

II Tatler Homes

INNER PEACE

Spaces that inspire
harmony, cultivate
balance, and evoke calm





This spread: The use of dopamine-inducing colours and textures defines Miaja Design Group's design strategy for Villa Mare Canary Islands at the pool area (left) as well as the living area (below)

DESIGNING TOMORROW

The interior design trends that will shape this year are a reflection of our collective desire for wellness, nature, and a sustainable future *By Sandhya Mahadevan*

The concept of interior design has evolved throughout history, taking on the influences of the times—from pure aesthetics and the show of craftsmanship of pre-industrialisation times, to functionality and comfort during the Industrial Revolution, to the minimalistic and iconoclastic sensibilities of the modern movement, to being driven by technology, sustainability and wellness in the past two decades.

As late American interior designer Albert Hadley said: "The essence of interior design will always be about people and how they live. It is about the realities of what makes for an attractive, civilised, meaningful environment, not about fashion or what's in or what's out."

It's one of the reasons why "when it comes to homes, I rarely use the word 'trend'. It just doesn't seem to capture the essence," says architect Keiji Ashizawa, founder of Keiji Ashizawa Design. "If I were to

discuss trends deliberately, I would highlight how homes have become somewhat more public while offices have taken on a more residential feel in the years following Covid," he explains.

In that respect, the quest that drives the profession as well as its design principles continues to be about making the best use of space, and focusing on function and user well-being. In the current space of time, all of the above fit under the umbrella of consciousness,

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involving an astute awareness of one's surroundings and a drive to enhancing creativity, efficiency and functionality through technology.

MINDFUL LIVING

"Sustainability, well-being and holistic living will still be the hot topics in the coming future," confirms Steve Leung, founder of Steve Leung Design Group, adding that he has personally witnessed an increased request "for mindful indicators of quality of life such as fresh air, abundant natural light and green scenery, with a more conscious appreciation for these nourishing elements".

This trend has especially had more traction in the Chinese market post-pandemic, adds Leung, among developers and homeowners alike. "Homeowners are actively seeking design solutions that align with their values, reflecting a shift towards more conscious and intentional choices in home design and renovation projects. This trend underscores the growing importance of personal preferences and values in shaping the direction of residential design and

construction processes." In his firm's Hong Kong and Shanghai offices, carefully planned spatial layouts maximise natural ventilation and let in natural light, reducing the need for artificial lighting and fostering a healthier indoor environment.

Isabelle Miaja, founder and managing director of Miaja Design Group has also noticed this focus, albeit handled differently across sectors around the world—from private homes and city hotels to resorts. "Resorts focus on wellness and sustainability as a main guideline, along with functionality, although the latter is deliberately camouflaged by the first two to ensure the seamlessness of well-being," she explains. "Residential combines all three on an equal basis as our clients are quite conscious about sustainability; functionality is a must to ensure each part of the home is not wasted and has a specific purpose, while at the same time, creating empty spaces is key to giving the overall home breathing transitions."



BLURRING OUTLINES

This focus has also propelled the concept of indoor-outdoor living among home owners and buyers.

At Odin Hills, one of Ashizawa's projects in Niseko, Japan, the architectural concept aims to integrate the stunning Hokkaido landscape directly into the interiors, allowing residents to feel connected to the natural surroundings and experience the seasonal transitions. "This approach is not just about aesthetics but about fostering a sense of harmony with nature, aligning with the growing demand for wellness-focused sustainable living," explains Ashizawa.

In Melbourne-based Solaris Property Group's projects, large windows and sliding glass doors, among other thought-through design elements, have been the means to let in abundant natural light and create meaningful common areas. "Creating communal spaces enables residents to integrate



and socialise. In this day and age, having these opportunities to connect with your neighbours is important for your mental well-being," says the firm's co-founder, Steven Galanos.

"Design is most impactful when it exists in connection with nature and not in opposition to it," says Winston Kong, partner at Champalimaud Design. With contemporary life edging us away from it, the yearning for these connections has increased of late. In a recent project at Peak Road in Hong Kong, the design firm used a

decorative mirrored wall to conceal the kitchen from the dining room. "The feature allows for a formal space for entertaining, while also serving to reflect the natural beauty of the landscape," explains Kong.

