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# Redefining Luxury: Branded Residences and the Future of Hospitality

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**Abstract:** This study examines the emerging phenomenon of Branded Residences, an innovative model combining luxury real estate and hospitality. The aim is to analyse their key characteristics, drivers, and challenges, as well as their implications for the future of luxury hospitality. The research is grounded in Yeoman and McMahon-Beattie's (2018) "Super-Rich" framework, positioning branded residences within the concept of "Prestige Luxury" and exploring how they respond to the expectations of ultra-high-net-worth individuals seeking exclusivity, personalization, and unique experiences. A mixed-methods approach is adopted, integrating quantitative and qualitative data. The study includes a survey of industry professionals assessing awareness and perceptions of branded residences, a comparative analysis of current market offerings, and semi-structured interviews with experts to gain deeper insights into growth drivers and segment challenges. Expected findings identify key success factors and market dynamics shaping Branded Residences, particularly the increasing demand for highly personalized and exclusive experiences. The study also highlights opportunities and challenges, including implications for destination development, sustainability practices, and operational models in luxury hospitality. Overall, the research contributes to the limited academic literature on Branded Residences by providing a structured analysis within the "Prestige Luxury" framework and offering forward-looking insights into their role in the evolution of hospitality and strategic industry development.

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**PALABRAS CLAVE:**
Hospitalidad de lujo; Branding de estilo de vida; Sector Inmobiliario

**Resumen:** Este estudio examina el fenómeno emergente de las Branded Residences, un modelo innovador que integra real estate de lujo y hospitalidad. El objetivo es analizar sus características clave, factores impulsores y desafíos, así como sus implicaciones para el futuro de la hospitalidad de lujo. El trabajo se fundamenta en el marco de "Super-Rich" de Yeoman y McMahon-Beattie (2018), situando las Branded Residences dentro del concepto de "Prestige Luxury" y explorando su respuesta a las expectativas de individuos de ultra alto patrimonio, centradas en la exclusividad, la personalización y las experiencias únicas. La investigación adopta un enfoque mixto, combinando métodos cuantitativos y cualitativos. Se incluye una encuesta a profesionales del sector para evaluar su conocimiento y percepción del fenómeno, un análisis comparativo de la oferta actual del mercado y entrevistas semiestructuradas con expertos para profundizar en los factores de crecimiento y los retos del segmento. Los resultados esperados identifican factores clave de éxito y dinámicas de mercado, destacando la creciente demanda de experiencias personalizadas y exclusivas. Asimismo, se analizan las principales oportunidades y desafíos, así como su impacto en el desarrollo de destinos, la sostenibilidad y los modelos operativos del lujo. El estudio contribuye a la literatura académica al ofrecer un análisis estructurado del papel de las Branded Residences dentro del "Prestige Luxury", aportando perspectivas sobre su evolución futura e implicaciones estratégicas para la industria.

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## 1. Introduction

**The hotel sector is built on hospitality, the basis of high-quality guest experiences.**

The evolution of luxury services is increasingly shaped by the convergence of traditionally distinct industries, particularly hospitality and real estate. In this context, branded residences have emerged as a hybrid model that redefines the boundaries between ownership, service, and experience. By combining private residential living with the service standards and symbolic capital of luxury brands, branded residences represent a shift from transactional consumption to long-term, service-embedded living.

Luxury, historically associated with exclusivity, craftsmanship, and status, is undergoing a transformation driven by the changing expectations of ultra-high-net-worth individuals (UHNWIs). Contemporary luxury consumers no longer seek only products or short-term experiences but rather integrated lifestyles characterized by personalization, continuity of service, and alignment with brand identity. This evolution aligns with Yeoman and McMahon-Beattie's (2018) "Super-Rich" framework, which highlights the growing importance of prestige, symbolic value, and bespoke experiences in shaping future luxury demand.

Within this landscape, branded residences are not merely an extension of luxury real estate but a manifestation of a broader shift towards what can be conceptualized as Prestige Luxury ecosystems, where value is co-created through the interaction of physical assets, service provision, and brand meaning. These developments offer not only high-end properties but also access to curated lifestyles, combining privacy with hotel-like services, brand affiliation, and community belonging.

Despite their rapid global expansion and increasing relevance for both developers and hospitality operators, branded residences remain underexplored in academic literature, particularly from a service and conceptual perspective. Existing studies tend to adopt descriptive or market-oriented approaches, focusing on growth trends, investment potential, and operational characteristics, while overlooking their implications for the redefinition of luxury as a service-dominant logic.

