

LUXURY

# Stay at home and develop a six-pack

In luxury developments buyers expect a gym to be part of the deal

Anne Ashworth

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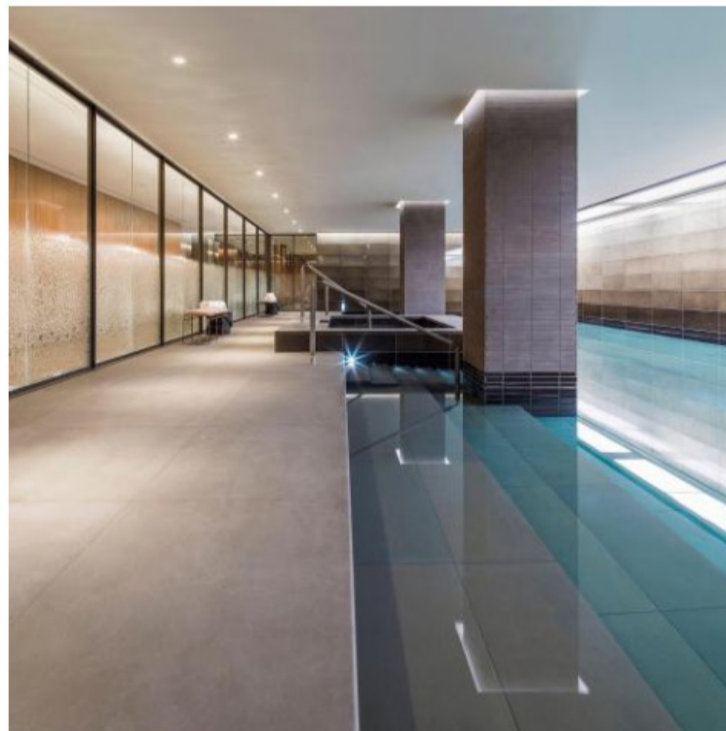


Gyms such as this one in Manhattan in the US will soon be appearing in UK developments

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People shopping for a home in a luxury block require a gym to be part of the deal. When you pay a seven or eight-figure sum for an apartment, it's reasonable to expect the chance to acquire a six-pack. Your flat may be the ultimate comfort zone, but in the basement gym you want to be tested to the limit, as well as receive tuition in mindfulness and better eating habits. No more slumping on the sofa. It's downstairs for dynamic stretching, yoga and metabolic system development in a facility bristling with thousands of pounds' worth of machines, under the tutelage of a buffed-up personal trainer.

This change in tastes is the result of an increase in the number of UK buyers of luxury new-build properties who live full-time at their homes, rather than leaving them empty for months. These buyers are also members of a generation accustomed to gyms that cater for every exercise trend and technological innovation for the measurement of achievement.



The pool in the Holland Park Villas development, a scheme of 72 apartments in Kensington, west London. Prices start from £1.675 million

This demographic shuffle is leading to a shift in the marketing of flats and also the growth of a wellness industry that manages gyms and spas, and provides bespoke diet and training regimes for residents. The soulless, low-tech basement room, with a running machine and a pile of weights, is making way for 20m pools and boxing-themed areas, with punchbags and a Muhammad Ali mural on an exposed brick wall. A boxing gym, backed by Anthony Joshua, the world heavyweight champion, is one of the features that ensured that the Chilterns, a scheme in Marylebone, central London, punched above its weight. All apartments have been sold, including the five-bedroom duplex penthouse, at a rumoured price of £20 million.

Not so long ago the emphasis of marketing literature for luxe apartments was the master suite, with its walk-in wardrobe. Now the space that enables you to fit into the outfits hanging in those wardrobes has become a top selling point. The brochure for Holland Park Villas, a scheme of 72 apartments in Kensington, west London, cites its “unsurpassed amenities”, including a gym, Pilates studio and 20m pool managed by Bodyism, the Notting Hill gym that caters to the rich and famous, including Rita Ora and Pippa Middleton.

