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Listeners, when you think about luxury, what do you think about? Do you think about handbag, a sports car? What if I were to tell you that true luxury goes much deeper than that?

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today we are going to talk about luxury and what that means for you and your lifestyle and your well-being. Welcome back to the Space to Be well.

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I'm Michel Palapas, and I'm with my co-host, Valerie Putman. Hello. And we are in our first season of The Space to Be. Well. And if you missed it, listeners, the first half of the season, we talked about the resonant framework as it relates to creating wellness in the built environments. Whether it's your home or your business, it's so important.

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If you missed it, please go back and listen. But we're going to continue on this journey, and we're going to shift gears ever so slightly, but not too much, because we're still on the topic of wellness, design, understanding wellness design, and how this really impacts our life. And we're going to be touching on the principles of wellness design in the next few episodes.

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And today we are going to be talking about the big L. Do we let them know what that is? The big L luxury. Yes, listeners, luxury helps us to create well-being in the environments that we're creating. And so this is a topic that is something that can be a little bit misunderstood sometimes. So if you're hearing the word luxury, many times we associate that with a price tag.

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And that's true. Luxury can sometimes be not quite as, it's not inexpensive because luxury is all about something unique and different. And so we need to better understand why luxury matters in the wellness environments that we create. And by the way, these principles that we're talking about are principles that we use in our environments every single day.

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And, luxury is an important one. Our customers ask us for, for the element of luxury. And if they don't, it's still something that we incorporate into our design, sort of behind the scenes. Because luxury may not be exactly what you think it is. I love that. Yeah. I

think, today our version of luxury. Really, it's it's really meant to be felt, luxury.

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And it's really about care and the connection, the quality. And so I think it's through luxury that we actually have this ability to take design and continue to elevate it, especially in the wellness space, because, you know, at the end of the day, isn't wellness, you know, really about caring for ourselves in the best way possible? You know, so I think, I think we have a lot to talk about today with, luxury.

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Exactly. And I think there's the that, sort of connection to there's a big if and when it comes to luxury. Right. You know, so a lot of people associate luxury with a luxury handbag or a luxury car or a luxury trip or experience. But what makes luxury true luxury and the way we bring this to enhancing our well-being is through meaningful luxury experiences, meaningful luxury investments, livable luxury.

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That's something we're going to talk about in detail, is livable luxury. And when you approach luxury from that regard, especially in the environments that we're creating and living in, then you can have true transformation. So listeners, I think we need there's a lot to unpack here. And I think what we need to start with is what is the definition of of luxury as we understand luxury.

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Well I think I think for us it's really about you know this you kind of, I already mentioned that a little bit about kind of this unique one of a kind of experience about the customization. But all of those kind of details, those kind of micro moments kind of come together and really yield us, the result of what luxury really is.

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And that's, it's seen and it's felt and it's through those unique experiences that we can create with the built environment and or sensory experiences and all of that that come together, that really are going to kind of take us on a journey and, you know, help us kind of live, live our best version of ourselves. So, Michelle, let's, let's let's take a little journey here, and, test of kind of what, what luxury really is.

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Let's do that. Okay. Let's do it. So let's pretend that it's it's a sunny Saturday and you decide, you know, I'm going to go take a walk in the park down the street. Okay? And do let's do it. Are you

picturing it? And you're walking around this lovely park? The flowers are in bloom. The birds are singing.

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The sun is shining. You look up and you're like, wow, I can't believe I'm here. Experiencing this today is such a lovely day. Would you call that a luxury experience? I would say that would be an amazing experience. And I love the idea of a, you know, a beautiful walk in the park on a beautiful day.

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The sun is out, flowers blooming. I don't know that I would consider that a luxury experience. I would consider that a lovely experience. And and that's something that I would esteem to do as often as I could. And I think what would define it, not quite as luxury, is I think anybody can take a walk in a nice park and true and, and, you know, experience the flowers and, and while it's a beautiful experience, I don't know that I would define that necessarily as luxury.

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Okay. So why don't we challenging. Yeah. What if we now let's say all of a sudden in a horse drawn carriage shows up in the park and instead of walking there's a red carpet that's rolled out in front of you. And you can now take this horse drawn carriage and walk. And instead of walking, you are, you know, driven around around the park, you're elevated.

