

# SAY HELLO TO THE SUPER STUDENTS!

**WHAT SPRINGS TO MIND** when you think back to your student digs? Recurring mouse infestations? Threadbare sofas? A fridge full of mouldy baked beans? Yep, us too. It's a far cry from the experience of one 19-year-old fashion design student who, last week, snapped up London's most prestigious student accommodation.

The anonymous American student will be paying an eye-popping £21,000 a month for a three-bedroom apartment on London's exclusive Park Lane. To put that into perspective, that's the same as an NHS nurse's yearly starting salary. So what exactly can the upscale undergraduate expect for their cash? Well, the spacious pad is in a nine-storey 1930s building designed by famous architect Giles Gilbert Scott. There's a terrace with sweeping views across Hyde Park, and the tasteful interiors have been crafted by Alexander James Interiors, who counts uber-luxury yacht company Sunseeker as a client. The

kitchen has Miele appliances, while the bedrooms have walk-in wardrobes.

But this is just the latest in a new trend of students swapping drab digs for luxe living. New figures from estate agents EJ Harris reveal that more than 107,000 international students studying in London are pumping £600m into the capital's rental market every year. Students in Leeds can rent palatial apartments from IconInc, a £15 million development where there is a cinema, gym and king-size beds. Oh, and there are study rooms, obv's. And in Bootle, just outside Liverpool, there are plans for a 156-room student block, complete with a rooftop infinity pool. Meanwhile, last week, Vita Student – which has stylish developments across the UK – won a prestigious industry award for customer service, beating the Dorchester hotels group. Student rooms fancier than the Dorchester? Maybe it's time to head back to uni...



From hi-tech gyms and cinema rooms to interiors to challenge a five-star hotel, this is less *The Young Ones*, more *The Ultra-Swish Ones*



## 'A PRIVATE GYM, CINEMA AND DINNER PARTY ROOM ARE PART OF THE SERVICE'

**Annie McConnell, 18,** is a first year business management student at Reading University. She lives in Saxon Court student apartments, where rents cost up to £14,000 a year

'When I clocked the polished wood floors and sleek chrome kitchenware in my new studio apartment, I knew I'd made the right decision about where to live. Last week, I moved out of my family home in Glastonbury to go to university and I was really worried about ending up in a dilapidated student hovel. After all, I've heard horror stories about dodgy landlords and broken boilers.

'I needn't have worried – my digs couldn't be more different from the average student room. For £11,000 a year (which my parents are paying), I get a studio with a double bed, en-suite shower, breakfast bar and a private balcony opening out on to views of the gardens.

'We have a private gym, which I intend to use. There's also a Sony in-house cinema which you can book out with friends – they show everything from art-house movies to the latest blockbusters. There's even a popcorn machine.

'Every little detail has been thought of – we even have a dinner party room with sleek crockery and wine glasses. It's better than my parents' home.'