This gap is particularly evident in three areas. First, there is limited theoretical understanding of branded residences as hybrid luxury service models that challenge traditional distinctions between hospitality and real estate. Second, the role of branding in shaping long-term, residential luxury experiences—beyond short-term stays—remains insufficiently conceptualized. Third, little attention has been paid to how branded residences respond to the evolving expectations of UHNWIs, particularly in terms of personalization, identity construction, and lifestyle integration.

As a result, there is a need for research that moves beyond descriptive analysis to provide a more integrated and forward-looking understanding of branded residences as part of the future of luxury services.

In response to the identified gaps in both academic literature and industry understanding, this study seeks to advance knowledge of branded residences by pursuing four interrelated objectives. First, it aims to conceptualize branded residences as hybrid luxury service ecosystems, positioned at the intersection of hospitality, real estate, and branding. This approach emphasizes the integrated nature of these developments, which combine physical assets, curated services, and brand identity to create distinctive value propositions for residents.

Second, the study examines the key drivers, defining characteristics, and value propositions of both hotel and non-hotel branded residences, with particular attention to their similarities and differences. By analyzing these attributes, the research provides a nuanced understanding of how diverse models of branded residences respond to evolving consumer expectations and market dynamics.

Third, the study investigates the perceptions and knowledge of both emerging and current industry actors, including future professionals and sector experts. This objective addresses the observed disconnect between academic exposure and practical familiarity with branded residences, offering insights into the preparedness of industry stakeholders to navigate and innovate within this evolving segment of luxury hospitality.

Finally, the study explores the implications of branded residences for the future of luxury hospitality toward 2050, focusing on trends such as personalization, service integration, and lifestyle-oriented consumption. By considering long-term developments, this research contributes to strategic foresight in the sector, informing both academic discourse and practical decision-making regarding the design, operation, and positioning of branded residences in a rapidly changing luxury market.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

According to Bailey (2023), brand value is a fundamental element in differentiating branded residence schemes within an increasingly competitive global market. In the post-pandemic context, the boundaries between work, leisure, and private life have become increasingly blurred, elevating the importance of flexibility, technology, and integrated living solutions. This transformation has expanded the branded residence landscape beyond traditional hospitality actors, incorporating fashion, automotive, and lifestyle brands. As a result, differentiation has become more complex, requiring not only strong brand equity but also the ability to deliver coherent and consistent experiences across physical and service dimensions. The case of Mandarin Oriental, with its long-standing heritage, illustrates how sustained brand value translates into enhanced resale potential and long-term desirability. This dynamic aligns with the Prestige Luxury driver of legacy, where heritage and symbolic capital reinforce perceived value over time.

Bursby (2023) emphasizes that one of the most critical distinctions within the sector lies between hotel-branded and non-hotel-branded residences. While hotel brands benefit from established expertise in service delivery and operational consistency, non-hotel brands must actively construct their value proposition, often relying on design, lifestyle positioning, and symbolic associations. In this context, success depends on the alignment between brand promise and service execution, as well as on fundamental factors such as location, architectural quality, and management structures. Within the Prestige Luxury framework, this reinforces the importance of authenticity, consistency, and experiential coherence as key drivers of perceived value.

The distinction between branded and non-branded residences further highlights the role of symbolic assurance in luxury consumption. Non-branded luxury residences, although often characterized by high-quality materials and prime locations, rely primarily on developer reputation and lack the structured service models and brand recognition associated with branded schemes. As a result, they may struggle to achieve the same level of prestige, consistency, and resale value. This contrast underscores how Prestige Luxury consumers prioritize not only tangible attributes but also intangible dimensions such as brand affiliation, trust, and status signalling.

Within the category of non-hotel branded residences, lifestyle brands play an increasingly prominent role. These developments emphasize identity, aesthetics, and cultural alignment, positioning the residence as an extension of the consumer’s self-concept. However, unlike hotel-branded residences, service delivery is often outsourced to specialized management companies, which may lead to variability in service quality. This distinction reflects a broader shift within luxury consumption, where experiential and symbolic dimensions—such as lifestyle congruence and cultural meaning—become as important as operational excellence.

In contrast, hotel-branded residences integrate established service cultures with residential ownership, offering a more structured and consistent value proposition. Affiliated with globally recognized luxury brands such as Four Seasons or Ritz-Carlton, these developments provide hotel-like services, including 24/7 concierge, housekeeping, wellness facilities, and personalized experiences. The integration of tangible service elements with intangible brand prestige enhances both experiential value and financial performance, reinforcing the Prestige Luxury driver of status. Moreover, this model exemplifies the convergence of hospitality and real estate, where service becomes a defining component of property value.

