

A specially designed circular floor mosaic creates an inviting entrance to the master bathroom

essential redevelopment The Halcyon

HALCYON DAYS

Sumptuous bathrooms are an important selling point of the apartments at The Halcyon, one of London's newest prestige property developments. Martin Hodgson of Tusk Developments, opened the doors of one of its deluxe bathrooms - exclusively for us

Words **Amelia Thorpe**
Pictures **Andrew Meredith**





Martin Hodgson, md of Tusk Developments, on the front steps of The Halcyon



Unrecognisable from its beginnings as a coal vault, this space is now an inviting and luxurious subterranean bathroom

‘EVERY SINGLE THING IS SPECIALLY DESIGNED AND MADE TO OUR SPECIFICATION’

Once the exclusive hideaway for media-shy celebrities, rumoured to include Yoko Ono and Mick Jagger, the ensuing years hadn't been very kind to Halcyon Hotel, this Italianate building in London's Holland Park. "It was pretty well derelict when I first saw it," recalls Martin Hodgson, md of property company Tusk Developments. "Water running through the ceilings, smashed windows and pigeons flying in and out," he adds.

Not to be deterred, early in 2006 Martin began the renovation and conversion of the Grade II listed buildings into 12 super-luxe and highly covetable apartments. "I love beautiful buildings," he explains simply of his decision to invest in this ambitious project. It's clearly had its challenges, not least because the fabric of the 1864-built structure, following bomb damage from the Second World War and some 1970s breeze block-style additions, had to be stripped back to its brickwork before renovations could begin.

Then Martin chucked out the first set of architect's plans. "The whole idea was to open out the space and maximise the dramatic ceiling heights," he says. "We got rid of the warren-like series of rooms and decided instead to create a smaller number of apartments, and make each of them super-luxurious in style." It was a bold move, but for a company that specialises in prestigious properties, Martin and his partner, in life, as well as in business, Ludmila Paratian, were confident that their potential purchasers favoured state-of-the-art comfort, as Ludmila explains: "If you can afford this type of apartment, you probably work so hard that, when it is your time to relax at home, you want to be whisked away to something gorgeous."

Ludmila, head of interior design at the company, has focussed her energies on creating elegant and sophisticated interiors with plenty of warmth and theatre. Open the door to the show apartment and you're in for a treat: bespoke furnishings in dramatically designed settings, with plenty of added extras, be it the infinity ceilings with fibre optic lights in the cloakroom, the vast tropical aquarium in the entrance hallway, the objets d'art, including a Burmese volcanic stone Buddha over 2m high, or the futuristic island in the glossy kitchen. "Every single thing is specially designed and made to our specification," says Ludmila, who sourced most of the furnishings from overseas. "It wasn't only that we couldn't find what we were looking for in the UK and that we didn't



A custom made glass-fronted wardrobe is a streamlined addition to the bathroom entrance



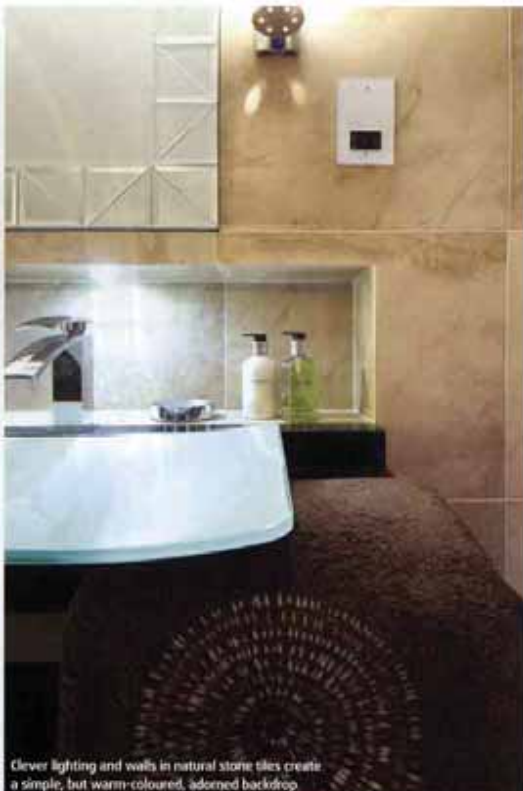
The jet black bath has a curved glass front and polished chrome hydrotherapy jets