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Maybe they offer you, a beverage of your choice while you're sitting there relaxing, enjoying the same sun and the flowers and the birds. Does that create a true luxury? Let's see. I would I would consider that to be a more elevated lovely experience. I think it's definitely getting closer to this idea of luxury, but I think it would depend, I think what would depend to me whether or not that was a luxury experience, if everybody could get in that horse drawn carriage and there is a line behind me of, you know, 20 people and, you know, kids running around and, you know, everybody taking turns getting on that, that carriage

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ride, I would say, probably still wouldn't be defined as luxury for me. I think that for me, I would want to have an exclusive ride, with, you know, a driver who has a, you know, top coat and hat on, you know, bottle of, fine champagne. And it's sort of a one of a kind experience.

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And and not everybody could experience that. And, and maybe even I would be doing that with somebody special, somebody who's with me. And I would be sharing that experience with somebody else. I think then I would lean more towards that being a luxury experience. Absolutely. Yeah. I think that's really great. Some of the things that you're saying and about it being a little bit more exclusive, a little bit more, I guess intimate with, you know, fostering connection with someone and, you know, just really like how special, you know, something like that would make you feel and comforted.

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And I think, again, that's just kind of bringing to me that full circle meaning of really what the true luxury is, is, you know, that in that moment that you felt very cared for, you felt very comforted, and you're able to just be at ease and enjoy. And I agree, I, you know, I, I like to think and along the lines of handbags, when it comes to luxury as is an example, you know, as you know, a couple of years ago I purchased a Prada handbag and it was, you know, not an inexpensive purchase.

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I'm very, actually very thoughtful about the purchases that I make. You know, what's important to me when I make these purchases is, is number one. Am I going to use this bag? Is this something that's going to fit with my lifestyle? Am I going to use it? Is it good quality? There's a lot that goes into decision making.

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When I make a purchase, and this is something that is going to be very important to our listeners as they think about their investments in, their businesses and in their homes when it comes to luxury pieces. And so I think there's we have to look at luxury. There's one aspect of luxury where it is all about an investment.

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You know, I know people who invest in luxury cars, for example, and they don't drive the cars, which, you know, is that true luxury? Not necessarily. I think they're investing in luxury cars and they don't drive them because they want a yield, a return on the investment. It's a car and it's accumulating in value in most likely if they're not driving them and they're collecting them, they're one of a kind, potentially rare.

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And so I think that is one aspect of luxury, if you're using it to yield a very specific return on the investment and you enjoy it, maybe you have a garage that's an all glass garage and everybody can see your collection. So now you're feeling pretty seen and understood. Right? And I think that's, that's, you know, that goes

to our self esteem.

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You know, I, I'm coming back now to the handbag. And you know, all these years later I'll be honest, that handbag makes me happy when I carry it. I don't see anybody else with that same handbag. It's so it's more rare. It's unique. I live with it. It's part of my lifestyle. And that to me defines true luxury.

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Can I even go on the please? Let's even go as far as to talk about other, luxury handbag collections that I'm aware of. That to me are more of a dime a dozen and everybody carries this particular brand of handbag. I don't really see that as luxury. I see that as a brand attraction, sort of making a statement based on a brand.

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But I tend to look at luxury as, you know, something that's more unique, something that everybody doesn't have. When I make a purchase and, and listeners, this is what you need to be thinking about. And we're going to get into more detail with your businesses and your homes that you're investing in something that is really going to be meaningful to you, that you're going to use, and maybe something that's unique and different and that's really going to set you apart.

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And that really lends itself to your self-esteem, you know, feeling like it's it's uplifting. It's uplifting to have something that's unique because it's tailored to you, it's tailored to your lifestyle. And that, to me, is the epitome of luxury. Mallory, many of our business owners, when they come to us and they're, they're opening their businesses, they tell us that they want the space to feel luxurious.

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And, you know, I think to most of our business owners, they're thinking along the lines of something a little opulent or the use of luxury materials and finishes. But a lot of our business owners don't have the the budget to go full on, luxury. So I think we are always trying to balance this idea of helping them use their head and their heart.

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In their decisions. Absolutely. And, you know, we have to use the and here's why the head is so important when it comes to luxury. The head is so important because luxury generally is associated with money. You know, the more rare, the more unique, the more, usually

the more money it cost. And so we're always trying to help our clients balance that.

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You know, in order to open a business, you need to yield a return on your investment. And not all of our clients have an unlimited budget. So we help them to decide on that. Now, there's a ways to create a look and feel of luxury. We don't have to do, full on courts or real marble on countertops to get a marble look.