The importance of service quality within this context is further supported by Louzao and Crespi-Vallbona (2022), who identify key dimensions such as empathy, assurance, tangibles, and responsiveness as critical determinants of customer satisfaction. In the case of branded residences, these dimensions extend beyond short-term guest interactions to long-term resident relationships, reinforcing the idea that service quality is central to the creation of sustained luxury experiences.

From a historical perspective, branded residences have evolved significantly over time. Early developments, such as the Sherry-Netherland Hotel and The Carlyle in New York, laid the foundations for integrating residential and hospitality functions. However, it was not until the late twentieth century that the model gained momentum, particularly with the expansion of Four Seasons and later Ritz-Carlton into residential offerings. Today, the sector has experienced rapid global growth, with major hospitality groups and new entrants competing in an increasingly dynamic market (Graham, 2021). This evolution reflects the progressive consolidation of Prestige Luxury drivers, particularly exclusivity, symbolic value, and long-term investment appeal.

Bacon (2010) notes that the emergence of branded residences was closely linked to the recognition that affluent consumers valued the combination of property ownership, hotel-level services, and investment potential. This led to the development of hybrid models that merge lifestyle and financial considerations, positioning branded residences as both experiential assets and investment vehicles. This duality aligns with the Prestige Luxury driver of combining functional, emotional, and symbolic value.

More recent studies emphasize the role of branded residences as lifestyle platforms rather than mere physical assets. Lethbridge (2023) and Graham (2021) highlight the integration of luxury amenities, personalized services, and strong brand identities in creating differentiated living environments. The increasing participation of luxury fashion and lifestyle brands further reinforces the importance of identity construction and experiential consumption (Gutiérrez-Ravé, 2024). In this sense, branded residences can be understood as spaces where consumers enact and reinforce their social identity, consistent with the Prestige Luxury driver of cultural and symbolic distinction.

Location also plays a critical role, with developments typically situated in prime urban, coastal, or resort destinations. These locations enhance both the experiential and symbolic value of the residence, contributing to its desirability among affluent buyers (Trilivas, 2020). At the same time, the integration of shared spaces and exclusive amenities fosters a sense of community, adding a relational dimension to luxury consumption that goes beyond individual ownership.

Brand prestige remains a central driver of demand. The association with a recognized luxury brand not only enhances perceived quality but also provides reassurance regarding service standards and long-term value. This is particularly relevant in a context where branded residences are increasingly viewed as investment assets, offering potential returns through resale and rental programs (Lethbridge, 2023). However, the ability to sustain premium pricing depends on the consistent delivery of high-quality experiences, reinforcing the importance of aligning brand promise with operational performance.

The global expansion of branded residences is supported by broader macro trends, including the increasing mobility of wealthy individuals, the growth of emerging markets, and the rising demand for personalized and flexible living arrangements (Trilivas, 2020). These developments illustrate how Prestige Luxury operates as a global driver of consumption, transcending geographical and cultural boundaries while maintaining a strong emphasis on exclusivity and differentiation.

Building on Yeoman and McMahon-Beattie’s (2018) “Super-Rich” framework, branded residences can be interpreted as material and experiential manifestations of Prestige Luxury. They respond to the demand for bespoke services, elevated status, and symbolic association with prestigious brands, while also reflecting broader shifts toward lifestyle integration and continuous consumption. In this sense, branded residences are not simply properties but vehicles of cultural capital, enabling individuals to signal status, identity, and belonging.

Finally, the relationship between owners, developers, and operators introduces additional complexity to the branded residence model. As highlighted by Soloway, Bernstein, and Newman (2013), issues related to management rights, service standards, and financial structures require careful alignment to ensure long-term value. Trust, transparency, and governance mechanisms become critical, particularly in maintaining the integrity of the brand and the consistency of the resident experience. Within the Prestige Luxury framework, these elements reinforce the importance of authenticity, reliability, and long-term symbolic assurance.

## 3. Methodology

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach to investigate the luxury branded residences sector, integrating quantitative data from tourism professionals with qualitative insights from industry experts. This combination allows a comprehensive understanding of both the knowledge levels of professionals and the operational realities and market dynamics of branded residences. Table 1 summarizes the methodologies applied to address the research objectives.

