



8. Luxury buyers also seek distinct exterior elevation, like in the upcoming residential project by Pentaspaces Consultants.

9. Rahul Bansai, partner, DCA Architects.

10. Gaurav Sanghavi, joint MD, Pentaspaces Consultants.

The demands are also being upgraded to newer lifestyle requirements, marking a new era in residential property development. "Some of the trending upscale luxury features are gourmet outdoor kitchen, open space facing an infinity pool or sea or golf course, home theatre, a fully-equipped home gym having large glasses, spa bathrooms and a designer dressing room," describes Ekta World's Mohanani. It's hard not to miss the obvious reference to life abroad in these luxury amenities – showing how international tourism and the global world that is the internet is influencing the residential sector indirectly.

Buyers also appreciate luxury homes that are well-fitted with the latest technology of international standard like automated curtains, LED units and centralised air-conditioning. "The interiors are equally important for the client, just as the exterior façade is. When it comes to the luxury segment, clients appreciate the interiors to have international design touches, quality flooring with the finest materials, a soothing colour palette and ample lighting fixtures," explains Hiral Sheth, director, Marketing, Sheth Creators. Another important factor that buyers will never miss out on is availability of ample of car parking space, excellent elevators and good security, she adds.

World-class security features are becoming USPs of upcoming premium residential projects. US-style concierge services and high-end access control that enable key-less entrance to the apartment are the new luxury parameters. "Features like digital security, management at the entrance, surveillance, smart interiors, occupancy sensing apparatus, panic button, etc, are features which the client appreciates in a luxurious residence," maintains Central Park's Bakshi.

WHAT ARCHITECTS WANT

If you could improve/change one design aspect in the way luxury residences/buildings are designed, what would it be?

Rahul Bansai, partner, DCA Architects: I would like to emphasise on the 'selection of material'. This aspect is of paramount importance and can affect the resident(s) in the long run. For example, an architect can use local material favouring the Indian climate even for luxury housing...Some architects do not consider this aspect earnestly. In a nutshell, one should be careful about material selection.
Reza Kabul, director, ARK: Given the fast-paced lifestyle and the constricted space availability, I feel luxury should incorporate a certain aspect of functionality. A sense of space gives a home its premium.
Gaurav Sanghavi, joint MD, Pentaspaces Consultants: Vastu, sometimes, creates a lot of constraints in planning and material use.

What are the pros and cons of the luxury housing trend?

Bansai: The pros are that it is improving the quality of life today and making it simpler for the residents. The cons are that the price increases and, at times, the idea behind getting value for money in terms of cost or worth gets defeated.

Kabul: It provides several amenities, convenience factors, larger floor plates, higher security, added layers of privacy and less noise. These could be listed as some of the major advantages of investing in a premium space. However, these projects are not always necessary in all market segments. While several developers focus their resources on developing luxurious properties, there are micro markets that have a dire need of large-scale affordable housing.

Sanghavi: Creating a design in any material, shape and size in the Indian market is a possibility now. The main issue lies in maintenance and serviceability.

Though luxury can be a state of mind, it is not a superficial component of design; it is reflected in the architecture as well as the interiors of spaces. Today's end-users know what they want, and very often expect more than what the developers have to offer. "The trend in luxury has gradually shifted from creating a 'wow' factor to creating a comfort factor at par with the owner's psyche. What stands despite all is that uniqueness is one of the key factors of luxury," declares architect Kabul.

UPCOMING PROJECTS

With well-known luxury addresses like South Mumbai running out of space, new projects are sprouting in neighbouring locations. Sheth Creators' Beaumont is located at Sion, a Central Mumbai location which is turning into an extension of SoBo. Spread across four towers of 45 storeys, it comprises 2/3/4 BHK spacious apartments, sky villas, landscaped decks and sky terraces with a view of the Arabian Sea, besides many exclusive lifestyle amenities and features. The structural and landscape architecture of the project is undertaken by P&T and Eco Plan Asia from Singapore, respectively.

The suburbs are not far behind in this luxury chase. Take, for example, Runwal Elegante at Lokhandwala, Andheri, which is spread across an area of 3million sq-ft with amenities like spa, infinity pool and recreational area. The project offers bespoke, fully air-conditioned homes ranging from 2.5 to 5BHKs, where customers will have the option of having their interiors designed by European designers. Features such as sensor lighting in lift lobbies, access control lobbies and home automation systems in the