

# FIVE-STAR STYLE

From bijou spas to bespoke bedside tables, well-heeled travellers are now looking to bring the very best of hotel interior design into their homes

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Clockwise from above: Soho Home has pieces from its clubs; hotel style from Elicyon; a home spa from West One Bathrooms



The softest of beds. The chicest of furniture. The most lavish of bathrooms. Designed to epitomise the utmost in luxury and comfort, few could deny the attractions of a top hotel — and of course, it goes without saying that the high-net-worth set have stayed at some of the very best. However, a new trend is now emerging in residential interiors, in which the swish amenities and decor of five-star hotels are making their way into contemporary homes.

As affluent types tend to be exceptionally well travelled, their knowledge of the luxury hotel experience gives them a wealth of design inspiration to draw on — especially when combined with handy social media tools such as Instagram.

“Our clients are global nomads. It’s not unusual for a client to message us while staying in a hotel, sending us images of the lobby or their room, or very specific features that they like,” says Charu Gandhi, founder of luxury interior design studio Elicyon.

Anna Beeber, principal designer of New York-based design studio Champalimaud, agrees: “Without a doubt, travellers are becoming more discerning; they know what they want and where to find it. They’re also

more observant, gathering inspiration from the places they stay. With luxury hotels, it’s not necessarily the glamour that attracts visitors, it’s the attention to detail in the design. Hotels provide elevated flourishes, both physically and aesthetically.”

Both Gandhi and Beeber are well placed to discuss this concept. Elicyon creates exquisite interiors for the most highbrow locations; among them, properties in Mayfair, Knightsbridge, Shanghai and Dubai. Champalimaud, on the other hand, has a wide number of sterling hotel commissions to its name alongside residential developments: The Stafford, The Waldorf Astoria and The Carlyle to name a few, with its highly anticipated renovation of Singapore’s iconic Raffles Hotel currently in the works. But exactly what hotel details are influencing current home design?

“Features are often specific, such as a certain reading light, or how shelves around the TV are lit,” says Gandhi. “In particular, wellbeing areas are often influenced by an experience a client has had. We are designing everything from an abstracted design of a Moroccan spa within a home to the perfect massage room that a client currently uses at a Four Seasons hotel.”

“A particular finish, the location of a plug, a certain kind of bed linen... These are the elements people want to bring into their

homes,” says Beeber. “For instance, the kinds of built-in units commonly found in hotel bedrooms, providing convenient bedside tables and easy-to-reach switches.” She explains that “dramatic” bathroom inspiration is also key, complete with such luxurious details as silk rugs by the bathtub, “as well as large vanity mirrors and refined wall-to-wall marble finishes”.

Ever reliable as an early adopter, the Soho House group clocked the popularity of its designs with consumers and acted accordingly, launching the Soho Home platform in 2016. Covering everything from furniture, textiles and lighting to art, decor and accessories, the e-commerce site offers everything its customers need to recreate a bit of Soho House exclusivity in their own homes, using pieces taken directly from its 23-strong roster of clubs. Members (aspiring or otherwise) can lounge around on velvet armchairs in fluffy branded robes, admiring their Paul Davies print, while clinking Barwell-cut crystal glasses.

Linda Boronkay, UK, Europe and Asia design director for Soho House, puts the movement down to the way in which “hotels want to create an enhanced ‘home away from home’ experience [for guests], meaning seamless services, amenities and compact solutions that are transferable to people’s everyday lives.”

Other ways to introduce the five-star feel to your home? In the bedroom, look to ultra-crisp, white bed linen, such as Frette, which







graces the beds of the Bvlgari and Hotel Cafe Royal, or Norvegr, a Belmond favourite. When it comes to wellness, make space for an elegant marble-finished wet room courtesy of West One Bathrooms, or even a bijou 6sq m spa, complete with a choice of showers, a steam bath and suitably atmospheric lighting.

“The growing trend for spa-like relaxation facilities at home is something we picked up on,” says Duncan Waters, West One Bathrooms’ managing director. “More people are moving into cities, resulting in increasing scarcity of living space and rising apartment prices, but at the same time, there’s increasing demand for enhanced quality of life.”

Stock said bathrooms with top-of-the-range products with delicious scents — think Acqua di Parma (as seen at Shangri-La at The Shard) or Le Labo (Fairmont Group). Additionally, invest in a statement piece for the bedroom, living room or hallway. Whether it’s a bespoke artwork or Zaha Hadid table, a hero piece will take centre stage — just be sure to keep other clutter to a minimum to let it shine.

Tom Parker and Andy Goodwin, co-founders of boutique interior architecture and design firm Fettle, have a number of residential projects that tap into this “eclectic, well-travelled” aspect of the luxury hotel spectrum (of which Parker and Goodwin are also well-versed, having worked on The Marylebone and The Hoxton hotels, among others). For instance, their Kensington townhouse project on Argyll Road features the same kind of design chutzpah that the duo so admire in the Rosewood and Pendry groups, complete with unexpected furnishings.

However, the duo claim that, in fact, the hotel-to-homes trend works both ways. “Luxury hotel chains are moving towards a more residential feel than previously, in order to appeal to a new genre of traveller,” they claim. “There is no longer a general ‘luxury’ aesthetic — it is now much more about well-considered design that is personal and inviting, much like a home interior.”

They point to colour and texture as an example: “In the past, palettes and fabric



schemes tended to be pared-back and, at times, bland. Now, a number of luxury chains are utilising richer, punchier tones and textures to create exciting interiors, for instance, Rosewood, or Firmdale, with creative director Kit Kemp’s natural motifs and bright patterns. Even the Edition — which is almost “anti-chain” — is transitioning in the direction of a residential feel through considered, more domestically styled vignettes.”

Beeber agrees that the lines between hospitality and residence are blurring, “as hotels strive to be more social and homes are being elevated to mirror a hotel experience in terms of looks, convenience and smart technology”. A case in point, she refers to one of Champalimaud’s recent residential projects, a luxury development located on the Upper East Side, called The Kent.

“The lobby mirrors an arrival experience one would find in some of New York’s grand dame hotels: chandeliers overhead, detailed flooring, lacquered walls. The meticulously designed social spaces could be mistaken for those of a hotel — the lobby ushers into the drawing room and then you are whisked upstairs to a breadth of other adjacent spaces.”

And then there is the Su Casa Dorado Beach hotel, located in Puerto Rico, which the company has just finished renovating post Hurricane Maria. “It’s the perfect example of a hotel that reads like a home; elevated and sophisticated, considering every need of a guest while also making one feel relaxed and welcome,” says Beeber.

As the divide between hospitality and home becomes increasingly hazy, it will be interesting to see how interior design adapts to the wants of the ever-more seasoned traveller.



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Clockwise from top left: Champalimaud’s Su Casa Dorado hotel aims to give a home-like feel; Fettle’s The Hoxton hotel also gives an at-home vibe; Allis Pendants by Soho Home add hotel charm; The Rosewood has unexpected interiors