**Table 1:** Methodologies Used

| Objective | Methodology | Rationale |
|---|---|---|
| To analyze emerging trends and their impact on the growth and development of luxury branded residences globally | Literature Review and Secondary Data Analysis | A comprehensive review of academic publications, industry reports, and market data allows identification of market trends, evolution, and defining features of branded residences. |
| To evaluate the level of knowledge among tourism professionals | Quantitative Survey among Tourism Students | The survey assesses professionals' understanding of branded residences, identifying educational gaps and areas for curriculum development. |
| To gain a deeper understanding of the unique characteristics, appeal, and operational realities of branded residences | Qualitative Interviews with Industry Experts | In-depth interviews provide insights into distinguishing factors, market appeal, operational challenges, and future sector developments. |

The first component of the study involved a literature review and secondary data analysis. Academic publications, industry reports, and market data were examined to identify emerging trends, sector evolution, and defining characteristics of luxury branded residences globally. This review provided the contextual foundation for the subsequent empirical research and helped frame the key issues explored in both the survey and the interviews.

The quantitative component consisted of a structured survey administered to over 180 tourism professionals. The survey aimed to evaluate participants' awareness and understanding of branded residences, their perceptions of the sector's distinctive features, and their views on the potential opportunities and challenges compared to conventional lodging models. Participants were selected using a combination of convenience and purposive sampling to ensure a diverse and representative sample of students with foundational knowledge in tourism and hospitality. Survey responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics, which enabled the identification of knowledge levels, trends, and gaps in professional understanding, providing valuable insights for educational development and curriculum design.

The qualitative component comprised semi-structured interviews with industry experts holding leadership roles in luxury hospitality, real estate, and branded residence management. Experts were selected based on their significant professional experience and their in-depth knowledge of the sector, ensuring that their perspectives would yield meaningful insights. The interviews aimed to explore the distinctive characteristics and services of branded residences, operational and strategic challenges, emerging trends, and consumer motivations. Discussions were guided by thematic questions, allowing for structured yet flexible dialogue that enabled experts to elaborate on critical issues. All interviews were recorded (with consent), transcribed, and subjected to thematic analysis, facilitating the identification of recurring patterns and sector-specific insights.

The integration of these quantitative and qualitative methods provides a comprehensive understanding of branded residences. The survey data offer measurable evidence of current knowledge levels among future professionals, while the expert interviews provide rich, contextualized insights into market trends, operational realities, and strategic considerations. Together, these methods enhance the validity and robustness of the study, ensuring that the findings are both academically rigorous and practically relevant to the luxury hospitality sector.

## 4. Results

### Analysis of the questionnaires

The survey provided valuable insights into tourism professionals' awareness and perceptions of branded residences, a growing trend in the hospitality industry. The results shed light on the participants' backgrounds, knowledge levels, and opinions on the topic.

Participants were asked about their current level of study. The majority (66.7%) were undergraduates, while 16.4% were pursuing a master's degree. Additionally, 10.9% had already graduated, and the remaining respondents were either doctoral students or already working in the field.

One of the core objectives of the survey was to determine how familiar respondents were with the concept of branded residences. The results were striking: 68.3% had never heard the term before, while only 31.7% were familiar with it.

Cross-referencing this data with educational background revealed that doctoral and graduate students had slightly higher awareness levels, but the knowledge gap persisted across all academic levels.

Participants who had encountered the term before were asked where they first learned about it:

14.2% mentioned course lectures as their source of information

6% learned about it through industry news or magazines

4.9% discovered it in textbooks or academic articles

Only 2.7% had seen it on social media, 1.6% had heard about it in a work environment.

A negligible 0.5% mentioned family or friends as their source.

Interestingly, 68.7% of respondents had never heard the term before and could not answer this question.

When asked to select the most accurate definition of branded residences, 58.77% of respondents correctly identified it as “a residential property associated with a recognized brand, offering services and amenities reflecting the brand’s standards.” However, 41.23% selected incorrect answers, indicating a lack of precise understanding.

An open-ended question allowed respondents to describe branded residences in their own words. Responses varied significantly, with some associating them with luxury villas, franchises, or co-branded apartment buildings. However, a notable number of answers correctly described them as collaborations between a property and a brand offering exclusive services.

When asked to identify well-known hotel brands associated with branded residences, 35% of participants selected “None of the above,” highlighting a general lack of awareness. Among those who recognized specific brands, 16% identified Mandarin Oriental, 15% selected Four Seasons, 13% mentioned Marriott, 11% cited Ritz-Carlton, and 10% were aware of Hilton.

The survey further explored participants’ direct experience with branded residences. Findings indicate that 52% of respondents reported never having visited such a property, while 41% expressed unfamiliarity with the concept altogether. In contrast, only 7% had experienced a branded residence firsthand, underscoring the limited exposure and engagement within the sample.

