

Domain HOME BASE

BOOK REVIEW

Beguiling style for homes in the sky

**21st Century Architecture
Apartment Living**

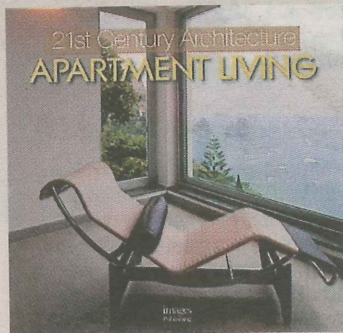
RRP \$59.99
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THERE is no doubt apartment living will become increasingly common as the population continues to increase and land and resources become more valuable. If you are at all sceptical about how interesting and stylish multi-residential life can be, just open this book.

The apartments are large, small and in between, and come from many countries. The common thread is clever, contemporary design.

An Austrian apartment, at just 75 square metres, is one of the smaller to feature in the book but the real surprise is this single room houses five people. The architects explain: "Room-defining furniture has been placed in the centre of the volume and can be opened in every direction. This furniture is part of the room but it also forms a 'room within a room' combining several different functions in one centrepiece."

The kitchen is behind a folding panel, the dining table hides away in the wall, a bench becomes a bed; innovations of space are accompanied by innovations of decor. The floor, walls and ceiling are painted in a soft, shadowy botanical pattern.



A 30-square-metre apartment in Slovenia takes the opposite approach and places service areas around the wall, closing them off when not in use with semi-transparent perspex doors printed with a soft tree pattern.

By contrast, Rice Design in Melbourne shows off 455 square metres of a former office building in Spring Street. The fitout is dramatically luxurious, with pale marble, dark wood and moody lighting, and the numerous rooms include a library, a wine room and spacious living areas.

The Manhattan apartments are also large and luxurious but probably the less said about them, the better; they will just make you sick with longing.

The book showcases clever storage, clever integration of work and living spaces and interesting decor touches, such as the abstract florals on the ceiling of a German apartment.

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