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From private Peloton studios to snow cabins, how at-home spas are bringing opulence to self-isolation

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From private Peloton studios to snow cabins, how at-home spas are bringing opulence to self-isolation

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Ice loungers by KLAFS at Gurcast. "Cooling off is an important part of the sauna experience," says its director

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From snow cabins and salt caves to whole-house air purification and Alexa-powered beds that control the boudoir's mood, the wellness revolution has taken hold in the world's most opulent homes. With the UK under strict lockdown as ordered by **Boris Johnson on Monday night**, at-home solutions for fitness, relaxation and mindfulness are more welcome than ever.

"Wellness is no longer something my clients want to tap into post-Christmas or pre-beach. Homes are being turned into the ultimate sanctuaries where everything feels better just by being there," comments health and nutrition coach Karen Cummings Palmer, who describes the trend as "whole house wellness curation".



Residence 950 in San Francisco, a development by Truon Pacific, in which the air is changed completely, several times a day CREDIT: JACOB ELLIOTT


In this heightened health-conscious world of the super-rich, saunas are going infra-red (it's better for you and heats your body rather than the room). Basement pools are being super-sized, such as the 94 feet- (nearly 29 metre-) long pool that arcs around the lower ground floor of Heathfield House in Highgate, on the market for £40m through UK Sotheby's International and Knight Frank.

And buyers in prime central London are requesting houses with spare bedrooms or basement space for Vitamin D chambers or cryogenic tanks.


Here is what's on offer for the extreme wellness crowd:

The "total wellness" house


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Residence 950 is not just the most expensive property for sale in San Francisco, priced at \$40m. It's a first for the Californian city, which is also on lockdown – and maybe the world - in its wellness ambitions. Developers Troon Pacific describe the new-build five-bedroom mansion that spans an entire block of upmarket Russian Hill as an “ultra-performance system for total wellness”.

That means not only can you swim in a cantilevered Norwegian stone infinity pool overlooking the Bay or be pampered in the property's separate wellness cottage, you can also feel reassured that the very fabric and functioning of the building are good for your health too.



Saunas are going infra-red. Sauna by KLAFFS at Guncast

Biophilic design brings the outdoors in and the indoors out, enhancing health through a connection with nature. The air in the house is completely changed 12 times a day, shielded cables and night-time wi-fi cut-off minimise exposure to electro-magnetic frequencies, and there's a whole-house water filtration and purification system, materials to dampen sound and the largest rainwater harvesting tank in San Fran.

There's no shortage of bling at Residence 950, but Troon Pacific's CEO, Gregory Malin, thinks the simpler technology may be the most valuable. “In our opinion, air quality – especially in places where it's an issue, including China, India and, due to recent fires, Northern California - will be one of the most important aspects in residential design,” he comments.

Cryo-mania

Daniel Craig, Jennifer Aniston and Usain Bolt all reportedly love a spot of cryotherapy, where the body is exposed to sub-zero temperatures to help the body heal faster, think better, sleep deeper and – who knows? – live longer.

The luxury residential market is following suit, according to Finchatton's design director Jiin Kim-Inoue, who reports rising demand for at-home cryo chambers “with temperatures of up to -140 degrees, which you stay in for three minutes”.

Property consultant Thea Carroll mentions a Middle Eastern rental client – a champion triathlete – who travels everywhere with his portable cryo-chamber. “Now we are looking to buy a house for him and the cryo-chamber will need to become a permanent fixture, along with a sauna, steam room, pool and gym.”

And the cost? That may give you the shivers too. Nick Stuttard of London Projects, estimates that to build a cryo-chamber in a 6,000 sq ft house (ie. a mega-mansion), you would be looking at about £250,000.



A Hampstead property with 25-metre indoor pool, gym, steam room and sauna with picture glass wall looking at a private section of garden

Ice, ice baby

Cryo chambers will get you very cold, very quickly, but if you're after something that's less chest freezer and more Chamonix après-ski, you'll be wanting a snow cabin. Marc Schneiderman, director of Arlington Residential, is still reeling from his first sight of one in a private residence – a house in Hampstead that's worth at least £75m and includes a 25-metre indoor pool, gym, steam room and sauna with picture glass wall looking at a private section of garden. “The client has spent four years creating what I can only describe as simply the ultimate indoor facility. It's nothing short of breathtaking,” says Schneiderman.

In his clients' London and Home Counties mansions, Gilles Darmon, director of [KLAFS at Guncast](#) designs immersive snow experiences including powder cascading down mock rocks and stalagmite ice fountains. "Cooling off is an important part of the sauna experience and our snow cabins are designed to mimic the great mountain ranges of the world, while our ice lounges are a sleek, contemporary and more eco-friendly option as they doesn't need to be kept as cold," says Darmon.



Sauna by KLAFS at Guncast

Spin doctors

The world's best Peloton instructors are the new rock stars, and fuelling our new-found manic for live-streamed spinning are co-working spaces such as [Uncommon](#), where hot-desking freelancers can jump in the saddle – and developments such as [Floral Court](#) in Covent Garden – where residents, including the future buyer of the £20m, Sophie Ashby-designed penthouse, will live alongside the spin giant's first studio outside the US when it opens next year.

In country houses, barns are no longer being turned into showcases for classic car collections; they are more likely to house spinning kit. "A client of mine who has bought a £5m Cotswolds house has built a special garage for his £50,000-worth of bikes, including a workshop and spinning area for his triathlon training. Extreme health is fast infiltrating how families live and how they dedicate their living and auxiliary spaces," says Jonathan Bramwell of The Buying Solution.

It's not too late to get a Peloton bike for lockdown. The company is implementing a new delivery format where it will fully assemble your bike but leave it at the entrance to your home or apartment. They will meet you to confirm delivery using a contactless method before departure.

Flexible spaces for bendy owners

Fitness fads move on fast "and home gyms need to have longevity," says Charu Gandhi, founder and director of [Elicyon](#), who makes her home gyms adaptable and multi-functional. One has a movable floor with "a complex grid of sockets and cables beneath that can easily be reconfigured as new equipment is brought to the market and incorporated in the space," says Gandhi.



A sociable yoga space, and an opulent pool, by London Projects

In one house she recently worked on, the husband trains for Ironman while his wife practices aerial pilates. "We created a grid of metal beams on the ceiling which are reinforced to carry weight, and we designed concealed cupboards to house the Ironman equipment, so the room could be empty and feel tranquil for her pilates sessions," says Gandhi.

London Projects' Nick Stuttard adds that clients increasingly want state of the art yoga or pilates studios at home. Often located in the basement, clever lighting and design trickery is key.

"We recently excavated a basement in Belgravia to create a huge leisure suite including a pool experience shower, steam room and sauna. The ceiling is stretched black barrisol, which gives the illusion that the room goes on forever," says Stuttard.

Read more: [How the celebrity set is staying calm by streaming spiritual wellbeing services](#)

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