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UNIQUELY UNIQUE: The Ideal Home

By Camilla McLaughlin

Individual flair is shaping luxury living, from technology and trends to fashion and wellness in the home.

One's home is often a point of pride that is the culmination of a person's individual taste, big and small decisions, and a unique vision. As a result, homeowners often love to relay the tales of their journey. Ask about their homes and you'll likely be treated to a running narrative covering architecture and floor plans to finishes and furnishings. A notable designer or architect might up the cachet, but the narrative remains deeply personal.

"Nothing speaks to the essence of true luxury more than the ability to use your home the way you want," observes Beverly Hills designer

Christopher Grubb, president of Arch-Interiors. With a vision that transcends décor, high-end individuals see today's ideal home as uniquely one's own, oriented to orchestrate lifestyle, interests, and passions. Even the smallest details are scrutinized as owners, even those working with designers, take a more hands-on approach.

"In recent years, there has been a noticeable shift in how clients envision their ideal homes," explains Juliette Calaf of Juliette Calaf Interiors in Miami and San Juan. "Their visions have become more intricate and deeply personalized, reflecting a strong desire for spaces that truly align with their lifestyles and identities. This evolution towards

crafting homes that feel authentically 'theirs' is a clear testament to the growing importance people now place on their living environments."

Joyce Romanoff, CEO of Maya Romanoff, an innovator of handcrafted luxury wallcoverings, shares a similar notion. "There is a strong desire among consumers for original, authentic designs

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that go along with their vision." This also exemplifies how homeowners are playing a more active role from design conception to final finishes. "The knowledgeable consumer is always interested in the origin and the quality of the products they purchase, along with the feelings they evoke," says Romanoff.

CURATING THE IDEAL HOME

Homeowners have become more specific in customizing the overall feel and function of their homes, and much of that can be explained by technology and social media. "When I started over 30 years ago, clients went to designers for a 'look' and let the professionals do their thing," says Arkansas designer Chris Goddard. Today, clients are far more knowledgeable about what they want in the long run, versus what's trending. "The major role of designers today is to pull the client's ideas into a cohesive vision," adds Goddard. "I love the fact that today's clients are not sheep following the latest design fad and really want to personalize their spaces and make it their own."

As the value and proportions of a home increase, so does the degree of customization. "At a certain price point," says Lisa Adams of LA Closet Design, "it's custom everything." Grubb similarly remarks, "With all of the choices on the market, I find people are able to embrace their personal style and not feel like they have to follow a fad."

TECH ASSIST

On technology in the luxury realm, Alejandro Bonet, managing partner of LD&D, a design and development firm, says, "I think information travels a lot quicker. And it's a lot easier. So, everyone has access to everything at any given second."

InteriorSelect, an innovative home design platform that was created by LD&D in partnership with Tecma Solutions, empowers buyers with a virtual 3D experience. With access to their specific floor plan and the ability to save multiple versions, users can explore customization options to ensure every detail meets their unique preferences, budget, and aesthetic taste. "InteriorSelect is a game-changer for residence customization at properties and those looking to enhance the buyer experience," says Bonet.

WHAT'S TRENDY TODAY?

Not following trends is what's trending today, according to ASID in their 2024 trends preview. Consumers are looking toward longevity and



PHOTOS COURTESY OF MAYA ROMANOFF

Luxury Update:
Three of Maya Romanoff's iconic collections, Flexi Mother of Pearl, Mother of Pearl Aphrodite, and Ajiro Fanfare have been selected to join the



prestigious permanent collection of the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in the Louvre Palace in Paris.

relevance. Already, it is evidenced in the growing demand for vintage and antique furnishings.

"Today's clients are really exploring what makes their homes luxurious and uniquely theirs," says Calaf. "Our clients can draw inspiration from various design elements, such as runway trends, fashion influences, and captivating art pieces. It's all about creating a space that looks aesthetically pleasing and resonates with a deeper emotional connection."

Michael Gutwaks, president of Maya Romanoff, further adds that focusing on materials rather than trends keeps the collections relevant in today's luxury scene. "Timeless fashion and the use of natural materials inherently inspire our designs and how we express that through our collections. It's about how our wallcoverings synergize with other elements in the room," explains Gutwaks.

FASHION FORWARD

Fashion and interiors have a long-entwined harmony, usually following parallel paths. It's not unusual for looks on the runway to eventually find their way into interiors. This particularly relates to colors. But the advent of venues that immerse shoppers and guests into a brand's experience is turning that traditional synchrony on end. Add to that an explosion of residential properties and hotels under the banner of fashion icons, including Versace, Karl Lagerfeld, and Dolce & Gabbana, and fashion's influence on interiors and lifestyle

has become even more notable.

The boutique effect on residences even extends to closets where owners are tempted to replicate a shopping experience. "Clients often look to clothing boutiques and boutique hotels to formulate their vision of what they expect in their closet," says Lisa Adams of LA Closet Design. "As we get more inspiration and more pictures are shared, I think it just opens up our eyes to the possibilities."

