

LUXE LIFE

Autumn 2018

Luxe life on
It is **a budget**
possible!

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**5 top tips for when your
building your dream home**

**Kaplan Inclusions
highlights**

KAPLAN



Above: I see a spot for the pizza oven!

Luxe life on a budget – it is possible!

We're all different. For a start, most of us are not as cashed-up as the Kardashians. I'm like chalk and cheese with my family. They'd rather have the world's biggest TV and I'd rather sink into a big bed with a good book. So, when it comes to luxury, it's very much a matter of taste. Not just yours, but that of your partner and family – even when they're wrong!

What's your idea of luxury?

The first step to getting the luxury life you want on a realistic budget is to work out what luxury means to you. Writing out a list of priorities is a good start. For me, luxury means feeling warm in winter. But until I wrote that down, even I wouldn't have thought that R4 insulation would be on my list of luxury items. It's not exactly gold taps, is it? Yet my partner runs hot and cares far more about ducted air conditioning; so, we've got both heating and cooling on our list.

Saving where it counts

Saving energy is a great way to save your budget for other luxuries. You can save up to 40% on your energy

costs by orienting your house to catch the winter sun and avoid the summer heat. A design with overhanging eaves will shade windows in summer and keep the worst of the winds off them in winter. Solid core doors have thermal properties that hollow doors just can't match.

Choose a builder with a BASIX Energy Efficiency Certificate included in your house and land package. Good house design is all about saving energy costs, and making efficient use of water to keep costs down, leaving you with more budget to spend on luxuries.

Light and space

For many people, luxury is having space, but the trick is to get the right amount for you. I, for one, don't

Below: What is your idea of Luxury?





Some consider a private ensuite bathroom the ultimate in Luxury.

want four bathrooms if it means I have to clean them all! I don't want an open plan room so big that I need an intercom to call the kids for dinner.

I do want to live in a space that feels generous and comfortable, and for me, that means a house that maximises available light. A light-filled house is my idea of luxury and close to the top of my list. What's on the top of your list?

Flexible floor plan

A good house designer is skilled at designing flexible floor plans that tick all the boxes. Remember the movie *The Castle*? That family adored the pool room. What does luxury mean for you when it comes to your ideal floor plan? Do you need a home office? Do you want somewhere separate for the kids to play, or integrated into the open plan? Spend some time discussing this with your family. When they come up with an idea that you like, smile and tell them: "That's going straight to the pool room!"

Do you love to cook Asian food? Then it makes sense for you to have a stainless-steel gas cooktop with a wok burner. Maybe you'd rather eat pizza, and for you having space for an outdoor entertaining area with a wood-fired oven is your idea of luxury. Add it to your list! You're creating a tool that will help you design your idea of a luxury life on your budget.

If you're starting with a house and land package, the fantastic thing is that you have a clean slate. Armed with your list of what a luxury life looks like for you, you can choose a floor plan that fits. Try to find a builder who is flexible with design options so your unique personality can shine through in your dream home.

You deserve a quality builder you can trust – and to have it all!

Kaplan Homes is known to deliver more bang for your buck without compromising on quality or service. Their list of luxury inclusions that don't break the bank is generous – the most generous list of luxury inclusions at no additional cost. Always do your homework and compare builders. You need to find someone who you can trust, and someone you enjoy working with. They are going to be responsible for delivering a luxury custom home to you on your budget.

In the end, you may not be a cashed-up Kardashian, but I think that kind of bling is very over-rated. Gold taps are not my idea of luxury. Give me a perfectly-designed warm house, with winter light spilling in, where I can relax while my children play happily together – now that is my idea of luxury.

Especially with a good book!

Kaplan Inclusions *highlights*

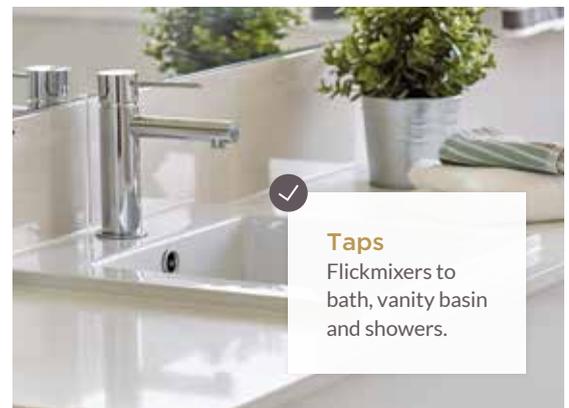
Here are just a few of Kaplan's generous luxury inclusions at no additional cost.

Pick up a copy of the Inclusions brochure at one of Kaplan's display homes or download it from the Kaplan website.



Air Conditioning

Actron is Australia's most innovative and successful air conditioning manufacturer and produces a strong and robust system that also has the upgradeable ability to be very high-tech using smart energy-efficient technology built for the harsh Australian conditions.



Taps
Flickmixers to bath, vanity basin and showers.



Hot Water

Instant gas hot water system for continuous hot water that never runs out.



5 top tips for when you are building a house – learn from an insider

After being involved in more than 27 building projects, I've learned that there are a few things that can make the building process go more smoothly.

1. Read your building contract and fill in all the spaces. You would be amazed at the number of people who sign a building contract and leave the terms and conditions blank. Those spaces are there for you to set some terms for when things go wrong. Read your contract. Don't sign it until every clause is complete.

2. Understand what is included in your total price for your house and land. How much allowance has been made for site works? Is that amount reasonable in the circumstances? Do you have rock, sand, or water table issues? A bit of research before you start building will prepare you for what is to come. Building contracts have an item for contingencies. You can expect a contingency budget of about 5 per cent on most contracts. If you are building in an area with sandstone or that is flood prone this could increase to 20 per cent.

3. What are inclusions with builder A, may be optional extras with builder B. A cheaper headline price may not give you the same value for money, as a price that – at first glance – may seem cheaper. Just like some airlines add on costs for meals, choosing your seats, jumping the queue and checking a bag, builders may add extra costs for floor coverings, anything but the cheapest tiles or taps, double power outlets (as opposed to single power outlets), and driveways or landscaping. A good tip is to create a spreadsheet and list all the things you want, then enter details of you three top builders. Enter the starting price of your preferred

plan and each builder's charge for those extras. The totals at the end may surprise you.

4. Think about how you live. A friend was telling me today that for her and her daughter, their bedrooms were their sanctuary. They needed rooms big enough to enjoy retreating to their own space. You may have young children who don't need much space in their bedrooms but you want the peace of mind a family room can give. They can play while you are in the kitchen or at your desk. Giving careful consideration to how you and your family are going to live for the next five years can make a big difference to the floor plan you choose.

5. Floor plans – never has an area of house building been more important and so little understood. Try to see a 3D version of different floor plans, so you can visualise what the rooms will look like and understand what it may be like living in that amount of space. Walk around the neighbourhood where your favourite floor plan is being built. Often you can have a peek at a home that is not yet at lock up stage and get a good idea of what the final house will look like. Don't go trespassing though or you will be in a whole lot of trouble. Some home owners are happy to show you their home. At least try to see a display home that has your floor plan (not one that has four bedrooms when you have three). However, display homes are designed to look enticing and the furniture is chosen to make the homes look spacious.

> [Go to kaplanhomes.com.au](http://KaplanHomes.com.au) to learn more.

“An absolute pleasure to deal with. From the first meeting at their display home, all the way through to completion and handover. Communication was great and everyone we dealt with kept us informed every step of the way. They built our dream home!”

BRENDAN PETROVICH