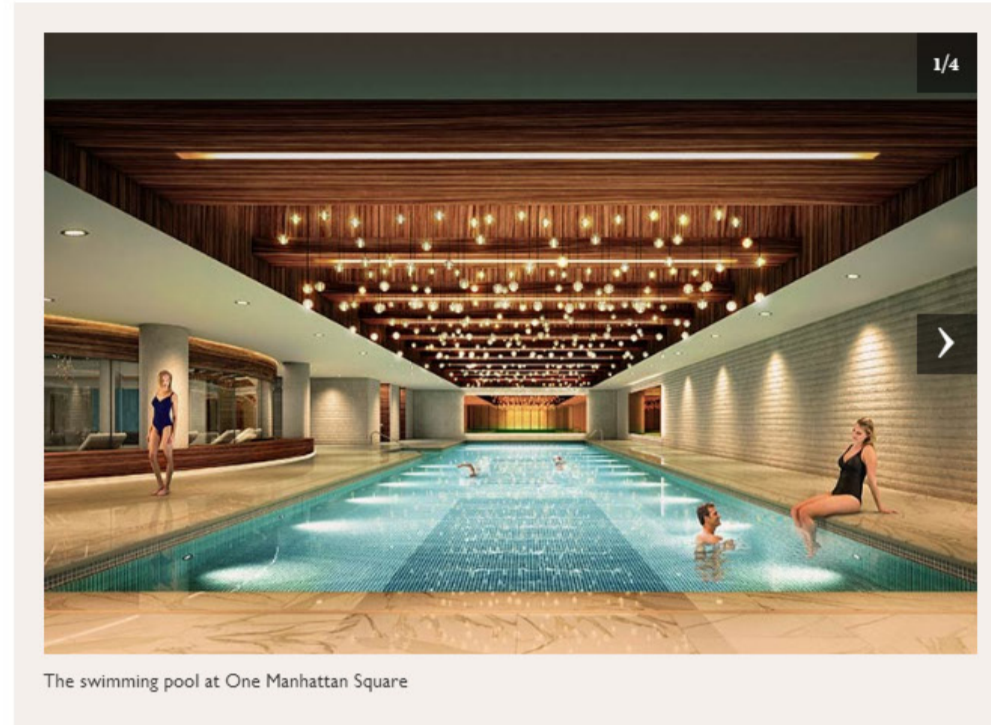
Nathalie Schyllert, the company’s chief executive, explains that the facility at Holland Park Villas is more than a gym. “We bring the community together for the ultimate wellness experience. You invest in much more than an apartment or a home — you invest in a lifestyle.”

Since 58 of the 72 Holland Park Villas flats have been sold, it seems that help with nutrition and movement has appeal. Indeed, Nicholas Gray, the sales director at Native Land, a developer, believes that wellness is seen as an essential by his target clientele.

The requirement for specialised onsite fitness-led Rhodium, a property management group, to diversify. The company already supplied concierge services to schemes in Belgravia, Chelsea and Mayfair. Dean Main, the company’s founder, saw that the gyms in some schemes lacked privacy, which meant that failure to hold the plank for more than a few seconds became an embarrassment. Residents want private studios, and tailored eating and exercise plans.

Rhodium provides guidance on every aspect of the good gym, in partnership with Dan Helge Hansen, the founder of MER, the Norwegian luxury fitness brand.

## Luxe gyms



Residents of Chiltern Place, another Marylebone scheme, are benefiting from the partnership. Only 12 of the 55 apartments at this 16-storey block remain for sale; prices start at £2 million.

The collaboration of Rhodium and MER will also be on display at the gyms in two Northacre developments: the Broadway, a development of 268 homes in Westminster, where prices start at £1.56 million, and No 1 Palace Street, a scheme of 72 apartments in a grade II listed Beaux Arts-style building close to Buckingham Palace (prices start at £2.5 million). Rhodium believes that staying ahead in the wellness and fitness sector depends on innovation, which suggests that some of the extras in the New York schemes will soon be arriving on these shores. The buyers of homes at One Manhattan Square, overlooking the East River, will enjoy a hammam, indoor pool, wellness spa and an adult treehouse.