AN INSIDE LOOK AT ULTRA CLOSETS

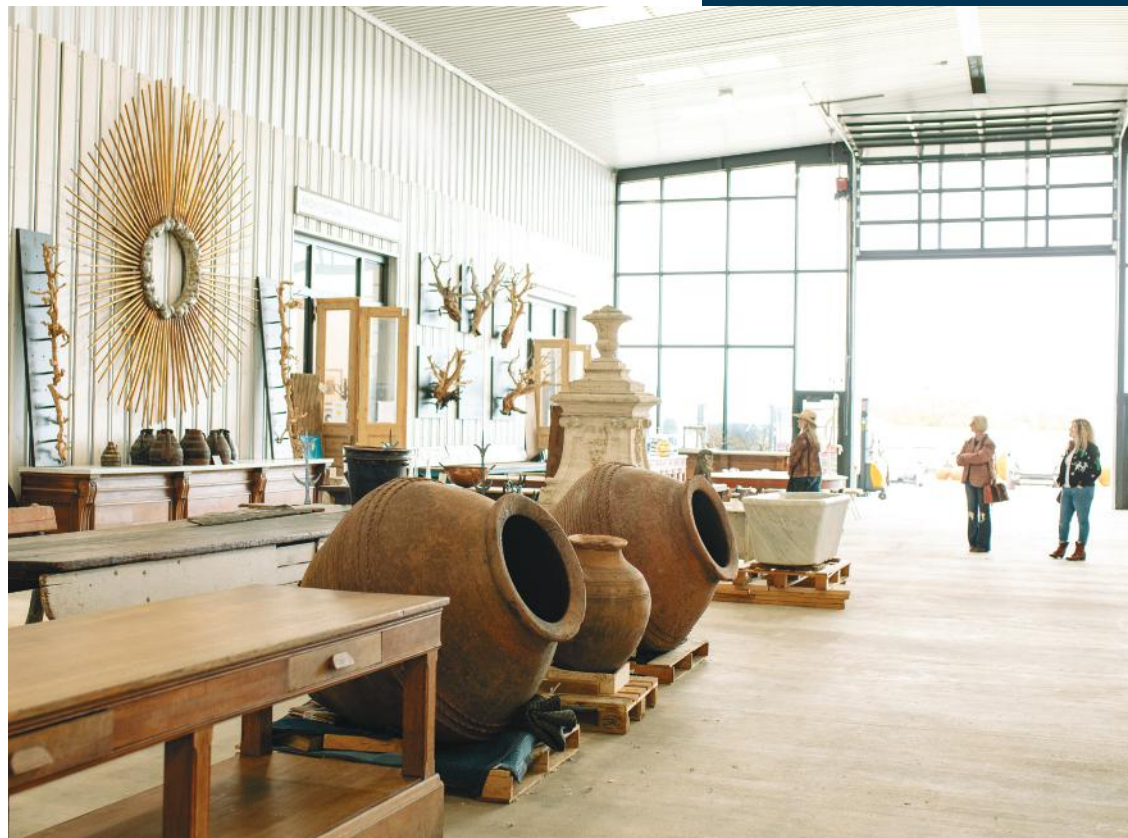
In ultra homes, the once-huge master closets frequently evolve into multi-room affairs. For example, Adams says, "You might have a glam room, the jewelry room, the travel room, the everyday closet, and the formal closet." Finishes become more exquisite with the liberal use of handcrafted wall coverings and materials such as onyx. At this price point, it's custom carpet, custom wallpaper, custom hangers, custom boxes, custom hardware, and everything with the specific finish that we want to match.

WELLNESS BESTS EVERYTHING

Wellness has morphed into an overarching value that plays into multiple facets of a home — air quality, lighting, ergonomics, sleep, and self-care. No longer simply a suite of amenities, it has become a thoughtful, well-conceived plan for the entire house.

Did You Know?:

In 1968, the Round Top Antiques Fair was a small-town event with a handful of vendors in a single red barn. Fast forward, today it's an international design destination — an event with 200,000-plus square feet of showrooms, all sourced by a collective of 33 of the nation's top dealers.



Luxury Update:

Fashion and lifestyle media brand ELLE is jumping into the private residence arena, lending its name to a collection of 128 residences in Miami. "At ELLE Residences Miami, the interior design blends mid-century modern and a contemporary design-forward aesthetic to reflect ELLE's distinct style with a unique sense of city. The aim was

For interiors, wellness might foster incremental changes; outside, it's having a huge impact on the way homes are oriented and amenities. It's also given rise to a new category, wellness real estate. Residences, buildings, and developments are being designed to promote overall healthy living.

TAKING WELLNESS TO THE NEXT LEVEL

From Dubai to Park City, new resort communities with wellness, often as a main focus, are on drawing boards. In Dubai, SHA Emirates Island at ALJurf offers an entirely new residential model wholly centered on wellness, with a range of beachfront residences, an award-winning SHA

Wellness Clinic, a health resort, and multiple pavilions dedicated to health and wellbeing. In Park City, Velvære and Ameyalli are also centered around wellness. From an enviable ski-in/ski-out location in the expanded Park City, Velvære offers residences designed to enhance both physical and mental well-being along with a comprehensive wellness center and all the outdoor amenities the Wasatch offers. The community is also enrolled in the International WELL Building Institute.

As far-reaching as these changes in consumer sentiment appear, they are only a springboard for how homes will evolve. These expressions of individual flair will perhaps make "Home Sweet Home" even sweeter. 🏡



to infuse Parisian elegance from French fashion with the tropical essence of South Florida. I think people will see that we've been able to balance the influence of *ELLE* and *ELLE Decor* while creating a living experience that is truly unique," says Fernando de Nunez y Lugones, CEO of Vertical Developments.

Did You Know?:

Research from McKinsey & Company shows wellness is a \$1.8 trillion market globally, one expected to grow 5-10 percent annually. Consumers are looking to spend additional dollars on products that improve their health, sleep, and mindfulness.

