

Tastemakers: Martin Kemp

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A private apartment in One57, a 57-storey building overlooking Central Park in New York, designed by Martin Kemp

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Martin Kemp, 55, founded his interior design company in 2012. He was previously the creative director for the developer Candy and Candy, overseeing projects such as One Hyde Park, the residential and retail scheme in Knightsbridge, west London.



Interior designer Martin Kemp

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More recently he has worked on British Land's £210 million Clarges Mayfair development; a vast chalet in the French Alps; a private polo estate in St Tropez; and a luxury apartment in One57, a 57-storey building overlooking Central Park in New York. Clients also seek out his expertise for their superyachts and private jets.

Kemp lives in an "open-plan, double-height loft" in Kennington, south London.

What is your biggest source of design inspiration?

My late mother. She had the best style and taste of anyone I know. I came home one weekend to find the hallway had been redecorated and carpeted in vivid scarlet, with a matt-black ceiling. Bonkers, but such fun — and it worked.

Chintz or minimalism?

Both. Chintz has humanity and warmth, which makes me want to curl up next to a fire with a pot of tea, whereas minimalism can bring modernity, freshness and simplicity.

What is your design essential?

My tape measure. It allows for those spontaneous "large" purchases.



A private jet designed by Martin Kemp Design

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Your favourite interior design "quick fix"?

Rationalise and declutter — famous last words from a magpie who keeps everything.

Your prediction for the next big interior design trend?

Feminine forms — the world needs softening.

The design pitfall to avoid?

Painting small rooms light to make them seem bigger and brighter never made sense to me; embrace the scale and darkness, and create drama instead.

If you could live in anyone's house whose would it be and why?

I visited a fellow designer's home recently and was blown away. It was truly special; beautiful with modern style, interest, warmth, eclecticism, excitement and sheer good taste.



A living room designed by Martin Kemp in the One57 building in New York

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When decorating what do you splurge on?

I find it hard to resist art or sculpture that appeals to me. It covers a multitude of sins.

What would you save on?

Decorating. I'm not too bothered by bare brick walls and chipped paint.

The best piece of design advice you have ever received?

Follow your own rules. It's what makes us individuals.

martinkempdesign.com