

MANSION GLOBAL

Noted NY-Based Designer Talks About a Return to the Traditional in Luxury Real Estate

Plus, Alexandra Champalimaud points to a 'relative bargain' neighborhood in Manhattan you'd never expect

BY LUCY COHEN BLATTER

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED ON NOVEMBER 07, 2016 | [MANSION GLOBAL](#) |



Champalimaud with her newest and current project—The Chamberlain.
WILLIAMS NY

Alexandra Champalimaud, the Lisbon-born designer and founder of New York-based interior design firm Champalimaud, has worked on some of the world's most distinctive hotel and residential properties, including the Waldorf Astoria in both New York and Chengdu, China and The Dorchester in London.

Recently, she was responsible for the design in two Manhattan luxury developments— 12 East 88th St. and The Chamberlain, on West 87th Street. We caught up with Ms. Champalimaud to talk design trends, hot neighborhoods and more.

Mansion Global: Describe your dream property.

Alexandra Champalimaud: My dream property has a timeless quality. It fits into and elevates its environment and culture and has a powerful sense of place. My dream property is elegant, welcoming and calm. It nurtures and transports its residents and their guests.

MG: What does luxury mean to you?

AC: Luxury, for me is experiential and personalized. I particularly luxuriate in the presence of exceptional craftsmanship.

MG: What's the biggest surprise in the luxury real estate market now?

AC: We're seeing a return to traditional design value, including kitchen layouts that offer an option to close off the kitchen.

MG: What's your favorite part of your home?

AC: We live in an 18th Century house in Litchfield, Connecticut, that remains largely original in hand-crafted details. I love the craftsmanship displayed at a time in which the location was wilderness and everything was necessarily completely local. My favorite experiences in this home revolve around candle-lit meals, with the light reflecting off blue-black painted walls and white trim. Thanksgiving dinners, with the late afternoon winter sun, are simply magical.

MG: What best describes the theme to your home and why?

AC: Peaceful. I need a clean palette and a clear mind to be creative. My home is calming and refreshing for the soul. Having worked on numerous projects over the course of the day, each one layered and complex, I find it essential to come home to a space where everything's easy.

MG: What's the most valuable thing in your home?

AC: The view from my living room in West Chelsea. We overlook Frank Gehry's IAC building, I like to call it my "lantern" when this beautiful piece of sculpture is illuminated at night.

MG: What's the most valuable amenity to have in a home right now?

AC: Technology that is dead easy to use!

MG: Best piece of real estate advice?

AC: Buy it if you love it and can barely afford it.

MG: What's going on in the news that will have the biggest impact on the luxury real estate market?

AC: Brexit. The economic troubles in Europe. What's going on in American politics. China's slowing growth rate. Political concerns in many otherwise attractive resort destinations. There is plenty to worry about, but that only creates opportunities.

MG: What is the best area now for investing in luxury properties?

AC: Who would have guessed that Manhattan's Upper East Side would become a relative bargain?

MG: What area currently has the best resale value?

AC: In New York, downtown seems to have the strongest demand. But, tastes change. I suggest trying to buy well and only buying what you love. If you are only thinking about resale value, you may make a mistake by overpaying for the hot area or trendy building today. Or worse, you may forget that the purpose of residential real estate is to enjoy it.

<http://bit.ly/2fLKnNE>