians place so much importance on well-designed storage.

Perhaps more surprisingly still, the presence of water can have a big impact on our mental health, with people who live near the sea reporting better mental wellbeing than those who live in more landlocked places.

Once I'd tied down the foundation of the book, it was a laborious but enjoyable process of writing, editing, sketching, checking, debating, thinking, sweating and a little swearing that led me to this point, where the book is published and available for purchase. Would I do it all again? Definitely.



Ben advocates taking every opportunity to bring in nature to shield and protect, as well as to inspire





Clutter is shown to provoke the release of cortisol, a stress hormone, so a tidy home really is a happy home

#### What inspires you?

Over the years, I've taken inspiration from a variety of sources, both within the field of architecture and outside it.

In terms of engaging the general public, I think what Kevin McCloud, George Clarke, Piers Taylor and Caroline Quentin have done with their tv programmes about home design and architecture is amazing.

They've democratised the whole thing and brought it to a wider audience. They've also inspired people to take control of their immediate surroundings – be it at home, or in the office and given them the confidence to make them better.

As a student, I loved books such as Gordon Cullen's *The Concise Townscape* and Christopher Alexander, Sara Ishikawa and Murray Silverstein's *A Pattern Language*, which combined beautiful passages on design with informative images and useful diagrams.

As somebody who thinks and learns in a visual way, these books really spoke to me and I wanted to recreate some of this feel to share with readers in *Happy by Design*.

#### What changes in attitudes would you like to see in the world of home design?

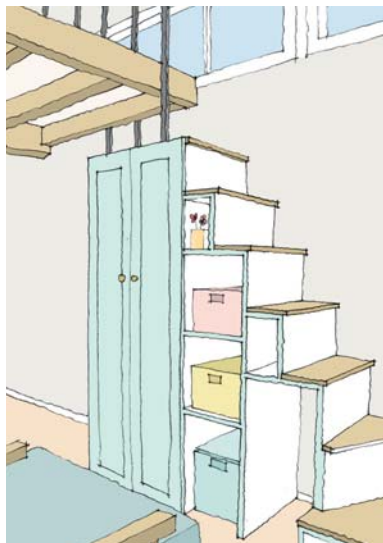
I often worry that architects and developers have become distracted by other issues – some more worthy than others – and have forgotten that when it comes down to it, they're designing homes and buildings for people.

This may sound simplistic but designing for people should be the fundamental approach of all architects – as proven by many of the greats from the twentieth century, such as Alvar Aalto and Louis Kahn.

Of course, cost, sustainability and award submissions are all important in their own right, but buildings need to serve the human experience and I think it's very easy now for architects and developers to lose track of that.

I hope that, over time, architects and the wider public gain a genuine understanding of how buildings and spaces affect us psychologically, and learn that the design of them can be tailored towards making people happier and healthier in numerous ways – not all of them cost-prohibitive.





You can take immediate steps to improve your home and your happiness by connecting with nature and getting organised

#### What difference could this make?

The implications of this shift in understanding would be enormous. We currently spend between 80 and 90 per cent of our time inside buildings and over 50 per cent of the world's population now live in cities. The impact buildings have on us as individuals and communities is only going to increase and we need to grapple with these subjects now in order to improve the future of our cities and buildings.

I also see this work as being incredibly important for the design of affordable housing, as data unfortunately shows that the less well-off someone is, the more likely they are to suffer with mental health issues.

A more conscious, mindful approach to the design of affordable housing could help those that need it most and those who often have the fewest resources to address the issues surrounding mental health.

#### How powerful is design as a preventative measure?

We have to be realistic. Good architecture isn't going to provide magical cures to people with severe mental health problems – this is a fact. Architecture won't replace the amazing advances being made in science and medicine.

But by providing comfortable, well-designed spaces where people feel happy and safe, we can improve the day to day

happiness of people who use them, which – in my opinion – is a powerful way of keeping people in a better mental place.

I've noticed dramatic changes in my mental wellbeing and positivity when I've had to live or work in an unpleasant space.

#### Would better spaces help the next generation?

Undoubtedly! If we started investing in happier buildings right now, the rewards would continue far into the future.

The impact of happy design on children and young adults could be enormous, as the Mental Health Foundation says 75 per cent of mental health problems start by the age of 24.

In addition, there would be a wider social impact, as young people – seeing designers, developers and their parents taking a more conscious approach to design – would learn that mental health challenges affect many people, and addressing them should be stigma-free.

#### Will you be doing another book and if so, what will it be about?

I'd love to and already have ideas floating around in my head.

Writing and illustrating *Happy by Design* has been an incredibly educational experience, shaping me as an architect and a person. However, I like to keep my cards close to my chest, so you'll have to invite me back to discuss it! ●

# HAPPY HOME HACKS



## REVIEW YOUR LIGHTBULBS

Cold colours can wash out spaces and make them feel clinical, as well as affecting your circadian rhythms.