To assess familiarity with branded residence services, respondents were asked to rate their knowledge on a five-point scale, where 1 indicated “not familiar at all” and 5 indicated “very familiar.” The results reveal that 69% selected 1, suggesting minimal awareness, while 14% selected 2 and 8% selected 3, reflecting only moderate levels of familiarity. Higher ratings were less frequent, with 6.5% selecting 4 and just 2% selecting 5, indicating that very few participants considered themselves highly knowledgeable about branded residence services.

## 5. Perceived Value in the Hospitality Industry

Despite their limited familiarity with the concept, participants were asked whether they believed branded residences contribute value to the hospitality industry. The findings show that 55% responded affirmatively, suggesting a perceived positive impact. Meanwhile, 42% indicated uncertainty, and only 3% expressed the view that branded residences do not add value.

A follow-up open-ended question invited respondents to elaborate on their perceptions of branded residences. The qualitative feedback revealed several recurring themes. Participants noted that branded residences may create new tourism opportunities and expand the range of accommodation options within a destination. Others emphasized their potential to enhance brand prestige and attract more diverse customer segments. However, some respondents also highlighted that the perceived value of branded residences is contingent upon their association with a recognized hotel brand.

When asked to identify common characteristics of branded residences, participants were allowed to select multiple responses. The majority recognized ownership by individual residents as a defining feature (77 responses), followed by management by a hotel or luxury brand (63 responses). Fewer participants associated branded residences with access to hotel amenities (24 responses), short-term rentals only (10 responses), or being exclusively located in urban areas (9 responses), indicating that awareness of less prominent features is more limited.

Finally, respondents were asked a true/false question to assess their understanding of whether branded residences can be purchased rather than solely rented. The results indicate that 69% correctly recognized that branded residences are available for purchase, while 31% erroneously believed that they are exclusively for rental, highlighting a notable gap in knowledge regarding ownership options.

## 6. Analysis of the Interviews with Industry Experts

To complement the survey, interviews were conducted with:

Expert 1: General Manager of Branded Residences in Dubai

Expert 2: General Manager of Branded Residences in Hong Kong

Expert 3: Founder of Non Hotel Branded Residences in Barcelona

Expert 4: General Manager of Branded Residences in Mexico

This analysis consolidates and interprets insights gleaned from interviews with four experts within the branded residences sector. These experts provided valuable perspectives on the distinguishing characteristics, service offerings, evolving market trends, and the multifaceted challenges inherent in branded residential developments. For the purposes of this analysis, these experts will be referred to as Expert 1, Expert 2, Expert 3, and Expert 4.

The experts consistently highlighted that the core of the branded residences concept lies in a strategic partnership between a reputable brand and a real estate developer. This collaboration allows developers to leverage the brand's established reputation, utilizing its name and logo for marketing and sales purposes. This association with well-known brands, particularly those with a strong presence in the luxury hospitality sector, is a key differentiator from traditional residential properties.

All experts agreed that branded residences offer a superior level of luxury, encompassing enhanced amenities and services. This translates to higher resale value, making these properties attractive investments for high-net-worth individuals seeking exclusivity and prestige. Beyond the tangible aspects, branded residences offer a unique lifestyle proposition. Expert 2 emphasized that it is not merely a property transaction but an entry into a unique lifestyle ecosystem that blends the comforts of home with the unparalleled services of a luxury hotel. Expert 3 further elaborated, highlighting that these residences offer a unique fusion of luxury hospitality, personalized services, and exceptional design.

The service offerings within branded residences are meticulously designed to surpass standard residential expectations. Residents enjoy exclusive access to facilities such as spas, fitness centers, beach clubs, marinas, and golf courses. In properties co-located with hotels, residents benefit from à la carte hotel services, including room service, housekeeping, and laundry.

Expert 2 highlighted the presence of a dedicated 24/7 concierge team and exclusive facilities like outdoor pools, gyms, meeting rooms, and lounges. Expert 4 drew attention to signature services such as butler service, private chefs, and in-residence spa treatments. These services are not merely about convenience; they are about curating personalized experiences that resonate deeply with residents' lifestyles.

A consistent theme across the interviews was the emphasis on fostering a sense of community. Residents are frequently invited to exclusive brand events and can participate in loyalty programs, cultivating a stronger connection with the brand and fellow residents.

