

People

Paola Navone talks about what inspires her, plus news and views from leading names in residential design

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Why kitchens are key for property developers plus we preview some of the new bathroom products from ISH

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Above A boutique development by Londonewcastle shows how even compact kitchens can offer the luxury look

Left Accouter Design's Mayfair studio has a team of creatives who deliver deluxe interiors

Below left Bulthaup's b3 kitchen in sleek white lacquer and brushed aluminium features in Neo Bankside, a joint venture between Native Land and Grosvenor

Below right Dark oak-framed black glass sliding doors conceal a plethora of high-end appliances in this luxurious kitchen by Hill House Interiors

black river, cosmic black or even a volcanic rock to create a stunning feature. Cooking has become a huge part of the modern lifestyle so putting professional-style appliances at the very top end will achieve that 'cuisine experience' at home. Most buyers are guided and reassured by big-name brands and the latest gadgets."

In today's competitive climate, anything that makes a kitchen stand out will draw the crowds. Cabinetry with inlaid leather and patterned metal details have the edge over simple high-gloss designs. "The role of the designer is to open developers' eyes to the tactile textures and amazing finishes they never knew existed," adds Weiss. "We guide developers through the design process, preventing them from making mistakes."

If their investment is to be worth the return, developers need to be in the know as



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to what today's buyers want. Many clients are well travelled with greater expectations than ever before and a desire to own a statement kitchen with real star quality. Many designs will now incorporate intelligent features, mood-enhancing lighting and the latest in wireless sound systems for the complete package.

Location is also key, as Peter Allen, sales and marketing director at Londonewcastle, explains. "For us, it's not a case of allocating the same fixed portion of an overall budget to the kitchen," he says. "Rather, it is about looking at the positioning of the development – its location, value and the customer we are aiming at. We also keep in touch with the market by attending design shows in London and abroad, such as Salone del Mobile in Milan, to gain an insight into new products and trends. It's important to create interiors

with character but they also need to be timeless, to some extent, because we often specify finishes in larger developments two years before the buyers move in."

Craig Matson, managing director of Roundhouse kitchens, is a trained architect and says that developers and their architects and designers will often look to a single source rather than individual product suppliers to deliver the kitchen, forming a long-established relationship over time. Some of these suppliers include SieMatic, Poggenpohl, Bulthaup and Boffi, while architect Paul Archer finds that the key elements tend to be light, openness and sociability. "If we're talking really high spec," he laughs, "we will often end up with two kitchens – one for the staff, who do the real cooking, and one for the family, which may just be for breakfast and light prep." ⑤

Below Queens in W2 offers luxury living in the heart of west London. Developed by Aston Chase, there are 16 bespoke apartments and a rooftop penthouse pavilion, each with its own design

Bottom This sleek kitchen sits happily amid the post-industrial features of this Design Research Studio penthouse conversion in Metropolitan Wharf, London



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