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## Sustainability Is the New Luxury

Conscious choices can lead to peace of mind, and there is so much beauty to be found in regenerative materials.

By Laurence Carr



The furniture and materials in Laurence Carr's own New Jersey home were selected to be healthy and sustainable, including zero-VOC Benjamin Moore Aura paint and Roche Bobois Mah Jong sofas.

**THE EARTH'S SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES** have been irreversibly influenced by human activity, and the consequences are being felt across the globe. Societies must learn to rethink their current way of operating and strive to live within the planetary boundaries to maintain a safe space for humanity.

Architects and interior designers in particular face a crucial task: reconciling human wellness with environmental preservation while maintaining a commitment to beauty and delight in the built environment.

One prevalent misconception is that sustainability compromises beauty and luxury. However, our experience reveals the opposite: Sustainable materials and practices often yield exquisite and healthful design solutions. Innovations in biomaterials and fabrication processes offer boundless possibilities for sustainable luxury.

Too often luxury is associated with excess. Luxury without a conscience is finally being replaced with conscious consumerism in the collective economy, but it's been a core value of my personal and professional practices for years now. I have always led from the link between sustainability and wellness, because when we live in alignment with our values, we experience more authenticity and comfort in ourselves and our surroundings. Conscious consumerism offers peace of mind. When there is an alignment of values, luxurious experiences are not to be underestimated.

In Carr's home, smart-home technologies and water-saving fixtures keep energy and water consumption low.



That's why I launched Studio Laurence, where luxury transcends mere opulence and marries sustainability with aesthetic appeal. Our mantra, "Beauty from the Inside Out," underscores the intrinsic connection between sustainability and wellness. I'm thrilled to see similar ethos being adopted by other luxury brands as well. The more we normalize these new standards, the more readily we professionals (and our clients) can adopt them.

To prioritize these principles, designing for longevity is paramount. Timeless styles, durable materials, and multifunctional pieces

not only minimize waste but also ensure that residential spaces evolve gracefully with their inhabitants. As we go through different seasons, facilitating a longer life cycle for each item we select for our interiors is crucial.

Material consciousness is also key. Opt for healthy selections such as renewable, recycled, or upcycled materials when possible, and choose natural fibers like organic cotton, hemp, or bamboo for textiles whenever possible.

The paradigm shift toward regenerative living signals a profound transformation in the industry. It's not merely about reducing

our environmental footprint; it's about actively restoring and enhancing the ecosystems we inhabit and living in harmony with nature. Architects and designers hold the power to shape a future where sustainability is synonymous with luxury. This practice honors the planet and enriches the human experience. Together we can redefine beautiful living for a more sustainable world.

**Sustainability is the new luxury. ■**

Laurence Carr is the founder and CEO of Laurence Carr Inc., a regenerative, multifaceted interior design firm, and the founder of Studio Laurence, a sustainable luxury home goods brand that specializes in zero-waste product design.