

# MANSION GLOBAL



Photo: Michael Mundy

## Homes Fit for Fashionistas

Beyond closets, here's what makes a house or apartment ideal for a curated and priceless wardrobe

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For someone with a cherished wardrobe or treasured archival pieces that are part of a fashion collection, the most important quality in a home is space to store it.

For some, that could translate to a room that functions as a gallery with custom display cabinets like the Metropolitan Museum of Art Costume Institute, where fashion is showcased like art. The majority of clothing collectors, however, request more-than-ample closet space.

“Once, I had a client purchase a second apartment adjacent to theirs just to house a massive closet,” said Phillip Thomas, founder and principal of interior design firm Phillip Thomas Inc. in New York City.

When your wardrobe takes precedence, a closet becomes not just a repository for storage. It’s a designed and built-out dream space where everything has its place and is meant to be displayed. “A wardrobe is tailor made for giving fashion high-art treatment,” said Kelly Hinchman of Studio H design in San Diego, California. Open shelving treats accessories as treasured items. “Hat stands, jewelry stands and even small pieces of sculpture hold things up in a way that looks merchandised,” Ms. Hinchman said.

And it includes the attention to detail and level of design given to any other main room within the home. “It is so important to feel beautiful in your surroundings while you are dressing, so we always like to treat the closet with the same level of finishes as the [primary] suite,” Ms. Hinchman said. “Beautiful lighting and materials are a must.”

And a vanity area is essential.

“Luxe seating and a hair-washing basin can be added bonuses to a closet with the space for it. And if possible, we love to include room for a few people to sit and gather, because what's more fun than getting dressed with a girlfriend or your stylist,” Ms. Hinchman said.

## A Bespoke Look and Feel



Photo: Courtesy of Lisa Adams

A fabulous closet or dressing room is such a wonderful way to start and end each day, Mr. Thomas said. “One should feel like they're being pampered and embraced every time they enter the space," he said.



Photo: Michael Mundy

Mr. Thomas thinks of designing closets the same way you would approach fitting the interiors of a boat. “Every nook and cranny should be used to its fullest with spots for hanging jewelry, sunglasses, and other accessories taking up those small corners that would otherwise be dead space. It should be a sculpture in and of itself,” he said.

Lisa Adams of LA Closet Design in Los Angeles outfits closets with bespoke furnishings, materials and lighting. For one client, she created a modern space with meticulously crafted details: a round marble island with gunmetal linear hardware, drawers with custom suede partitions for clutches and glass shelving to display showpieces like a rare Hermès Himalayan handbag. She also commissioned a custom freestanding (in case her client moves) marble jewelry cabinet with suede-partitioned drawers categorized according to jewelry type and a glass case with a jewelry form that displays prized pieces—all under biometric lock to keep it safe and sound. This is not to be outdone by the bespoke chandelier that provides a glimmering focal point.

Ms. Adams added a matching marble vanity. “The mirror extends beyond the vanity to create the illusion of more space and seamlessness. I did custom brush cups at the vanity and drawers with custom inserts for hair tools, hair products and makeup,” she said.

## Highlighting the Glamour of It All

California-based Ms. Hinchman designed a closet for a fashion blogger with abundant open space that effortlessly connected to her bathroom and featured high ceilings, double doors and finishes that echoed those in her primary suite. She extended shelving all the way to the ceiling to optimize every inch of the room and utilized pull-down rods to double hanging length. And the space is anything but utilitarian. Hinchman added a graphic rug, plush seating and an elegant light fixture.

And as an extension, a glamorous dressing room with great lighting, mirrors and ambience where the outfit of the day can be tried on and documented is a must. “I like to design with texture and lighting to create a stylish dressing room,” Ms. Adams said. Plush seating, custom area rugs and fabric-lined cabinets with back-lighting are all hallmarks of these spaces.

Ms. Hinchman said she mixes handbags with shoes to create vignettes and styled moments. “This contributes to a curated shopping look,” she said. She also organizes items by “departments” to “create a space that’s both functional and aesthetically beautiful and allows you to shop your own wardrobe as you’re getting dressed,” she added.

To make a stylish dressing room, Mr. Thomas chooses one material or element as a unique moment in the space that’s special and exciting,



Photo: Jenny Siegart

and then keeps the rest of the space somewhat simple. For instance, in one of his favorite dressing room projects, he used lip-printed wallpaper to make the space chic and fun and then went with sophisticated-yet-simple white and mirror finishes for all the rest.

When a wardrobe is more of a curated collection, how it’s displayed is part of the experience.

“I think fashion is art, and there are so many ways to let fashion work as art in your home,” Mr. Thomas said. In his own dressing room, he installed valet rods where he likes to hang some of his favorite outfits for display. For another project, clients had a very special kimono that they wanted to hang in their bedroom, so he made a full-scale print of the delicate object and literally turned fashion into art. “Fashion is a way of expressing yourself and should be displayed proudly throughout the home,” he said.

## Fashion Homes for Sale

When it comes to custom closets, one Paradise Valley, Arizona, home showcases the ultimate his-and-her space with 11 electric clothing cabinets and a Brown built-in safe in each.

“The upper cabinets are motorized, allowing for convenient access to the entire wardrobe,” said Jim Cavanaugh an agent with The Agency in Scottsdale. “The closet also has multiple drawers for extra storage and a dressing area with a full-length mirror. The vanity even has its own TV in the custom-lit mirror and a Kallista makeup sink.”

For a city dweller in New York, where closet space is a premium, one Fifth Avenue apartment features a window-lined closet bigger than most Manhattan bedrooms, which leads out to a wraparound terrace.



“Designed by Clive Christian, this closet features everything from glass back-lit cabinets to showcase handbags and accessories to leather-covered internal drawers,” said Amy Herman, licensed real estate salesperson at SERHANT. “There are multiple rows of dressing areas and there is also a large center island built-in featuring additional drawer space fit for a prince or princess.”

To accommodate a massive clothing collection like a well-curated boutique, a home in Cold Spring Harbor, New York, offers the ultimate luxury experience.

“The open, airy walk-in boasts over 500 square feet with a substantial custom-built closet island designed with ample storage, velvet-lined jewelry drawers and a quartzite top,” said John Messina of Daniel Gale Sotheby’s International Realty. “The hanging towers feature adjustable, polished chrome rods with double rails to maximize short storage and long hanging space that is easily adapted to suit changing needs.”

Ample shelving is suited for designer handbags or hat displays, while mirrored doors enclose additional accessory storage, he said. Custom lighting and a crystal fixture elevate the look and feel, and there’s a 120-square-foot dressing and vanity/makeup area between the two primary bedroom closets.

And then there’s the dedicated walk-in shoe closet, which houses the homeowner’s curated shoe and boot collection.

“Floor-to-ceiling sections line the walls and feature adjustable, slanted shelves with toe stops, which can be reconfigured in a myriad of positions to accommodate new finds or rotating displays,” Mr. Messina said. “It is both a practical and beautiful spot to sit and put on or take off one’s shoes.”

