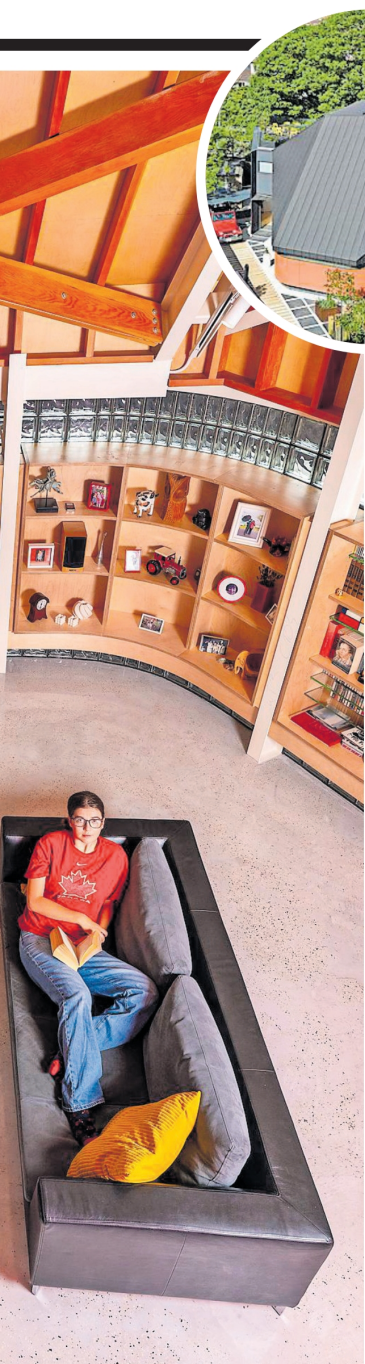




LUCKY YOUNG FOR THE SUNDAY TIMES/PRICE

building costs spiralled during the Covid pandemic, he tweaked the design to futureproof his investment. Developers are advised against building the most expensive house on a street so he designed the layout of the house, which is 3,000 sq ft, so that it could be split down the middle and sold as two

homes in the future. He put in foundations for a second staircase, as well as separate plumbing infrastructure.

'FITTING IN DRIVES ME MAD'

To his surprise, Saltykov says that neither of his next-door neighbours objected to his plans. They seemed glad to see the back of the seven garages. Planners approved the project in just four short months.

What does he say to traditionalists who might say the house isn't in keeping with the terraces? "If that's your attitude, you might as well live in an open-air museum where nothing can ever change. This plot was left unloved. There was no way of building on it satisfactorily from a blueprint that had gone before.

"The 1930s terraces were built using the technology allowed at the time. When they were built, they didn't fit in either. There were fields here. When the Victorians built terraces, nobody had built them before."

He didn't set out to provoke. "It's not a look-at-me house. It's so well hidden. It's purely about achieving a better result through means that are not necessarily conventional."

A challenge when running his architecture practice, Andrei Saltykov and Partners (ASaP), is finding clients that want brave and unconventional designs. "I'm happy to fit in if it makes sense but this fitting in business drives me mad," he says. "Is there ever going to be progress if all you're doing is what you've done before? Isn't that the biggest criticism of AI? It just recirculates what's already been created. That's why it can never be original. Just by fitting in, you might as well design with ChatGPT. You don't need people."

Saltykov is encouraged by the public response to the house. Two hundred people came for a tour last year at the Open House festival and he's opening it again this year, on September 19. He recently stood on the station platform and overheard two women chatting about his house. It could have been mortifying. "But they said, 'Isn't this amazing?' And I said, 'Thank you, it's my house.' And I went to the dentist the other day and they were saying, 'Oh, you live in that amazing house.' It's known in the area."

Clearly it has tickled the public imagination. He's even signed it up with filming location agencies. Is he sure he wasn't inspired by sci-fi just a bit? "When we were moving, I found a 1980s poster from my old space Lego set. It was a space station that had a similar shape to this. And my daughter Gina is convinced that the Lego set inspired the house."

The reality, he insists, is more prosaic. "It's more about the boring things: sunlight, views, shadows, access, how you get rid of water, all this practical stuff is what drives the design."

Maybe so. But for the rest of us, it's more fun to call it the spaceship house.

