



Fancy Hyde Park on your doorstep?

LET'S MOVE TO

MARYLEBONE

Technopreneurs are flocking north of the park for its great connections, says *Anna Tyzack*

Lovably positioned between Hyde Park, Regent's Park and Mayfair, it was only a matter of time before Marylebone was 'discovered'. This is where the new generation of buyers want to put down roots – even though their parents would never have considered living 'north of the park'.

'There's so much going on here in terms of restaurants, shops and transport links, plus all the green space you could want,' explains Simon Tolfit of Tedworth Property. 'Californians love it; European tech investors love it.'

So-called after the church of St Mary and the river or 'bourne' beside it, much of Marylebone was constructed in the 18th century by two landowning families, the Portmans and the Howard de Waldens, who appreciated good quality architecture. The estates are still the area's two major landlords.

By the end of the 20th century, however, Marylebone had become a poor relation to Mayfair, and the two estates set about improving its fortunes. Less than two decades on, Marylebone is now considered to be one of the most desirable places to live in prime central London, says Alex Bourne, director of Beauchamp Estates. 'You benefit from living in the centre of a great city and one of the best high streets in London, all in a wonderful urban village – it really is the best of all worlds,' he says.

The gentrification began slowly in the 1990s, with the arrival of independent businesses such as Daunt Books, which occupies premises



St Mary's, Bryanston Square

on Marylebone High Street – built in 1910 for antiquarian booksellers Francis Edwards. By the time Chiltern Firehouse opened in 2013, the whole area was alive with wine shops, cafés and boutiques. There are also now several luxury hotels, including the Marylebone Hotel and the Langham.

'Howard de Walden and the Portman Estate are a key factor in the area's charm,' says Paul Christian of Marsh & Parsons. 'Their careful curation of beautiful independent shops and restaurants has made this a special corner.'

Many of those buying in Marylebone are wealthy international graduates and tech professionals working at Google, Facebook and Snapchat in King's Cross and Fitzrovia, according to Martin Bikhit, of Berkshire Hathaway Home Services Kay & Co: 'This new generation is lured by the café culture, quality restaurants and the open spaces of Regent's Park and Hyde Park.'

Buyers also appreciate the excellent connections: to the City and Canary Wharf from Baker Street and Bond Street, to Heathrow from Paddington, and to Paris by Eurostar from St Pancras. 'All within a ten-minute cab ride,' says James Hyman of Cluttons.



Clara Paget

WHEN IN MARYLEBONE:

Proper coffee
AOK Kitchen on Dorset Street makes a great flat white and healthy food. aokkitchen.co.uk

Brunch with friends
Fischers is an informal neighbourhood café and Viennese konditorei. fischers.co.uk

Curry night
For delicious South Indian food and an underground cocktail bar head to Ooty. ooty.co.uk

Cocktails
The Chiltern Firehouse, naturally. It's celebrating its fifth year. chilternfirehouse.com

Girl's lunch
La Brasserie Milanese is a modern (and dog-friendly) Italian restaurant in the heart of Marylebone. labrasserie.com

Date night
Chef Simon Rogan's Roganic serves wow-factor food from his own farm in Cumbria. roganic.uk



Shopping spree
On Marylebone High Street don't miss Cire Trudon (trudon.com), a candle emporium on Chiltern Street, or clothing boutiques KJ's Laundry (kjslaundry.com) and Mouki Mou (moukimou.com).



The area has lots of fantastic restaurants, like AOK Kitchen

The area has increasing family appeal, due to its proximity to parks, roomy townhouses with gardens and private schools that include Wetherby Prep and Senior schools, Francis Holland, Queen's College and Hyde Park School. There are also outstanding state options and two international schools. 'There is a charming village feel, with a farmers' market at the weekend,' explains Lucie Hirst of property finders Colombo Hirst.

Marylebone's varied property offering ensures it suits buyers at every stage of life, adds Alessandra de Paiva Raposo of DPR Property. 'The area is home to grand townhouses, some of which have been converted into lateral apartments,' she says. 'And there are also a number of mews houses and new builds.' The smaller properties are perfect for those downsizing from larger houses in St Johns Wood and Hampstead to somewhere more central. Then there are country dwellers in search of a pied-à-terre, says Hyman. 'It's so easy to get out into the country from here,' he explains.

Prices have, unsurprisingly, escalated dramatically over the past few years. The average price is around £1,600 per sq/ft: a studio flat costs from around £400,000 and prices for four-bedroom properties start at around £2 million.



Wetherby is one of many excellent schools in the area

Earlier this year Marc Schneiderman of Arlington Residential secured more than £7 million for a property in Harley House, a gated mansion block 150 yards from Regent's Park, suggesting that wealthy buyers are confident in the area. 'The sale was a record price for the building and we had competitive bidding from three buyers,' he explains. 'The record sale for Marylebone on the Land Registry over the past 12 months was £12 million for an apartment.'

Prices are still up to a third lower than in Mayfair and Knightsbridge, according to research by Cluttons. 'Prices are chunkier than they once were, but Marylebone still looks good value, particularly given it is developing into a truly prime area,' Tollit observes. The most prestigious addresses are east of Baker Street.

Property finder Philip Eastwood of The Buying Solution recommends Dorset Street and Manchester Street for a calm residential vibe. The garden squares are always coveted: Montagu Square (where John Lennon and Yoko Ono once lived) and Bryanston Square, formerly home to Wallis Simpson.

For those on a lower budget, meanwhile, the streets west of Baker Street, towards Edgware Road, offer the best value in the area, according to Tollit – from just under £800,000 for a two-bedroom property in a purpose-built block.

In some ways, Marylebone has been a victim of its own success, he continues. 'The prices are becoming quite punchy for an area that isn't Mayfair or Belgravia,' he says. 'But then Marylebone seems to offer what the next generation of buyers are looking for – we call it the Chiltern Firehouse effect.' ■

FOR SALE



RAINSFORD STREET, £1.55M

A new three-bed mews house towards Paddington. It has been meticulously finished and there is free parking outside. Always a bonus in central London. lurotbrand.co.uk



CHILTERN PLACE, £4.25M

This cutting-edge development has a gym and residents' club lounge, plus 24-hour security, full concierge services and valet parking. The last remaining apartment has two bedrooms. savills.com



RESIDENCES AT THE MANSION, FROM £4.95M

A collection of 23 high-end apartments by Clivedale London. Partners include Fortnum & Mason and Bamford. Plus access to a chauffeur-driven Bentley. themansionw1.com



BRYANSTON SQUARE, £4M

A three-bed apartment in the historic garden square that was once home to Wallis Simpson. Accommodation includes a 30ft-wide reception and access to a residents-only garden. kayandco.com



REGENT'S CRESCENT, FROM £2.9M

Built by King George IV, Regent's Crescent is an exclusive development behind the original Nash façade. 67 Grade I-listed apartments promise the highest standards of modern luxury. knightfrank.com