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Today there are so many, plastic laminates in in finishes and materials to achieve the look of luxury. So that's one thing, right? To achieve the look of luxury, there's many ways to go about doing that. And we help our clients make those decisions every day. But sometimes there's that 1 or 2 key pieces that they're considering that will really elevate the space, and there's no two ways about it.

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In order to accomplish this, they're going to pay a little bit more money. And so it's really looking then to the heart. And when we move to the heart we're looking at is this a good decision. Is this going to yield a good return on the investment. Is it meaningful. Does it mean something? Does it represent your brand if it's for your home, is this something that you're going to look at every single day?

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Is it going to stand the test of time in ten years from now? Are you going to love that piece? And so now you're using your heart in making those decisions. But you have to use both. Don't you agree? A definitely sometimes the heart wants what the heart wants, but but the bank, doesn't have the, the funds to kind of match or meet that.

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But I think it's, you know, that's such a great way to kind of explain the, the head and the heart and finding a way that you can still kind of have both, like, you can you can find a way to kind of marriage, and marry the, the idea of still getting something that you really love and that's really going to be something meaningful and lasting to you.

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And, but you can find ways to balance that offset the cost by selecting some other things or making other decisions that are going to yield. Still a great result. And at the end of the day, it still comes together as a amazing design. I think that listeners, that's

one of the biggest takeaways. You know, a lot of people want that look of luxury.

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And so that doesn't mean necessarily that you have to spend a lot of money to get the look of luxury. There's so many creative ways to go about doing that. But at the same time, you can also consider those investment luxury pieces. It's all about potentially, especially if you're on a budget, less is more. And so it's about investing in 1 or 2 key pieces and maybe even building on that, to yield the, the end result.

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Yeah, absolutely. I, you know, I, I remember this one particular project that we worked on, you know, pretty recently. It was in New York. I know you're familiar with the one, I'm talking about, but, you know, for her, there was this beautiful mosaic tile wall that it's just out of this world. Just gorgeous. And it's not just even, like, an eight foot high wall.

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No, this is, you know, floor to ceiling, you know, 12ft. Yeah, exactly. With, handmade Italian tiles that created this really beautiful mosaic. And, and like you, I think you are starting to mention, you know, but with this investment in this piece, this is something that really set her brand apart and was really going to make a statement, give that wow when you first walk in the door.

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And so I think, everybody can find that kind of moment of that item that that area of something that you can really just make your own and really align with your identity and invest in it. Exactly. And she uses it all the time. Right? So she has so many photo ops in front of there and Instagram moments.

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And anytime anybody sees that wall, it is it's identifiable. It absolutely is her brand. Yeah. And you know and I think that was that's a great example. And then there of course was the unbelievable chandelier in that one. Yes. Wow. That they spared no expense. Yeah. But really and I think that's a perfect example. There were two key items within the whole project.

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It was it was a little bit higher end project altogether, but there were only two key items where they really splurged, and that was that mosaic wall and that beautiful chandelier. And I think that's the word we're using the word splurge. But you want to be careful

about splurging. That's where you want to use your head in your heart.

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We have that other example of the business owner that wanted the very, very expensive doors. Yeah. In their space. Yeah. And we helped her to use her head and and, you know, helping to understand that it probably is not a wise investment, not going to yield a return. And it really was her heart truly in it. I mean, if she could be persuaded out of that.

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And yes, listeners, we do talk our clients out of these things because it's important to the end result. I think that, that was a really great sort of example of guiding our customers to yield the best return on the investment and really balancing your head and your heart when it comes to splurges, which are most likely and usually, especially in an interior associated with luxury purchases, absolutely.

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And, you know, can I also say that, I might be biased here. But I feel like, you know, this is truly if you're not working with a designer, you know, I would say you you definitely should be, and you should find one that can be aligned with, you know, your thinking and your identity and all the things that we've been talking about.

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And I think one thing and, you know, as Michelle just mentioned, is that we really focus on trying to find that balance for people, finding finding that balance for luxury, for quality, for all the different parts and pieces that go into the project. And so I definitely recommend that if you aren't working with a designer and you have a project in mind, it's it's a wise decision, I think an investment while spent.

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Yes. And it really is about being practical. Yeah. You know, it's I think that's an important way to look at or talk about using your head, but it's also about being practical and practical comes down to money. It comes down to wearability. It comes down to, just being able to ease in and the use of the space.