The London Homebuilding & Renovating Show, September 18-20, Excel, London. Free tickets for readers at homebuildingshow.co.uk/sunday-times



HOW TO MAKE YOUR MOVE TO ANTIGUA

The Commonwealth nation has favourable tax laws and a golden visa programme — not to mention 365 beaches. By *Cathy Hawker*

Links between the UK and the Caribbean Commonwealth nation of Antigua and Barbuda go back a long way. Horatio Nelson was stationed there in the 1780s and while he was less than complimentary about the island — an "infernal hole" was his blunt assessment — he is immortalised at Nelson's Dockyard, the world's oldest working Georgian boatyard and an atmospheric Unesco world heritage site on Antigua's south coast.

Antigua is a sailing paradise, home to international regattas and a favourite with professional and amateur yachties. "The sailing scene plays a key role in Antigua's appeal and combined with its 365 beaches makes it a compelling choice, especially for younger people," says Tom Vickery from Savills' global residential team. "Antigua appeals strongly to British buyers thanks to its familiarity and ease of navigations. English is widely spoken and the legal system aligns with the UK. The favourable tax regime is another significant draw, particularly for globally mobile purchasers, as well as the citizenship by investment programme."

Sarah Ward, cofounder of London-based international interior design studio Ward & Co, has owned a home on Antigua since 2017 and worked professionally on several exclusive private homes and branded residences there.

"I love the lifestyle, the pace of life and the friendliness of the people," she says. "Work takes me to the US and across the Caribbean; Antigua is so well situated, an easy base to reach other islands and to get to Miami."

WHERE TO MAKE YOUR MOVE

West is best, says Ward, 58. "The west coast faces the calm Caribbean Sea which is generally more welcoming



SEANFANE/GETTY IMAGES

than the Atlantic on the east coast," she says. "That's also where the biggest investment in infrastructure is currently going in, around Jolly Harbour with the marina redevelopment and the new Nikki Beach resort under way. This coast also has the biggest range of properties and prices, with homes from \$400,000 up to \$10 million."

You're never far from a good beach on Antigua, but the most sought-after locations with good access to marinas, restaurants and international schools include English Harbour in the south, Jolly Harbour in the west and between Dickenson Bay and Hodges Bay in the north.

RENTALS

The long-term rental market remains very active with demand outpacing supply, especially in popular coastal locations, says Dominique D'Aloia, owner of Paradise Properties Connection: "Demand is driven by professionals relocating to the island, the yachting industry, diplomatic personnel, international schools, medics and those moving here for lifestyle." D'Aloia says one-bedroom homes in these locations start from \$1,000 a month and two-bedroom homes from \$2,000.

James MacKenzie, 59, sales director at Antigua's

premier residential and hotel resort, Jumby Bay, moved from London to Antigua five years ago and rents a four-bedroom home with a pool in the northeast of Antigua on Long Bay, paying \$3,000 a month. "There's increasing interest in taking up citizenship while those coming as digital nomads are getting younger and together — this demand is pushing up rents," he says.

HOW TO MAKE THE MOVE

Antigua's nomad digital residence programme allows those aged over 18 who work remotely and earn at least \$50,000 a year to stay for up to two years. It costs \$1,500 per applicant — \$2,000 for a couple — and holders pay no local income tax.

The citizenship by investment programme was introduced in 2013 to bring inward investment to the islands. For a fee of \$10,000 and a minimum investment of \$300,000 into an approved property or a contribution of \$230,000 to the National Development Fund, Antigua and Barbuda grants citizenship for life to qualifying individuals. Successful applicants pay no tax on worldwide income, and no capital gains, inheritance or wealth tax. Official government channels say the process takes 90 days, but anecdotal online reports put the time scale for some applicants at closer to 10 months.

Demand is growing for relocation to Antigua, says Joe Rice, head of citizenship programmes at Global Citizen Solutions.

"Antigua and Barbuda offers one of the most family-friendly golden visa programmes, significantly cheaper than nearby St Kitts and Nevis for a larger family to gain citizenship," he says.

Top: the view from Shirley Heights, to English Harbour and Nelson's Dockyard. Inset above: the designer Sarah Ward, right, with her daughter, Rosie