The management of branded residences prioritizes personalization and exclusivity. Experts underscored the importance of anticipating residents' needs and delivering services that exceed traditional accommodations. Expert 2 emphasized the pivotal role of a dedicated team and proactive maintenance in ensuring resident satisfaction. Expert 3 highlighted the strategic integration of technology for service automation and a discreet yet effective management approach. Expert 4 focused on exceeding expectations through anticipatory service, ensuring each resident feels uniquely valued.

Maintenance and security were consistently identified as critical components of the management approach. Experts agreed that preventive maintenance and robust security measures are essential for upholding the high standards of comfort and safety that residents rightfully expect.

The residents of branded residences represent a diverse demographic, encompassing entrepreneurs, international investors, and families seeking second homes. Despite their varied backgrounds, they share a common desire for discretion and high-quality service. Many are existing brand loyalists, viewing their residence as an extension of their established brand experience.

Expert 1 noted that a significant portion of residents are familiar with the brand and utilize their residences as secondary homes. Expert 2 emphasized the diversity of their resident base and their shared expectation of exceptional, personalized service. Expert 3 described their residents as individuals seeking a lifestyle that seamlessly blends luxury with the comforts of home. Expert 4 highlighted that their residents highly value the integration of luxury hospitality and residential privacy.

The motivations driving the purchase of branded residences are multifaceted, encompassing investment potential, lifestyle enhancements, and brand loyalty. Experts agreed that these factors are intricately intertwined, with the relative importance of each varying among individuals. Expert 2 observed that most purchases are primarily driven by a desire to enjoy the property, with brand trust and prestige playing significant roles. Expert 3 added that many clients perceive these properties as both a valuable financial asset and an opportunity to inhabit a luxurious environment. Expert 1 emphasized the balance of investment, lifestyle and brand loyalty.

## 7. Discussion

This study set out to conceptualize branded residences as hybrid luxury service ecosystems and to explore their implications for the future of luxury hospitality. The findings provide empirical and conceptual insights that extend existing literature and reinforce the relevance of Yeoman and McMahon-Beattie's (2018) "Super-Rich" framework in understanding emerging luxury models.

**From Ownership to Service Ecosystems**

One of the central contributions of this research lies in reframing branded residences not merely as real estate assets, but as *service-embedded living environments*. While traditional luxury consumption has been associated with ownership and exclusivity, the findings suggest a shift toward continuous, relationship-based service experiences. The expert interviews consistently highlight that the value proposition of branded residences does not reside solely in the physical property, but in the integration of personalized services, brand affiliation, and lifestyle curation.

This aligns with the Prestige Luxury drivers of bespoke service and symbolic value, where the experience extends beyond episodic consumption (e.g., hotel stays) into everyday life. In this sense, branded residences can be understood as ecosystems in which value is co-created through ongoing interactions between residents, service providers, and brands. This challenges traditional distinctions between hospitality and residential living, suggesting a convergence toward a service-dominant logic in luxury contexts.

**Brand as a Mechanism of Trust, Identity, and Value Creation**

The findings also reinforce the critical role of branding in shaping perceived value and consumer decision-making. Both the literature and expert insights indicate that brand affiliation functions as a signal of quality, consistency, and status, directly influencing purchase motivations and resale potential. However, beyond its economic function, branding operates as a mechanism of identity construction and social positioning.

Within the Prestige Luxury framework, this reflects the growing importance of symbolic capital and lifestyle alignment. Residents are not simply acquiring property; they are affiliating with a brand ecosystem that reflects their values, aspirations, and social identity. This is particularly evident in the distinction between hotel-branded and non-hotel-branded residences, where the former leverage service heritage and operational expertise, while the latter emphasize design, aesthetics, and lifestyle narratives.

This duality highlights a broader tension in the evolution of luxury services: the balance between operational excellence (hospitality logic) and symbolic differentiation (lifestyle branding logic). The ability to successfully integrate both dimensions emerges as a key determinant of long-term value and market differentiation.

The quantitative findings reveal a significant lack of awareness and understanding of branded residences among future hospitality professionals. This gap is particularly relevant when interpreted through the lens of the future of luxury services. As the industry evolves toward more complex, hybrid models, the competencies required of professionals must also expand beyond traditional hospitality management to include real estate, branding, and experience design.

This disconnect suggests that current educational frameworks may not be fully aligned with emerging industry realities. From a theoretical perspective, it highlights the need to broaden the conceptual boundaries of hospitality studies to incorporate interdisciplinary approaches that reflect the hybrid nature of contemporary luxury offerings. From a practical standpoint, it underscores the urgency of integrating branded residences into curricula and professional training.