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And at the end of the day, we're talking about wellness, we're talking about well-being. We're talking about how we as human beings experience space. And so if if you want that big, beautiful

chandelier and it's going to light up your life every single time you look at it, that splurge may be well worth it. Yeah, but you have to be careful about that.

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And that's balancing that to practicality with, you know, with these pieces that are going to really help you to feel better. They're going to help you to be happy. You know, one of the things that is really important about wellbeing and, and, luxury is this idea of inspiration, this idea of surprise. We all want to feel inspired.

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We all want to feel elevated. We want to be curious. You know, curiosity is really something that's important for your self-esteem. Curiosity is good for our wellbeing. We want to be curious. It forces your mind to look at things in a unique and different way, and then it inspires us, and that inspiration will fuel us as human beings.

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And so that's what luxury brings. And that's why we don't want to sort of shy away from the idea of luxury. We want to consider luxury in all the aspects of what it can do to change your life. Truly. Yeah. I think in some ways, luxury really can be the highest form of design. You know, when you talk about that, because it really does create that overwhelming foundation of, of like the caring and the, inspiring like you're talking about.

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It really has all these components that really this elevated version of design. Yes. And that is why we used luxury, the principle of luxury, as our first principle to share with everybody today. Because luxury is important. It's always something that we have. We've stood by. We understand that luxuries about unique experiences, unique pieces, unique environments, and so this is something that I think is paramount to wellbeing and wellness.

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And, and by the way, I'm going to reiterate that wellness design is not just for wellness spaces. That's this is that's the whole philosophy behind what we're talking about, is that wellness design is for every space that we live and work in, and that is why it's so important to get back to the resonant framework, study the resonant framework in the projects that you're going to be working on, invest in that framework, and then seriously consider the principles that we're talking about here, starting with luxury as a key principle for wellness, design and well-being.

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You know, listeners, there is another aspect to luxury, too. We talked about it being this higher level or even the highest level. But there are ways to accomplish luxury that aren't as elevated looking as one might think. Right. Let's talk about the the latest trend, quiet luxury or slow luxury, Valerie, that we're seeing in the in the spaces that we're designing.

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Yeah. I think there's really this, this big movement of this idea of quiet luxury, this understated, this refinement, just really this kind of interior where you really just feel comfortable, you feel at ease, but, you know, it's of good quality. It doesn't have to shout at, the top of its lungs like, hey, look at me. You know, it's just, an amazing space that just exudes that it doesn't have to say, hey, I'm luxury, you know?

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So I think this trend is, like, such a such, a big, a big thing. I think it's going to gain even more traction. You know, and in the upcoming year, just as people really reflect and, you know, really even take on this idea of, you know, really what a wellness interior should feel like. Exactly. I think there is I think that's an excellent, example of quiet luxury and why that's important today.

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Because we are looking at some of the same elements here in terms of luxury. Right. Quiet though sort of leans towards less is more. And it incorporates organic elements. So we see a lot of the olive trees and more of the wood tones and just these organic elements, indirect lighting, lighting plays such a big role in quiet luxury.

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So by the way, it's quiet luxury again. Luxury has a price tag even though it's quiet. Yeah. You know, quiet luxury still leans towards unique different exclusive. It's about less is more a little more minimalism and a lot more about unique experiences and a unique look and feel. I love that, you know, I think just kind of along the same topic, you know, people have also been talking about the idea of what slow luxury is.

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And to me, you know I think that's really about kind of lingering a little bit more savoring, your decisions and your choices and, and not like rushing into things that you're, you're taking your time to find what's what your version of luxury really means. But what do you think I do? I agree, I think slow luxury really has a close connotation to wellness.

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Yeah, slow luxury is about self-care. Slow luxury is about your well-being and about taking care of yourself. And so when we talk about wellness and we even think about spa like environments, this is where slow luxury really comes into play. And I think where you can take your inspiration from, too, is sort of looking to the spa movement and creating an environment that helps you to slow down, helps you to smell the roses, helps you to enjoy life at a pace where there is no stress, there's no chaos.

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And so that is, I think, a very good form of luxury that we're absolutely seeing in the spaces that we're creating today. Listeners, how do you define luxury? What are you doing today in your home, in your businesses to create that feeling of luxury? And if you're not, I challenge you to rethink the idea of luxury as it relates to any space, no matter what your style is.

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I hope this inspired you to think about luxury in a unique and different way, and how that can elevate your space and really transform your life.