



KNIGHTSBRIDGE
PRIVATE PARK

A PREMIUM
RESIDENTIAL
NEIGHBOURHOOD
IN MOSCOW

February 7 2014



RESTAVRACIA
TRADITIONAL DEVELOPMENT

LINLEY
INTERIOR DESIGN



LINLEY BRINGS ROYAL LUXURY TO RUSSIA

Carol Lewis - Published at 12:01AM, February 7 2014

Founded by the Queen's nephew, Linley is bringing a touch of Royal interior design to a prime Moscow development.

There is nothing more quintessentially British than the Royal Family, the Union Jack and traditional craftsmanship. British bespoke furniture-maker Linley, founded by the Queen's nephew, David Armstrong-Jones, is famed for all three.

Viscount Linley — known professionally as David Linley — trained under the master furniture-maker John Makepeace. "I started doing marquetry in my mother's attic," he explains. The exquisite marquetry creations on which the company has built its reputation remain at the heart of Linley's collection, from the bestselling Union Jack jewellery boxes and lovingly created inlaid tables and desks, to the unbelievably detailed marquetry in its Royal Opera House keepsake box and London Skyline panel, which was exhibited at Masterpiece London last year.

David Linley no longer makes furniture: "I had to make a choice between staying in the workshop or being here in the shop, meeting and greeting." He remains the face of the company even though yacht broker Jamie Edmiston bought a majority share and was appointed chief executive of the company in 2011.

David Linley is clearly passionate about British craftsmanship, eager to talk about dovetail joints and burr walnut veneers in his Pimlico showroom in South London. It is a craftsmanship that has garnered his company an interior design contract on one of Moscow's most prime property developments.

Enver Kuzmin, chief executive of luxury Russian property developer Restavracia N, explains: "I came into this showroom and saw a desk and I just knew from 10-15m that this was quality. You could see the quality."



It is this quality that he now wants to offer his wealthy Russian clients. Kuzmin has hired Linley's interior design service to furnish the communal areas and penthouses at Knightsbridge Private Park, a 155-home development, in Moscow's prime Khamovniki district.

The development, which is just 3km from Red Square, draws on Neo-Classical London townhouse style, with private gardens and terraces as well as a central two-hectare communal central garden, a feature that is extremely unusual in Moscow. Kuzmin is keen to emphasise that the homes are being built for family-orientated Russians with children, and he has included a kindergarten especially. He was keen to emphasise the importance of the greenery by calling the development Hampton Court, but "pt" is awkward for Russians to pronounce. Likewise the naming of the four residential blocks remains undecided (Balmoral and Windsor are two of the suggestions), while Kuzmin decides whether they are easy on the Russian tongue — and ear.

Linley has been offering an interior design service for ten years and has worked on a variety of high-end properties, including the penthouses in the iconic Battersea Power Station project in London. Linley's approach to interior design will, under the direction of its new creative director Alex Isaacs, remain true to its British roots for its latest project, but with some Russian touches.

Isaacs has designed two alternatives for the penthouses, one of which has a Neo-Classic flavour — "a modern interpretation, not too full on," he says — and the other Art Deco. In the communal areas Isaacs brings together elements of both designs. There are some classic Linley pieces of furniture here and there, and plenty of the inlaid woods for which the company is famous, but the designs also have a contemporary Russian feel, with high ceilings, marble floors, lots of crystal and strategically placed back-lit onyx panels. He has managed to combine the British desire for understatement with the Russian tendency towards lavish luxury. Apartments cost up to \$10 million (£6.1 million) and penthouses up to \$21 million (£12.9 million).

"It is British quality and British in its thoroughness, although not overtly British in style. There is a Britishness to how it comes together, though — the look is one of being assembled and collected over time rather than bought en masse," Isaacs explains.

There are some key differences between Russian and British tastes that will remain, though, according to Kuzmin. The external walls are 64cm thick "because Russians like to feel safe"; the floor-to-ceiling height is over 3m high in the apartments ("people expect height in luxury apartments") and 5m high in the garages ("Russians like to drive large cars in the winter"). The rooms, and in particular the kitchens, are spacious to allow for socialising — "even very wealthy Russians often prefer to eat at home, they will hire a chef rather than eat out" — and the ramps out of the garages are calibrated so as not to scratch the underside of a Ferrari.

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