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BEST OF BOTH, KINGS GATE, LONDON SW1, S/S 2016

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KINGS GATE

Best of both

LAND SECURITIES' LATEST RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT COMBINES CUTTING-EDGE CONTEMPORARY DESIGN WITH A SENSE OF HISTORY, REFLECTING THE FAST-CHANGING FACE OF VICTORIA

WORDS GEORGIE LANE-GODFREY

VICTORIA

Ask any SW1 resident and they'll tell you their favourite corner of central London has changed – a lot. In recent years, Victoria has evolved from a mere transport hub to a go-to destination for food, shopping and global designer brands. At the heart of this transformation is bustling Victoria Street, where futuristic developments such as Cardinal Place are attracting ever more businesses and retailers to the area. And now, with the completion of Nova, Victoria on the horizon, the neighbourhood has never been more enticing.

As a result, an increasing number of residential projects are popping up, such as the luxurious Kings Gate. Designed by Lynch Architects, its contemporary exterior is in keeping with the local's new look, while its interiors, by Millier, evoke its rich history. Millier's team was responsible for the apartments' layouts and finishes. 'We opted for natural materials and a rich palette of neutrals to keep it timeless,' says partner Helen Westlake. 'We wanted the fixtures and fittings to be subtle yet strong, so buyers wouldn't feel the need to replace them. To do this, we used texture wherever possible, choosing timber grain for the doors and a tactile leather effect for the stonework.'

Tactility was one of the key elements Millier employed to turn these sleek apartments into welcoming homes. 'People want their home to look different from their office environment,' explains fellow partner Alex Nord. 'And they now appreciate that how a property feels is just as important as the way it looks, making homely features such as fireplaces more popular.'

In choosing the colour scheme for Kings Gate, Millier took as inspiration the surrounding streets and nearby St James's Park. 'We wanted to soften the appearance of the building and also give it a sense of context, so we took the image of the sun setting over the park and the historic red-brick buildings of Victoria as our starting point,' explains Westlake. 'That instantly gave the interiors greater warmth, which can often be quite a challenge in a new-build development.'

That warmth is something the team at Millier was keen to capture in Kings Gate. 'We wanted to create homes that looked as if they had been built to be lived in, rather than purchased solely as an investment,' continues Nord. 'What differentiates these apartments is the proportions of the rooms. The ceiling heights and luxury-sized bathrooms were intended to give a sense of being in a grand space. Unlike in many developments, where smaller furniture is plotted on the plans to make rooms seem bigger, we designed the layouts so larger luxury furniture can be accommodated without compromising on space.'

Luxurious furnishings are part of the Kings Gate identity, and each show apartment has been given a bespoke look by interior designers Spinocchia Freund. 'The neutral context gave us the opportunity to try different palettes to ensure no two properties would be the same,' says designer Lauren Wood. 'Every item of furniture was created in-house and is unique, as are the artworks and accessories, giving each home an individualised feel.'

The Spinocchia Freund team used as its springboard the development's bronze window frames and brass bathroom taps. 'We used lots of metallics, pairing them with greens and rust tones,' explains Wood. 'My favourite pieces are the armchairs in the penthouse. They have striking, geometric, rose-gold arms that echo the building's angular, modern architecture, but we upholstered the seats in a soft, lush, forest-green velvet. Pieces like this were our way of tying the sharp, masculine exterior of Kings Gate with its softer, warmer interiors.'

Briefed to create something new and unseen before in a residential development in the capital, Spinocchia Freund was keen to move away from the traditional, Art Deco-flavoured 'London' look that has been popular in recent years. It sums up the result of its endeavours as 'sleek, young and sexy'. 'When it comes to the new direction Victoria is taking, Kings Gate is leading the way,' says Wood. 'It's a bold new architectural development that takes its interior inspiration from the design highlights of the past. What could possibly suit Victoria better?'



This page, from top Kings Gate's contemporary exterior, by Lynch Architects; the building's striking angles; Millier took its design cues from nearby St James's Park. Opposite Interiors, including the roof terrace, by Spinocchia Freund, are 'sleek, young and sexy'



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THE SPRING/SUMMER ISSUE



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