

LUXURY

# You have to be flush to afford these loos

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The Toto Neorest, currently on offer at £9,405

[Katrina Burroughs](#) | Sunday February 25 2024, 12.01am, The Sunday Times

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What does "luxury loo" mean to you? Is it all about the remote-controlled heated seat and the tornado flush? Or do you require a monogrammed cistern and porcelain in a custom colour? According to Jane Landino, head of design and creative studio at Taylor Howes, your idea of a posh WC depends partly on your nationality.

"British people tend to think of them one way, and our international clients are a whole different ball game," she says. "With Middle Eastern clients they generally want a shattaf. It's like a hose attachment that goes next to the WC. It's a highly hygienic alternative to toilet paper." If you consider that TMI, look away now.

While the shattaf has yet to find a place in the typical British bog, Landino says that the ultra-high-net-worth Brit is increasingly embracing the smart loo or washlet. The whatlet? She explains: "Posh hotels, particularly international chains, have smart loos. British clients love them once they have tried them."

Trone's Icone01 model has a clear column behind the pan for a water reservoir, €2,350

For those who are not up to speed on these marvels of modern hygiene, smart loos or washlets (also known as shower toilets) incorporate advanced functions such as a sensor-controlled lid that opens on

approach; an automatic night light; seat warming (with variable settings); a deodoriser; and a memory that stores the rinsing preferences of four household members. (To avoid misunderstanding, this means post-use rinsing of the user, not the facility.)

The seminal smart loo, incorporating all these features, is produced by the Japanese manufacturer Toto, whose latest model is the Neorest WX1 (£12,540, currently on offer at £9,405, [cphart.co.uk](http://cphart.co.uk)). The Neorest even keeps note of the timing of your visits, or as the blurb says, “detects the user’s habits and switches to energy-saving mode accordingly”.

The Villeroy & Boch ViClean i100, £2,888

Unless you do not want your, er, movements tracked, surely there is no downside. Except these new generation loos are not lookers. There are alternatives to the Toto — but the other options are not eye candy either. There’s Duravit’s Sensowash Starck f Shower Toilet (£2,785.20, [duravit.co.uk](http://duravit.co.uk)), Villeroy & Boch offers the ViClean i100 (£2,888 excl VAT, [pro.villeroy-boch.com](http://pro.villeroy-boch.com)), and Roca has the InWash with InTank (£5,159.87, [roca.com](http://roca.com)). All overdeliver on features, but they are, in essence, squat white cisternless wall-hung WCs — and look just as attractive as that sounds.

Drummonds makes Victorian-style WCs

For a more aesthetically interesting luxury loo, you could go classic. At Drummonds the most in-demand design is a Victorian-style WC, the type of model with the cistern high on the wall above the pan. This was a cutting-edge luxury design when it debuted at the 1851 Great Exhibition — as advanced as the washlet in its time. Now it is loved for its wow factor and vintage charm. The interior designer Katharine Pooley favours the Brora (a high-level cistern loo with a pull chain, from £2,520, [drummonds-uk.com](http://drummonds-uk.com)), which comes sans seat. Pooley adds: “They suggest their Throne loo seat ‘will make you feel like royalty’ (from £1,195). I am not sure about that, but their seats are lovingly handcrafted in beautiful natural timber and the accessories look very much at home in the grandest of

surroundings." At her family's house in Scotland, Forter Castle, all the bathrooms are furnished with Drummonds loos, rolltop baths and freestanding showers.

A Thomas Crapper brass cistern, £2,915

Adam Mosley, a director at Thomas Crapper, the 150-year-old specialists in Victorian-style loos, reports a recent demand for cast brass cisterns (£2,915, [thomas-crapper.com](http://thomas-crapper.com)). "Clients are asking for their cisterns to be customised. It might be that someone wants their property name on the cistern, or perhaps a bon mot which has a personal significance." Such as? The two that he recalls most readily are "Stay on target" and "IP Knightly".

Should you hanker for a showstopping contemporary water closet, the studio to discover is the French company Trone. It offers statement toilettes in remarkable sculptural forms. The curvy asymmetric Callipyge comes in eight colours, from an Yves Klein blue to a soft dusky pink (€1,200, [trone.paris](http://trone.paris)). And [the Icone01](#) (€2,350) is more arresting yet, with a clear column behind the pan for a water reservoir. These are both a far cry from a Crapper.

Trone toilets have a futuristic aesthetic

The Paris and London-based interior designer Ola Jachymiak calls Trone's loos "revolutionary" designs. She says: "Their toilets feature a futuristic aesthetic with the exposed and transparent cistern, creating a visually striking impact. This innovative approach has garnered attention not only in France but also across the globe, indicating a shift towards embracing more avant-garde and modern toilet designs." So is this the beginning of the end of the little white washlet?

Not any time soon, according to Stephen Dick of Residence Interior Design, who now installs shower loos in two thirds of his projects in London apartments and large country houses in Surrey and Hampshire. He has been giving thought to the most pressing question of 21st-century

sanitation — how can design help his clients to cope with juggling the call of nature with their ever-beckoning social media accounts?

Innovators of the Industrial Revolution never had consider the hygiene implications of homeowners taking their smartphones into the loo for a scroll while they sat. Dick has identified an ingenious accessory that he is adding to his bathroom schemes: the Addstoris, a Hansgrohe loo roll holder that has a little phone shelf on the top for when homeowners need to go hands-free (£49.17 excluding VAT, [pro.hansgrohe.co.uk](http://pro.hansgrohe.co.uk)).

Landino, of Taylor Howes, says the Japanese, who gave us the first washlet, have now cracked the issue of dirty devices. “In Japan recently I saw when you go into a powder room there’s a place where you can sanitise your phone. It’s a UV light technology. You put your phone into a slot next to the sink. It goes down into a slot and the UV light shines on it and it pops up completely cleaned. It’s called [Wosh by Wota](#) and in the time it takes to wash your hands you can clean your phone too. We haven’t installed it in a project yet, but everybody is super-aware of cleanliness, so these new technologies are the future — people will want a version of it in their own home.” [There’s an Instagram post](#) that shows it in action. Maybe have a look when you next take a comfort break.