

Looking for a dream home? 56 Repulse Bay Road demands your attention – a prestigious collection of 53 luxurious houses at one of Hong Kong's best locations – and only 20 minutes from the city centre.

Dream home by the sea



These majestic residences range in size from an expansive 2,700 sq ft to a hedonistic 4,000 sq ft with direct access to the warm sands of Repulse Bay – a dream beachfront home in a highly exclusive area inhabited by the rich and famous.

The features include generously sized bedrooms, balconies, private roofs and terraces – enough choices to meet the desires of every family member.

And, of course, there's that mandatory luxurious resident's club which, in this case, offers an indoor swimming pool, squash courts, sauna, recreational room – and large, landscaped gardens for picnics and barbecues.

The craftsmanship at 56 Repulse Bay Road is of the highest quality. All work has been carried out to the most exacting standards, and was recently rejuvenated by one of Hong Kong's top architects Edward Billson, who together with fellow director Karl Grebstad make up the leading architectural firm MAP Architecture & Planning.

Floor to ceiling, energy efficient windows with full size sliding doors are installed in each sea-facing room. Frameless glass balustrades outside ensure that the breathtaking views from every single house are always there to enthrall you.

Security systems at 56 Repulse Bay Road are all state-of-the-art, from CCTV to motion sensors and fortified perimeter fencing.

But best of all, the sea is close enough to touch. The lifestyle is incomparable – from jogging on the beach, to drinks on your terrace at sunset, or building sandcastles with the kids.

If you're looking to acquire one of the most desirable residences in Hong Kong today, fashioned from the highest standards of craftsmanship and boasting impeccable finishes and fittings, then 56 Repulse Bay Road is an offering you can't afford to ignore. You may never have to search for a home again.

Village living



More and more expatriates are now seeing Hong Kong as a place that can satisfy their business desires as well as provide them with a comfortable, quality lifestyle. This is the view of Australian architect Edward Billson.



And many of them, he has noticed, are setting up home in the New Territories in spite of the archaic government home "ownership" regulations and building rules that apply to village houses.

But Billson of MAP Architecture & Planning managed to turn a tired, old village house in Tai Po Tsai, Sai Kung into a family-friendly abode that complies with government specifications.

He also showed that Spanish-style, three-storey villas need not be the foregone conclusion when building in the New Territories.

His own house, situated at the end of a

winding lane with expansive views over the sea, has become a much admired and talked about residence among both visitors and local residents.

"But people who see it tell me it's categorically not a village house – but it is," Billson insists. "It just shows that you can have a village house without it having to look like one."

It conforms to local building regulations. It is 27 feet high and each floor covers 700 square feet, with four feet wide balconies along one side, all of which are hallmarks of a typical village house. However, the similarities end there.

Building the house from scratch gave Billson creative freedom. He recalls that it was nice to have the opportunity to make decisions and to analyse opportunities presented by the site.

With this in mind, he chose a rectangular structure, not a traditional square one. He said he wanted all the rooms to have a view of the sea, so he made it longer and narrower – and it worked well.

The ground floor features a large living room and kitchen which open onto a huge terrace; a study and bedroom are on the first floor; and a spacious master bedroom and open bathroom run through the length of the top floor.

Each level is connected by a "floating" glass and steel staircase positioned at the rear of the house and huge windows all around allows light to flood in.

The architect chose light-coloured materials throughout, with limed ash for the floors, Travertine marble in the kitchen and bathroom, painted plaster walls and steel and glass for the staircase – all to allow the maximum amount of light to penetrate the house.

"I wanted an almost art gallery-like feeling to the space," he said. Restricting himself to a certain number of materials also created cohesion.

Billson looked for ways to increase the standard 700 square feet of functional space, so he added a four-metre-wide terrace along the front of the house. Bi-fold doors open up along the facade to create a seamless transition between inside and outside.

Billson and his wife Claire entertain a lot. They believe that the lifestyle in Sai Kung is all about opening out the house, getting lots of people around and sitting inside and out.

"I love being able to open the doors and turn the ground floor into one big space."

The houses Billson has designed show they are not the prescriptive New Territories Exempt House Ordinance kind that are the root cause of the moribund designs commonly seen in the New Territories. To the contrary, the ordinance provides a design opportunity for those with the skill and knowledge to take advantage of it.