The open sweeping curve of the glass basin has earned it the name, Curve



The Okumé shower panel is made in Italy



Clever lighting and walls in natural stone tiles create a simple, but warm-coloured, adorned backdrop

product specification

- Bath** TuskSpa Adamakis hydrotherapy
- WC** TuskSpa
- Basin** TuskSpa Mirr Glass Canceo
- Basin console** TuskSpa bespoke
- Basin taps, shower heads and valves, accessories** TuskSpa Moon collection
- Mirror** TuskSpa bespoke
- Wall tiles** Blue black mosaics, natural stone and metallic wall tiles, all TuskSpa
- Floor tiles** Polished limestone, circular floor mosaic, all sourced from Italy
- TuskSpa Tel: 020 8785 3077
www.tuskspa.com
- Toiletries** Molton Brown Tel: 0800 178 1188
www.moltonbrown.co.uk



Blue and black mosaics cover the partition between the bath and WC



Contemporary brassware from the Moon Collection from TuskSpa is imported from Italy

I didn't want to go down the white route because I find that too clinical. Instead, I wanted something with the feel of the kind of luxurious powder room you might find in a swanky club



The spacious shower area is clad in metallic wall tiles and glass mosaics for gleaming effect

want to use the same products that could be seen elsewhere, but also because it is practically impossible to get the quality that we want and service from UK companies," she says.

Even the bathrooms and their furnishings are individually designed by Ludmila and bespoke-made. "It's one of the most important rooms to get right," she says. "I didn't want to go down the white route because I find that too clinical. Instead, I wanted something designed to awaken your senses, with the feel of the kind of luxurious powder room you might find in a swanky club," she adds. Our private tour of the recently finished master bathroom in one of the apartments begins with a sharp intake of breath as the photographer can't quite believe his eyes. "It's stunning," he says. The space, believe it or not, was once a coal vault, but the lack of windows and subterranean location didn't faze Ludmila. "The whole idea was to create a luxurious, underground, private spa," she says.

Unable to find a bath that was sufficiently sturdy, large and comfortable according to Ludmila and Martin's requirements, they set about designing their own, creating a series of hydrotherapy baths with up to 40 body jets and tinted glass fronts. Each of the bathrooms in the apartments is different, so they added custom-made, glass wash basins, lacquered vanity units and marine wood shower panels to the specially designed baths. "Our plan is to build Tusk as a luxury brand,"



The TuskSpa hydrotherapy bath has a glass front; 18 wall, back and foot jets plus 20 floor jets; a water boost system, ozone cleaning; under bath LED light strip and internal LED lights

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'THESE APARTMENTS, INCLUDING THE BATHROOMS, ARE ALL ABOUT CREATING AN EXPERIENCE AND TRANSPORTING PEOPLE TO A DIFFERENT PLACE'

explains Martin. This month, they launch TuskSpa to market their bathroom fittings, including their range of glass wash basins, from £695, to hand-built and finished hydrotherapy baths, from £12,495, to the Indicha exercise pool with its counter-current swimming jet and channel, from £35,650.

So, for Tusk, it's not a price sensitive market, then? "Our clients want quality," says Martin, confident of his beliefs since he has only two of the apartments still to sell - yours for just under £5m each. "These apartments, including the bathrooms, are all about creating an experience and transporting people to a different place."

business profile

Tusk Developments

Who are we? Martin Hodgson, md, and Ludmila Paratian, head of interior design

Where are we? Tel: 020 8785 3077 www.tuskdevelopments.com

For details of The Halcyon, 81-82 Hollan Park, London W11, visit www.halcyonw11.com

What we do Prestigious residential property developments

Business history Tusk International, Tusk Developments' holding company, was launched in 2004 as a luxury property development and interior design company. Headed by Martin Hodgson, now 42, the company has a staff of 120 involved in the construction, renovation and development of properties from start to finish, including interior design, glazing and joinery. Its own range of bespoke bathroom fittings, TuskSpa, launches this month



Ludmila Paratian and Martin Hodgson in the show apartment kitchen



The Grade II listed Halcyon was built in 1864 as two elegant residential villas



Blue black mosaic tiles and a jet black hydrotherapy glass fronted bath provide the drama in this luxurious bathroom, complete with its mirrored wetroom television and red glass TuskSpa washbasin



The high-gloss kitchen in the show apartment is designed by Ludmila Paratian and produced by Aster Cucina in Italy

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