Another key insight emerging from the findings is the centrality of personalization and community in shaping the appeal of branded residences. Expert interviews emphasize the importance of anticipatory service, tailored experiences, and exclusive access to brand-related events. These elements reflect a shift from standardized luxury offerings to highly individualized and relational experiences.

At the same time, branded residences foster a sense of belonging through curated communities, where residents share similar values, lifestyles, and expectations. This dimension resonates with the Prestige Luxury drivers of exclusivity and cultural distinction, where value is derived not only from the product or service itself but from the social context in which it is embedded.

This reconfiguration of luxury value—from product-based to relational and experiential—suggests that future luxury services will increasingly focus on long-term engagement, emotional connection, and lifestyle integration, rather than discrete transactions.

Looking ahead, the findings suggest that branded residences will play a significant role in shaping the future of luxury hospitality. As UHNWIs continue to prioritize personalization, flexibility, and seamless service integration, the boundaries between hospitality, real estate, and lifestyle services are likely to become increasingly blurred.

Branded residences exemplify this shift by offering a model in which luxury is not consumed temporarily but lived continuously. This has important implications for destination development, as such properties contribute to the creation of high-end, service-oriented ecosystems that extend beyond traditional tourism infrastructures.

Furthermore, the growing emphasis on sustainability and wellness identified in the findings indicates that future developments will need to integrate environmental responsibility and holistic well-being as core components of the luxury value proposition. In this context, branded residences may serve as laboratories for innovation, where new forms of sustainable, technology-enabled, and hyper-personalized living are developed and tested.

## 8. Theoretical contributions

This study contributes to the emerging literature on luxury services by advancing a conceptual understanding of branded residences as *hybrid luxury service ecosystems*. Moving beyond predominantly descriptive and market-oriented approaches, the research reframes branded residences within a service-dominant logic, where value is not embedded solely in the physical asset but co-created through continuous interactions between residents, brands, and service providers.

First, the study extends Yeoman and McMahon-Beattie's (2018) "Super-Rich" framework by empirically illustrating how Prestige Luxury drivers—such as exclusivity, personalization, and symbolic value—are operationalized within a residential context. In doing so, it shifts the focus from episodic luxury consumption (e.g., hotel stays) to *continuous, lived luxury experiences*, thereby broadening the scope of luxury service research.

Second, the paper contributes to the conceptualization of branding in luxury contexts by highlighting its dual role as both a signal of quality and a mechanism of identity construction. Branded residences demonstrate how brand affiliation transcends traditional consumption boundaries, becoming embedded in everyday life and shaping long-term consumer relationships. This perspective enriches existing literature on luxury branding by emphasizing its experiential and relational dimensions.

Third, the study introduces a novel lens for understanding the convergence of hospitality and real estate. By conceptualizing branded residences as spaces where service, ownership, and lifestyle intersect, the research challenges traditional industry boundaries and calls for a more integrated theoretical approach. This has implications for future research on hybrid service models and the evolution of luxury ecosystems.

Finally, the identification of a knowledge gap among emerging professionals contributes to the literature on hospitality education and skills development. It suggests that existing academic frameworks may not fully capture the complexity of evolving luxury service models, highlighting the need for interdisciplinary approaches that integrate hospitality, real estate, and branding perspectives.

## 9. Managerial implications

The findings of this study offer several practical implications for developers, hospitality operators, and luxury brands seeking to position themselves within the growing branded residences market.

First, the research underscores the importance of delivering *consistent, high-quality service* as the foundation of the branded residence value proposition. While brand affiliation enhances prestige and marketability, it is the execution of personalized, anticipatory service that sustains long-term value and justifies premium pricing. Operators must therefore ensure that service standards align with brand promises, particularly in non-hotel branded residences where operational expertise may be less established.

Second, the study highlights the strategic role of branding as both a differentiation tool and a mechanism for building trust. Developers and brands should carefully consider brand alignment, ensuring that the chosen brand reflects the target market’s lifestyle aspirations and values. Successful projects are those that integrate brand identity into every aspect of the resident experience, from design and amenities to service delivery and community engagement.

Third, the growing demand for personalization and lifestyle integration suggests that managers must move beyond standardized service models toward more flexible and adaptive offerings. The integration of technology—such as smart home systems, AI-driven personalization, and digital concierge services—can enhance the ability to anticipate and respond to residents’ needs, creating a more seamless and differentiated experience.

