

Left Liftshop has an exclusive designer range of innovative elevators available, including this modern design, perfect for adding convenience and luxury to your home.

## PUSHING THE BUTTONS

Originally seen only in high-rise buildings and multi-level structures, the elevator is quickly becoming the must-have accessory for luxurious abodes

By Caitlin Chander

Today's homes are getting a lift, and not the cosmetic kind. Elevators are becoming a popular addition to home renovations as they boost the value of a residence and increase its functionality. Sweeping staircases are being replaced by high-tech elevators that are swift and more functional, but there are certain factors that restrict some people from making the extreme purchase. Maintenance, loud noises, pollution and a bulky structure are all issues that inhibit homeowners from inviting an elevator into their homes.

What most people do not realise is that a home elevator is very different from the ubiquitous, stark, ungainly structures you see in an office building. Home elevators are an entirely different breed. With sleek designs, optimum functioning and environmentally friendly features, elevators now flaunt all kinds of intriguing options.

Three elevator industry aficionados — Bernard Edwards of Liftshop, Natalie Xylas of Liftronic and Simon Henderson of Grant Elevators — guide us through the current trends in elevators and the latest industry breakthroughs.

## LOOKING FOR A LIFT?

What aspects of design and function encourage us to purchase an elevator?

### Hidden gem

Many of us believe elevators are bulky and too cumbersome to sit in a home. Nowadays, however, customised lifts are placed in secluded areas of the house, minimising the impact of its appearance. Liftronic is one of the many elevator companies specialising in creating the most suitable elevator for your home. "The Liftronic advantage is our non-standard sizing," says Natalie Xylas. "We understand that all homes are unique and available space is always different. Liftronic's engineering and design capabilities allow you to fit that 'square peg into a round hole'. Elevator companies are now focusing on camouflaging the machine and assimilating it into the design of your home. Bernard Edwards of Liftshop offers the impeccably talented Elfolift that blends effectively with the wall finishes of your home.

### Green factor

Being 'green' has long been a top priority for many homeowners, who may steer away from the concept of an elevator because of the stigma associated with its pollution. New technologies have been introduced in recent years which make home lifts more environmentally friendly than ever before. Bernard explains the new hydraulic technologies enabling the machines to function using less energy. "Our Supermec lift is Australia's first post-hydraulic technology traction lift designed specifically for the home elevator market." Such innovations are bringing home elevators to the forefront of home technology and functionality.

### Long-term investment

Lifts have become a major addition to the modern abode. "Lifts have come a long way

## ELEVATING BENEFITS

Five reasons why an elevator should be the latest home design accessory:

- 1 More mobility around the house for the physically challenged
- 2 Stylish and unconventional way to move between levels
- 3 Great way to transport groceries from A to B
- 4 Great way to move furniture around the house
- 5 Adds to the value of your overall house price



This glass lift from Liftshop adds a diverse element to its surroundings.

over the years," explains Natalie. "A lift in the home is becoming the new cinema room, a 'must have' on your wish list when building or renovating your home." As with a cinema room, installing an elevator in your home is a major investment which will last for many years. Simon of Grant Elevators explains that

the decision should not be taken lightly, and while there are many elevators on the market, they may not all suit your lifestyle. "If you're considering adding a lift to your home, keep in mind that it is an investment for the future; it allows you to stay in your home for longer."



Customised lifts can be placed behind doors, such as this hardly-noticeable option from Liftshop.

## A LIFT FOR EVERY OCCASION

**Natalie Xylas:** Reasons for installing a lift in a home are varied, as is the list of requirements. Some clients look for everything, from a sexy all-glass lift car and glass-clad supporting structure which becomes a visual feature of the home, to a more discreet, functional lift to help the elderly and less mobile.

**Bernard Edwards:** The Freedom lift with aluminium and glass shaft is the best value available for retrofitting to existing homes where a stylish effect is being sought. The Elfolift, with its endless customisation and flexibility, is the architect's choice, and the Supermec is the only traction drive lift available that is power failure proof; it can still run up and down repeatedly in the event of a blackout.

**Simon Henderson:** The way the market is going, elevators are being offered as totally customisable products that will fit into any situation. Obviously depending on the client, some people are looking for a subtler lift and some go for the designer lift that adds a diverse element to its surroundings.

## ALL IN THE DESIGN

### Aesthetic accentuations

As the elevator becomes a more desired addition to the modern home, certain design applications are being introduced to the elevator market. Glass shafts, coloured glass, fabric interlays and aluminium shells are all popular materials for home lifts. With myriad architectural finishes, the options are endless. Even innovations in the design functions are tempting. Simon of Grant Elevators reveals the latest innovation: dual automatic doors. "It looks fantastic in the home; it uses space well and adds value to the residence." According to Bernard of Liftshop, there are also innovations that are not visible to the naked eye — "improvements 'under the hood' which are not physically visible, but provide improvements in performance and quality," he explains.

### Future-proofing

Nowadays, most people install a lift in their home so they can live there for longer. As life becomes more fast-paced, a home elevator means you can continue to move around

your house free from the struggle of stairs and walk-ups. "You are future-proofing your home; you won't have to find somewhere else to live just because you physically can't manage stairs anymore," explains Simon.

### Technological advancements

Efficiently using space is one challenge elevator companies face. Many brands are now specialising in customisation of shape and design so the elevator can complement the rest of the home. "The latest product from Grant Elevators incorporates the latest technology in elevators to provide easier use and efficiently minimise the usage of space," explains Simon. An important advancement in elevator technology is the power-failure-proof system which features most notably in Liftshop's Supermec lift. This design is definitely a big attraction for installing an elevator in your home. As with any industry, the elevator market is constantly upgrading and improving, with fresh new designs always around the corner.