



ABOVE: WARM TO THE IDEA  
OF AN INFRA-RED SAUNA

For a more serious investment, you could think about installing a pool – especially if your house is large. “There are certain expectations that a house of a certain value and type should have a pool”, says Peter Mackie of Property Vision. But he warns that a pool will only add value if the house is of the right size and proportions – anything from 4,000 sq ft up is his recommendation.

Tony Line is managing director of the London Swimming Pool Company, which won an award in 2006 for a pool it designed in Mayfair. He reckons that a pool in Mayfair is definitely an investment – primarily because international buyers often demand them.

There are quite a few considerations to take into account, however – running a pool is expensive, and it’s not just about filling it with water, either – air handling and water treatment systems and lighting all have to be thought about too.

Peter Wetherell, of the eponymous Mayfair estate agency, reckons that a pool investment is “a house-keeping chequebook, not a hard-nosed negotiating chequebook”. By that he means it is a personal preference, rather than a guaranteed investment. He recently sold a house where the pool had a retractable dancefloor on top for multiple use – that’s “the way forward,” he says.

If a pool is too much or a gym too little, a whole new world of fitness options is opening up for the property owner wanting to exercise at home. Nordic, which claims it was the first to bring the sauna into the UK, has just launched an infra-red version, which

is said to bring with it health benefits such as fat burning, speeding up the healing process and cellulite reduction. The infra-red saunas cost from £2,600 up to £4,300, plus VAT, and the company also offers steam rooms and hot tubs.

One thing’s for certain – the backlash against the sweaty, noisy and often unpleasant atmosphere of the gym means that, whether you choose to take a run around the park with some weights or work out in your own state-of-the-art fitness room, investing in some sort of gym equipment for home use is worth it – if only for your own sanity.

Unless, of course, you choose to heed the pragmatic advice of Mr Mackie, who poses this question to homeowners with enough room for fitness facilities: “If they’ve got seven floors and no lift, do they really need to put a gym in?”

BELOW: FOOTBALLER  
PETER BEARDSLEY TRIES  
THE WATER ROWER HOME  
EXERCISE MACHINE