Fourth, the findings emphasize the increasing importance of sustainability and wellness as core components of luxury value. Developers and operators should incorporate environmentally responsible design, energy-efficient systems, and wellness-oriented amenities as integral elements of their projects, rather than as optional add-ons. This not only responds to evolving consumer expectations but also strengthens long-term brand positioning.

Finally, the identified knowledge gap among future professionals’ points to the need for stronger collaboration between industry and academia. Organizations should invest in talent development through partnerships with educational institutions, internships, and training programs that prepare professionals to manage hybrid models at the intersection of hospitality, real estate, and luxury branding.

## 10. Conclusions

The branded residences sector is increasingly adapting to evolving consumer preferences, reflecting a broader shift in luxury real estate and hospitality markets. This study confirms that sustainability, wellness, and flexibility have become central to the design and operation of branded residences. Previous research highlights the growing consumer demand for eco-conscious and wellness-oriented living environments, emphasizing energy efficiency, sustainable materials, and integrated wellness facilities as key differentiators in the luxury segment (Capgemini, 2021; Deloitte, 2022). Our findings align with this literature, demonstrating that both industry experts and emerging professionals recognize these factors as critical drivers of market appeal and competitiveness. The rise of remote work has further influenced the sector, necessitating flexible, multifunctional spaces that accommodate both professional and lifestyle needs, a trend supported by recent studies on the evolving nature of luxury residential design (Henderson, 2020; KPMG, 2021).

Interviews with industry experts revealed a persistent misconception that branded residences are merely luxury properties associated with a well-known brand. Contrary to this perception, experts emphasized that the true value proposition lies in the service quality and holistic experience provided to residents. This aligns with the conceptual frameworks proposed by Prayag and Hosany (2019) and Kim et al. (2020), who argue that the experiential dimension of luxury hospitality, rather than branding alone, drives perceived value and consumer loyalty. Experts highlighted that brands with a strong hospitality background, operational excellence, and comprehensive service offerings are better positioned to deliver meaningful and differentiated experiences, reinforcing the idea that the sector operates at the intersection of real estate, luxury branding, and hospitality service.

The study also identifies sustained growth potential for branded residences, particularly in emerging markets and global urban centres. Experts anticipate increasing diversification as new brands enter the market, along with greater emphasis on personalization and exclusive experiences. These observations resonate with industry analyses noting the global expansion of branded residences and the rise of hybrid ownership models designed to meet the evolving demands of high-net-worth consumers (JLL, 2021; Savills, 2022). However, the sector faces substantial challenges, including regulatory complexities, funding constraints in emerging markets, shifting consumer expectations, and the need to maintain consistent service quality. Such challenges echo findings from prior research on luxury real estate development, which highlights the operational and strategic complexities inherent to branded hospitality offerings (Cohen & Prayag, 2020; Deloitte, 2022).

A significant finding of this study is the knowledge gap among hospitality and tourism students regarding branded residences. This gap extends beyond academic awareness, reflecting a broader disconnect between emerging luxury real estate trends and the preparedness of future professionals to engage with them. Theoretically, this underscores the need to expand hospitality education frameworks to integrate hybrid models that combine real estate, branding, and service management. Existing literature on hospitality education emphasizes the importance of aligning curricula with industry trends to ensure graduates possess relevant skills and knowledge (Baum, 2015; Walker & Walker, 2020). Incorporating branded residences into academic programs, along with experiential learning opportunities such as internships, case studies, and guest lectures, can bridge this gap and enhance both theoretical understanding and practical competence.

Sustainability emerged as a defining theme for the sector's future. Developers are increasingly expected to respond to environmentally conscious consumer preferences by embedding sustainable practices throughout the design, construction, and operational phases. This finding supports prior studies on the strategic importance of sustainability in luxury hospitality, which demonstrate that eco-conscious developments not only meet market expectations but also enhance brand equity and long-term value (Jones et al., 2016; Capgemini, 2021). Alongside sustainability, technological innovation—including smart home systems, AI-driven personalization, and digital concierge services—was identified as a critical enabler for meeting evolving consumer expectations and differentiating offerings within a competitive market.

In conclusion, the rapid growth of the branded residence market presents both significant opportunities and complex challenges. To navigate this evolving landscape successfully, industry stakeholders must prioritize bridging the knowledge gap through education, integrating sustainability practices, and leveraging technological innovation. Doing so will not only enhance the sector's resilience and competitiveness but also ensure that luxury branded residences continue to deliver meaningful, personalized, and high-quality experiences. These findings provide a foundation for future research to further explore the hybrid nature of branded residences, the intersection of luxury branding and hospitality services, and the implications of evolving consumer preferences for market strategy and operational excellence

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