Warm colours on the other hand can be relaxing and calming, as they're shown to promote the release of serotonin.

## MAKE EXERCISE EASY

Reduce the amount of excuses you have by making it easy to exercise, whether this is through a bicycle hanger by the front door, or a small workout space, with yoga mat and hand weights in the corner of a room that's ready to go whenever you are.



## EMBRACE THE IMPERFECTIONS

If you have the choice between materials, furniture or ornaments that feel either machine or hand-made, opt for the latter.

Studies show we form stronger emotional and personal connections to objects with imperfections.



## MATCH COLOURS WITH YOUR MOOD

Research shows colours have an impact on how we feel. Yellow, for example, stimulates the release of mood-boosting serotonin.

Pick bold, uplifting colours to feel energised and calm, muted tones for spaces to relax in.



## INTEGRATE LOW MAINTENANCE NATURE

Whether this is buying a pot plant or adding an internal green wall – plants, water and animals make us happier.

I'd recommend the Swiss cheese plant – even my un-green fingers haven't killed mine!



## ADD MORE STORAGE

This is often the first piece of advice I give people when they ask what one thing they should do to make their home a better place to spend time in.

I've put it last here so it will be the most likely advice you remember!

# MIA KYRICOS

Hyatt Hotels Corporation has committed to developing wellbeing initiatives for both guests and the people it employs. Its global head of wellbeing explains why *Well Home* matters



**A**s someone who's worked in wellness for the last two decades, I can't help but think that we're living in amazing times. Wellness is no longer a fad which is dictated to us on the cover of a magazine. It's a global movement which the hands of time have no chance of turning back.

It's about a shared desire to live healthier, longer and more fulfilling lives than those before us. It spans multiple generations, and fortunately, is fueled by a greater awareness and understanding of the science behind it.

I've been watching this shift for quite some time. Earlier in my career, I was focused on the luxuries of travel, including the development and operation of spa facilities around the world.

It was there I learned about health and wellness and began to contemplate what the implications might be for all of us, if only we had access to the same support.

Later I gained insights into the health and wellness of sedentary people, partnering with the executive teams of corporations who were driven by the desire to reduce employee healthcare costs.

Our focus was on the nutritional, physical, emotional and mental health of each individual,

## We're now smart enough to know that it's the environments we choose to surround ourselves with that impact our health and wellness

but we paid less heed to the environments within which people worked and lived.

Fast forward to 2013 when I had the privilege to work alongside a small group of individuals at the Global Wellness Institute who identified and defined "wellness tourism" – travel associated with maintaining or enhancing your personal wellbeing – as a sector of the economy that was growing twice as fast as global tourism.

While this was a great moment in time for those of us who worked in travel, I began to wonder what would happen if we shifted our focus from where people would only visit, to where they call home.

Now, years later, we've started to look at the houses, buildings, and communities within which we all live, and as it turns out, I haven't been the only one thinking along these lines.

For years, I've watched the team behind *Well Home* bring magazines to market and the forefront of our industry that

have been professionally and personally meaningful to me – from spa and wellness and health and fitness to architecture and design. I've looked to them to help make sound business sense from advancements in these fields, complemented by changes in society at large. Today is no different.

*Well Home* has been designed to showcase and explain what it means to live well, with care for the environment that surrounds us and respect for the fact that how we move, fuel, play and think are not the only things that affect our wellbeing.

We're now smart enough to know that it's the environments we choose to surround ourselves with that impact our health and wellness, and thanks again to our friends at Leisure Media, who will now help to teach us how.

So sit back, grab a healthy beverage and enjoy the magazine. And let's toast to a well world together.

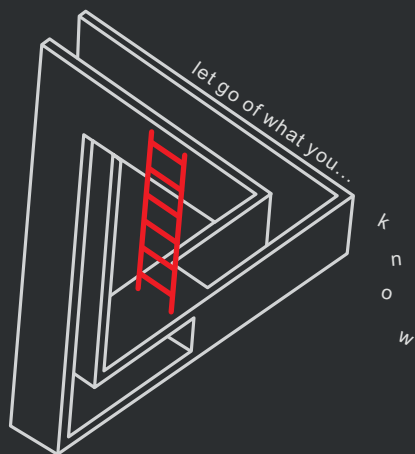
● Mia Kyricos is senior vice president and global head of wellbeing for Hyatt Hotels Corporation and founding chair of the Wellness Communities Initiative for the Global Wellness Institute.

Mia has also served as senior leader and strategic advisor for wellness-driven hospitality, tourism, travel and healthy lifestyle companies globally. Follow her on Twitter @mkyricos



WITH OUR FLOORING AND YOUR INSPIRATION  
THE POSSIBILITIES ARE ENDLESS





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