

MY SPACE: TARA BERNERD

The founder of the eponymous Belgravia-based interior architectural practice Tara Bernerd & Partners and former protégé of Philippe Starck on global inspirations and what makes a house a home

Text **Diana Khoo**

HAVEN: TELL US ABOUT YOUR LIVING SPACE.

Tara Bernerd: I am fortunate to live in a beautiful apartment on the banks of the River Thames in London. The building was designed by Lord Norman Foster but I have redesigned the interior of the space, introducing concrete panels in the entrance hall to make a dramatic statement as well as changing the layout so that double Crittal-framed glass doors that lead into the open-plan living space frame the view beyond.

DESCRIBE YOUR MOST FAVOURITE ROOM AT HOME.

I love to entertain at home and have designed my living room to reflect this. It is an open-plan living space that I designed to be as flexible as possible. And I do so adore the theatre as the day changes to evening and the view of the

Thames changes as the lights start to twinkle on the bridge beyond.

WHAT IS THE MOST TREASURED OBJECT IN YOUR HOME?

It is hard to identify just one item. However, if I had to choose, it would be the first art piece that I collected — a small hand-painted bottle with a jade stopper. It brings me just as much pleasure now as when I first discovered it in Hong Kong.

WHAT CAN WE FIND ADORNING YOUR SHELVES?

I used to travel frequently to Milan and now have an obsession with Murano glass, which I love to mingle with a curated collection of books and other objets d'art.

PLANTS VERSUS FLOWERS?

Plants and flowers really can bring a space

to life. While I love both, I would have to say that I ultimately prefer flowers. From peonies to hydrangeas, their variety and colour really add that final layer of design and a sense of season to the space.

CONDOMINIUM LIVING VERSUS A LANDED PROPERTY?

I would say I like both almost equally and would certainly enjoy the challenge of designing either a condo or a country house with a rambling garden.

IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT DOES EVERY HOME NEED IN ORDER TO BE COMPLETE?

A home should have a sense of personality that truly reflects the character of its owner.

WHERE COULD WE STAY, THOUGH, TO EXPERIENCE A TASTE OF TARA BERNERD & PARTNERS' INTERIOR DESIGN STYLE?

The new Zentis Osaka hotel, my first design project in Japan. It was a particular honour to work with the Palace Hotel Group, one of the country's leading hotel brands. As with so many of our projects, the design of the hotel takes inspiration from its locale, the heritage of the area and the people who are going to use it.

TELL US A LITTLE MORE, PLEASE.

The furniture is a mix of mid-century and modern contemporary pieces, many bespoke-designed for the hotel. The guestrooms are inspired by the traditional Japanese bento box, with interlocking layouts designed to optimise sustainable room sizes while traditional art commissioned by a local artist is a nod to the vibrant location in which the hotel is set. **W**