This blurring of boundaries through space flexibility is poised to become one of the biggest industry trends, says Leung. "Homes will increasingly feature designs that are highly adaptable and multifunctional, redefining the traditional distinctions between living and working environments. They will also serve as venues for



This page: Strategically placed mirrored walls and partitions allow for formal entertaining spaces with nature views at this project by Champalimaud Design in Hong Kong

Opposite page: Solaris Property Group's designs are characterised by a soothing, muted colour palette that blends effortlessly with the natural environment

polished and shiny, to more of an organic finish that can be matte or a rough-textured finish," he adds. "We're also starting to see the overlapping of different materials. For example, traditionally, materials such as timber and stone would meet evenly on different surfaces within the home. Today, these rules have been thrown out the window and we're seeing an overlap of uneven meetings of these materials."

The desired connection with nature will flow into interior colour palettes as well, says Miaja, albeit with a more eclectic bend—from natural tones to vibrant hues. She believes that bright, bold and inspiring interiors will remain a robust trend, and one that is "strongly supported by manufacturing-industry furniture, fabrics and finishes alike".

"Colours are part of nature; we marvel at a flower, a butterfly, the beautiful and harmonious combination of colours we find as we observe birds and fishes and more—Mother Nature is creating every day," adds Miaja.

These are appropriated differently across cultures, some subtly such as in the Nordic countries, while others such as South America embrace it entirely. "Each civilisation applies it to reflect their environment and make their

innovative social interactions, featuring dedicated spaces for networking and entertainment."

GO NATURAL

"Authenticity is a very important pillar of interior design. Textures and materials are now chosen with sustainability in mind, and by sustainability we also take into

consideration the carbon footprint," says Miaja, pointing towards the increasing preference towards natural as well as "locally found/produced" materials.

Galanos predicts that the use of stone and wood varieties will continue to lead the way Down Under. "The trend is moving away from materials being smooth,



design reflect their sensibility and their background.”

“At Odin Hills in Niseko, we have curated a palette inspired by the changing seasons and the natural beauty of the Hokkaido landscape,” explains Ashizawa, extrapolating Miaja’s statement. “The colours are drawn from the earthy tones of the mountains and the vibrant, evolving hues of the foliage, providing a harmonious connection between the interiors and the unique outdoor environment. This approach aligns with the desires of people who choose to create a second home in Japan.”

Ashizawa anticipates a deeper exploration of palettes that reflect the natural landscapes and the surrounding residential areas, particularly in projects situated within pristine environments.

Galanos sees light colour palettes continuing to be popular in Australia. “A soothing, muted colour palette consisting of whites, light browns and beige is versatile and really blends in with the natural environment in Victoria,” he adds.



INTEGRATED FUTURE

Air, water, light, nourishment, fitness, comfort and mind will be keywords taking over interior design mood boards, say Leung and Miaja. “Creating a natural and healthy space is more than a trend; I think it is becoming a big part of the design landscape and, even more importantly, a big part of our client’s aspirations,” adds Miaja.

The key is in designing a place that you will love spending time in, says Galanos. “Do plan for the future though,” he adds. “Use sustainable materials wherever possible, and subtly integrate technology that fits your needs.”

In that respect, he says, smart tech will continue to revolutionise



how we live, leaning towards seamless integration with our surroundings—USB charging, smart home devices, keyless entry and AI-driven home management will become essentials alongside energy-efficient air-conditioning, heating and lighting systems and appliances.

Leung hopes this move towards a green direction—a definite step away from “chasing fleeting trends

to creating designs that endure and remain relevant for the long haul”—will continue in Asia. “Design will play a more defined and crucial role in dealing with today’s environmental challenges, with green building and evidence-based standards like LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) and WELL increasingly considered and adopted in the near future.”

This page: The earthy tones at Odin Hills in Niseko harmonise with the natural landscape

Opposite page: A semi-translucent staircase and orange-brown gradient glass partitions invite natural light in and lend the illusion of space at McDonald’s Cube restaurants by Steve Leung Design Group

